

# 20 powerful secrets of persuasion

 By [James Hurford](#)

24 Oct 2014

Your ability to persuade and influence people - to get them to understand, accept and act upon your ideas - is crucial to your success. People who speak persuasively have greater personal power, get more things done and achieve their goals faster.

By learning how to persuade and influence people it will help you to be more successful in every area of life - your home, your work and in your community.

## Two important things to remember

**Persuasion is not manipulation** - manipulation is control and coercion through force, to get someone to do or believe something that doesn't benefit them. Persuasion uses reasoning, sound argument and compelling benefits to get people to do things that are in their own best interest and yours.

**Don't try to persuade the unpersuadable** - choose your ground. Identify those who are more open to your ideas, point-of view, products or services and focus your energy and attention on them.



Source: [Statesman.com](http://Statesman.com)

## The power of persuasion

**1. If people don't trust you, they won't listen to you** - trust underpins everything you say and do. Your reliability, confidence, credence and assurance - without them, you are lost.

**2. We like people who are similar to us** - people prefer to say 'yes' to people they like. That's why, before getting down to business, it is best to talk about who you are, what you do and, if possible, find some common ground or pay a genuine compliment.

**3. Put yourself in their shoes** - if you think about yourself and what you want all the time, you're never going to persuade. Learn how to consistently talk to people about them; do that and you'll have their attention.

**4. Give a little something to get a little something in return** - we're all wired to return favours. The rule of reciprocity is so strong that by giving something, doing a favour, making a concession, providing small gestures of consideration to others, you'll find that others will feel compelled to return your kindness.

**5. What we see is just as important as what we hear** - like it or not, people judge you at first glance. Your body language, behaviour, character, gestures and the way you are dressed all come into play. They have a lasting impact on your ability to persuade others - make the most of them.

**6. Confidence and certainty are compelling** - we all have a need for certainty, and confidence is the outward sign of inner certainty. You will always be able to persuade others if you really believe in what you do.

**7. Have authority** - people listen to experts. They give their trust, and money to them everyday. Because our reaction to authority is so powerful and immediate, by having it you can to a get 'yes' quicker and more often.

**8. Knowledge is power** - know your stuff.

**9. Build your reputation** - your reputation is based on your past. Your integrity, accomplishments and character are all important when you are trying to influence. When it comes to influence, your reputation is your biggest asset.

**10. Physical attractiveness** - there's no getting away from it, people like to identify with attractive people. While you don't have to be a model (which can be distracting) you should make the most of how you look.

**11. Make it scarce** - people want more of the things there are less of. If you want somebody to act, you have to make them feel they will lose out if they don't, even if that object is you.

**12. Instil a sense of urgency** - you have to persuade people in the present. If they don't do what you want them to do right away, then they'll never do it in the future.

**13. Establish rapport** - when people feel more comfortable with you they are more open to your suggestion. Listen, ask open ended questions, empower people, pay compliments, use humour - you'll find people will warm to you.

**14. Be persistent** - if you want to persuade someone, don't give up. Ultimately, the one who persists will be the most persuasive. Persistence can be an essential element of persuasion - both in business and in life.

**15. Be flexible with your response** - the person with the greatest flexibility of behaviour will have the most influence in any situation. Flexibility will enable you to achieve your outcome.

**16. Stay calm, keep your emotions in check** - people turn to those in control of their emotions, especially in times of conflict, pressure or stress. Would you ever look up to a leader who panics under pressure?

**17. Pick your battles** - persuasive people understand that most conversations don't require getting someone to do or accept something. Aggressive pushers put people on the defensive, while truly persuasive people understand their power and use it sparingly.

**18. Listen more than you speak** - you can't persuade or convince others, if you don't know the other side of the

argument. Persuasive people are constantly listening to you and not themselves. They're listening for objections, connections and moments of agreement - common ground they can capitalise on.

**19. Engage with people** - smile, establish direct eye contact and speak firmly and clearly, at a slow pace - all of this will help them relax and engage with you, which in turn will make them more receptive to you and your ideas.

**20. Try to eliminate fear** - whether you're speaking one-to-one, to a group of people or a large audience - people pick up on nervousness. It creates a barrier to persuasion.

Stop thinking you're not good enough or you haven't got what it takes. We can all get better and no one is perfect.

## ABOUT JAMES HURFORD

- Keynote talks • Consulting • Mentoring • Group training • One-to-One Coaching +44 79 3088 3695 [jameshurford@icloud.com](mailto:jameshurford@icloud.com) [www.theconfidencedoctor.co.za](http://www.theconfidencedoctor.co.za)
- The confidence killers - 14 Mar 2016
- Nobody cares about you - they care about themselves, their problems and their dreams - 25 Jun 2015
- How to write persuasive messages - 13 Mar 2015
- Tips to being a better speaker - 18 Feb 2015
- 'The Golden Thread' - 14 Feb 2015

[View my profile and articles...](#)

For more, visit: <https://www.bizcommunity.com>