

## Summary: The Big Picture

Persuasion	What we do with others to get them to adopt a new behavior or belief. It does not include manipulation, deceit, coercion, or force.
Credibility	Required for persuasion, it includes a positive impression, expertise, trustworthiness, and composure.
Framing for common ground	Involves identifying and presenting a plan or framework for the negotiating context that comprises common interest and facilitates collaborative decision making.
Using logic and reasoning	Presenting compelling and error-free evidence (facts, data, charts, or graphs) that support your arguments.
Appealing to basic instincts	Communicating and behaving in ways that evoke an automatic (click-whirr) response; these include reciprocity/obligation, scarcity, and consensus/social proof.
Cognitive dissonance	Tension that exists when individuals' beliefs do not align with their behaviors; the persuader's goal is to suggest approaches or solutions that will reduce this tension.
Unethical persuasion tactics	These arise out of a lack of skill, ulterior motives, and needs to "win at all costs," and can damage the trust and relationship between the parties.

## Key Terms and Concepts

**ACE Theory** A theory in persuasion that holds that people use three criteria (appropriateness, consistency, and effectiveness) to determine whether to respond to a persuader's arguments.

**Appropriateness** The right thing to do, based on generally accepted standards or norms, or in some cases, rules of law or morality.

**Cognitive dissonance** The tension that exists when individuals' beliefs do not align with their behaviors.

**Consensus/social proof** A principle in persuasion that holds that people often decide what to do based on what they see others doing.

**Consistency** The degree to which the action or belief proposed compares to that of similar others or to their own past behaviors or espoused beliefs.

**Effectiveness** The degree to which an action or idea leads to a desirable state or outcome.

**Frame for common ground** Identifying and presenting a plan or framework for the negotiating context that comprises common interest and facilitates collaborative decision making.

**Inoculation theory** A theory in persuasion that holds that persuaders can be more effective when they anticipate potential objections and address them before they arise.

**Manipulation/coercion** Convincing people to agree to something that is not in their best interest nor any thing they would ever do without the influence of the persuader.

**Persuasion** The presentation of arguments and supporting evidence to get others to adopt a new behavior or belief.

**Scarcity** A principle in persuasion that holds that people will be motivated to obtain something they believe in short supply.

## Discussion Questions

1. Reflect on a time when you were successful in getting an individual or a group to do or believe in what you wanted. What did you do or say, and why was it effective?
2. Reflect on a time when you were not successful in persuading an individual or a group. What did you do or say? If you could replay the scenario, what would you do differently and how might the outcome differ?
3. What are your thoughts about the ways in which products and services are marketed to grab your attention and business? Are the practices employed ethical? Why or why not?
4. If you were to market one of your favorite products (e.g., soft drink or other beverage, tennis shoe, car), what things would you be sure to include? Why? What impact would they have on potential buyers?

## Ethical Dilemma: Power of the Professor?

Susan Jaymes is a professor at a mid-sized regional university. Dr. Jaymes has always been popular with the students, who frequently cite her enthusiastic style, hands-on approach, and excellent knowledge base as reasons for taking her class. Her popularity is

even further boosted by teaching evaluation scores, which are gathered by the student council and published at the start of each semester. These same scores are also factored into all professor yearly performance appraisals, and as appropriate, merit increases

Lately, merit increases have become smaller, and the bar that seems to matter most in determining raises has become higher. In response to this, Dr. Jaymes has taken steps to ensure that her teaching evaluations are as high as possible. First, knowing that only the most serious students will attend, she hands out the evaluation during an optional exam review session. Second, she brings snacks and drinks to the session (something she never does during normally scheduled class sessions). Finally, after handing out the forms and before leaving the classroom, she reminds the students "how much your input counts on my remaining employed with the university and how important getting a raise—albeit tiny—is for me to be able to pay my huge monthly student loan payments, considering how little faculty here are paid."

### Discussion Questions

1. Discuss how Dr. Jaymes is using persuasion to facilitate her goal. What methods or theories are being used?
2. Do you think these methods will be effective? Why or why not?
3. Do you think Dr. Jaymes' approach is ethical? Explain.
4. If you were her boss, in other words, the department chair, and you found out what she was doing, what, if anything would you do and why?
5. If you were a student thinking of taking Dr. Jaymes' class and a former student of hers told you about her practices, in what way would this information affect your decision?

### Endnotes

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