

## 10 Common Mistakes of Old School Persuaders

By Kurt W. Mortensen

Have you ever had someone try to persuade you with those old, outdated, offensive tactics? You know the ones I am talking about. Before you are even close to purchasing a product I am sure that you have been asked: “Do you want it in green or black?” I am sure you have also heard: “If I could show you how to become financially independent, you’d be interested wouldn’t you?” This backs you into a corner and you don’t even want to answer the question. You wonder, does this person really think I’m that dumb? You don’t buy from these people. You don’t even like these people. You never go back to their store. Do these tactics still work? Sure they do. It is the law of averages. Eventually you can find someone who will bend to any persuasive technique. Great persuaders are not smarter; they just have the right tools. You have heard the adage, “If you are a hammer, everyone is a nail.” You can’t treat everyone exactly the same. You have to customize the presentation to every customer. I want to give you a new set of tools because one tool will not fit all your prospects. You can’t use the old school tactics and force every prospect into the same mold. The more tools you have, the more successful you will become. Research shows that most persuaders use three to four persuasive techniques. High producers still only use seven to eight persuasive techniques. Did you know there are over 100 techniques? If you look at persuasion like it’s a piano, most are playing chopsticks when they could be playing Mozart. Why haven’t many persuaders caught up with the times? Why are so many still using the old tools that would best be put to rest? Are you one of them?

First, you must understand persuasion and influence have changed in the past twenty years. Your consumer, prospect, and customer have changed. They are bombarded with over five thousand persuasive messages a day. Your prospect is more educated and more skeptical than ever before. Think about it. When you are approached by a sales rep or called by a telemarketer you automatically put up a huge wall. You are already resisting before anything has been communicated. If you try those old style tactics, you will lose prospects, which results in lost sales. What good is a sales tool that works only part of the time? Imagine if the brakes on your car only worked part of the time.

Let me ask you a question. Have you ever had a prospect that you were working with and you knew they needed your product or service, they *wanted* your product or service, they could afford it, but they still didn’t buy from you? What happened? It was a perfect fit for both parties. We live in a fast-paced world. We don’t even have time to think. So your prospect comes in and everything is perfect but they don’t buy and they say, “I need to think about it.” We don’t have time but the knee-jerk reaction is to think about it. Do you want to know why your prospects aren’t buying from you?

### **The Persuasion Pitfall**

Understanding your audience is key. You must also know what laws of persuasion you are going to use on them. There are times and situations where certain persuasive laws or techniques are not appropriate. You can’t treat every person or every

audience the same way. If you take persuasion too far, you will run into what I call the “persuasion pitfall.” People are persuaded and influenced until they feel cheated, misled, or taken advantage of, and then they never tell you about their feelings, and they never do business with you again. In sales and marketing, we have a tendency push the envelope a little too hard when trying to persuade others. This could be in a personal one-on-one encounter with a friend or shopping at a furniture store. Persuaders who do not possess the ability to read others or who do not have the skills necessary to persuade typically fall victim to the persuasion pitfall. They take persuasion a little too far, using extreme pressure or try to sell you a product you don't need or want. When you use persuasion, influence, or power the wrong way, people will lose all trust in you and never want to be persuaded by you again.

“Over-persuading,” is always going to set off silent alarms in the mind of your prospect. These alarms will send feelings of uneasiness, negativity towards you personally, your store, or your product. The challenge with this pitfall is that 99 percent of the people in the world will say nothing to you about feeling over-persuaded or offended, they simply will never go into your store again; they will never want to associate with you or your product. Or, if you are a friend or family member, they will never trust or listen to your point of view again. This pitfall is a silent killer because most persuaders don't even realize the mistake was ever committed. The duped person will never come back to the store and will probably tell others not to go back, too. You have probably had this happen to you many times, at a car dealership, in retail stores, or over the phone. You have to have a sixth sense in persuasion and know how hard you can push. We hate to feel manipulated or pressured. We have all been burned or taken advantage of and when we see signs of such behavior we run. Many uneducated persuaders can be offensive, condescending, obnoxious, and insulting. Some people will need to have space, some will have to talk to a spouse, and still others will have to come back later before making a decision. You have to sense and know by knowledge, experience, and nonverbal cues how many tools of persuasion you can use without running up against this pitfall. You have to sense their limits.

### **1. My clients/customers trust me**

Wrong. We have done studies at the persuasion institute and found most people do not trust you. The persuader thinks and feels that he or she has developed trust, but when we talk to the customer/prospect, there is no trust. Here's the deal: Forty years ago, people were more trusting. The attitude was, “I trust you. Give me a reason not to.” Now it's, “I don't trust you. Give me a reason to trust you.” So now you're starting well below zero. On average, depending on your occupation, over 70 percent of the time you did not develop trust with your customer/prospect. Ouch. Even if they like you, if they don't trust you there will be no deal. The ability to gain and keep trust is a vital factor in influencing others. Research has shown, time and time again, that trust is always a contributing factor in the ability to influence others. When a person trusts you, trust alone can cause them to accept your message. On the flip side, if people don't trust you, all the evidence, reasoning, facts, or figures in the world won't get them to budge.

Trust can be an ambiguous concept, but certain things are quite clear: You can't get others to trust you unless you trust yourself first. Your message will not be convincing to others unless it's convincing to you. Whenever someone tries to influence us, we ask ourselves, "Can I trust this person? Do I believe him? Are they really concerned about me?" We are less likely to be influenced if we sense that the person is driven solely by self-interest. Never assume that people trust you. Always show the world you are someone to be trusted, no matter what the circumstances are.

## **2. I need more closing skills**

Sure it is nice to have a few closing skills in your persuasion tool box, but shouldn't you spend more time opening up your prospect before you even think about closing? In fact, great persuaders don't even have to use closing techniques. The consumer is ready to purchase before the end of the conversation. The only time you really need a closing skill is when you have blown it and you have not followed the proper persuasion process. You need to be able to connect, be sincere and empathic, and show you have their best interest in mind. You should spend more time on connecting, building rapport, finding needs and wants, positioning your product, and answering questions.

Persuading a customer/prospect occurs throughout the whole process, not just at the end of the presentation. Studies show it is much more important how you open a sale rather than close it. Research shows that hard closes not only offend but have also lost their effectiveness. Hard closes work less than five percent of the time and over half of those prospects had buyer's remorse and returned the product.

It is said that the first and most lasting impression is made in about the first four minutes. Be sure you demonstrate confidence in those first four minutes, because the cement dries fast! Nothing can replace a bad first impression, even if you try to make it up later. Fixing a first impression is like fixing a wrecked car. Even after exhaustive time, effort, and expense, you still know it was wrecked, and you're more apt to detect anything that might be wrong with it.

We have all had the experience of meeting someone who, after just a few seconds of being in their presence, we have felt an instant connection or bond to. This is the Law of Connectivity. Conversely, we have probably all met someone who we instantly did not like and did not want to be around. This process is caused by a lack of connectivity and usually takes only a few seconds to become apparent. The Law of Connectivity states that the more we feel connected to, part of, liked by, or attracted to someone, the more persuasive they become. When you create an instant bond or connection, people feel comfortable around you; they will feel like they have known you for a long time and that they can easily relate to you. When we feel connected to someone, we feel comfortable and a sense of trust evolves.

When someone feels love or unconditional acceptance, they will be open to your influence. To be this open, they have to know that you empathize with their situation.

Empathy has both Latin and Greek roots. The two parts of the word mean “to see through” and “the eye of the other.” Seeing through the eye of another creates long-term influence. When people know that you can see what they see, feel what they feel, hurt the way they hurt, they will be willing to be influenced by you. The whole world is full of people trying to make us do things for their reasons. All we need to do is pause and understand with whom we are dealing, what they are thinking, and why they are thinking those things. Once we understand these principles, we have empathy and the door of influence swings wide open. Empathy and caring are part of having humility. When you are humble, you demonstrate to others that you are not driven by ego, or pride, and you’re not just out to get the best for yourself.

### **3. Objections are good**

There is a big difference between a genuine question of concern and an “I’m done with you” objection. Is it a sign of interest or resistance? That is the key question. When they present every objection in the book, this should be a red flag to you. You are probably going down the wrong road, not reading the person. What they are really saying is, “Go away. I have heard enough. I don’t see where or how this can help me.” Did you really uncover their wants and needs, or are you vomiting a list of features and benefits? Many persuaders vomit information. Here is the issue: your prospect will buy for their reasons and for only their reasons, they don’t care about why you like the product or how much you know about the product. You need to find out the one or two reasons they want to buy and tell them how your product or service will benefit them. When you list features and benefits, two things happen. It can suck the energy out of the persuasion process and it can actually give them reasons not to buy that they wouldn’t have even imagined. Find the one or two they are really going to care about and get them to purchase – *then* you can fill in the blanks with the other features and benefits. Here is the key: before they buy or have made the decision to purchase, they are looking for reasons *not* to buy. After the decision to buy, they are then looking for reasons why they made a good purchase.

Great persuaders will always have fewer objections to handle than old style persuaders. If you really understand your prospect, you “pre-solve” before the objection has even occurred. “Pre-solving” objections can be effectively accomplished by using a tactic titled inoculation. Do you inoculate your prospects?

The term “inoculation” comes from the medical field: injecting a weak dose of a virus into a patient inoculates or prevents the patient from actually getting the disease. The body’s immune system fights off this weak form of the disease and then is prepared when the full disease attacks. Likewise, when you are presenting to an audience who has an opposing viewpoint standing in the wing, you have to “inoculate” them with a weakened form of the other side’s argument. If you know someone is going to attack your viewpoint, you prepare your audience in advance for the attack. The idea is to address the issues that your opponent will bring up and then directly refute them. The point to understand is that the inoculation must be a weak form of the “virus.” If you inoculated a human body with the strong strain of a disease, they could become sick or even die. The dose must be weak enough to prepare the body for the stronger virus but

not so strong that it overpowers the body. In persuasion, you don't want to give strong doses. You don't want to give your prospects all the ammunition from the other side of the persuasive message. On the other hand, if you don't prepare your audience for what they are about to hear, the sting of your opponent's words, logic, or testimony might be too much for them to handle and they could switch sides.

We are surrounded by countless examples of inoculation, many of which are used in the courtroom. The attorney stands up and says, "The prosecution will call my client mean, evil, a terrible husband, and a poor member of society, but this is not true, as I will show you over the next couple of weeks...." So, when the prosecution stands up and states anything close to what the defense attorney has claimed they will, the jury is prepared, thinking he or she is acting exactly the way the defense said they would. This gives the jurors a way to ignore or even discount the prosecutor's arguments.

Society needs to understand the importance of inoculation in regards to smoking, drugs, teenage pregnancy, and others issues. Street gangs also use this inoculation tool. When they are trying to recruit members to join their gang, they inoculate future gang members by telling them their parents, teachers, and cops will encourage them not to join. They will tell them all the reasons their opponents will give, fueling them with ammunition for the impending attack. This preparation enables him or her to handle the oncoming assault from parents, teachers, and others. We know our children will come in contact with forces that do not advocate the views and beliefs we would wish to instill in our kids. Who should be the first contact with your children – you, or the drug dealer? When you inoculate people, they can mentally prepare arguments supporting their stance. This reinforcement prevents them from switching teams. The more prepared they are, the more they'll hold fast to their attitudes and beliefs. The more deeply this reinforcement is ingrained, the more difficult it will become for them to be swayed.

#### **4. I am an outgoing people person, so I am a natural persuader**

There are the stereotypical persuaders who are friendly, outgoing, and sometimes loud. Research reveals, however, that some of the best persuaders are actually introverts. How can you persuade if you are always talking? Great persuaders will listen more than they talk. Great persuaders use listening and questioning to get prospects/customers to persuade themselves. Which approach do you think will have better long-term results; if *you* persuade them, or help them persuade *themselves*? It's much better if they feel like they made the decision themselves without any outside pressure.

Fortune 500 companies commonly require listening training, even though many employees think it's a waste of time. The truth is, poor listening skills account for the majority of people's communication problems. Dale Carnegie asserted many years ago that listening is one of the most crucial human relations skills that could possibly be developed. Listening is how we find out people's preferences, desires, wants, and needs. Of all the skills one could master, listening is probably the one that will pay you back the most. It is how we learn to customize our message to our prospects. Good listening is not just looking at someone and nodding your head in agreement. You have to make sure

the other person knows that you understand. The more the other person feels understood and cared about, the greater your ability to persuade and influence.

Of all the tools in your persuasion toolbox, questioning is probably the one most often used by master persuaders. Questions create immediate involvement; they guide the conversation, clarify concerns and objections, reveal beliefs, attitudes, and values, help you find out what your prospect needs, and show your sincerity. Questioning is a very diverse and useful tool.

We are taught to answer a question when it is posed to us. We automatically think of a response when asked a question; even if we don't verbalize the answer, we think about it in our head. Most people want to be cooperative; we don't want to be considered rude by ignoring when a question is asked of us. In this way, a question stimulates our thinking response. Make sure you are careful in how you pose your questions. The structure of your questions dictates how your listener will answer them. A good rule of thumb is to start with the easiest questions first. You want to draw your audience into the conversation and help them feel relaxed and comfortable. People are encouraged by answers they know are right. Begin the conversation by starting with a general topic instead of a specific subject. You need to get the wheels in your prospect's mind rolling before you ask them to answer the more specific questions.

The best questions draw a person into the conversation and out of being unreceptive. It is to your advantage to ask questions that will get your prospects to open up. For example, consider the following:

What do you think about...?  
Have you ever thought about...?  
How do you feel about...?  
When did you start...?  
Where did you find...?

## **5. Focusing on price rather than building value**

Many persuaders tend to focus on price rather than building value. When you are finished with your presentation your prospect should think, that's it? That's inexpensive! What a great value! Even if they can't afford it, they can see the value of what you are offering. Discussing price creates fear in many persuaders. It's often where the sale begins to sink. Three things happen. Prospects know it is a great way to get rid of you, they can postpone making a decision, and it is a knee-jerk reaction. You have not built the value of your product or service. We often feel like lost sales come down to price. It is not the price issue! It's that they don't see the value. Think about it. If price was always the issue, we would all be driving Yugos, drinking Kool-aid, staying at Motel Six, and shopping at thrift stores.

If you do hear the price objection too frequently, try asking, "Compared to what?" They will usually give you a blank stare because there is nothing to compare it to. It is your job to help them compare your product or service to a Rolls Royce, not a used

economy car. It's all about human perception. The human mind has to find a benchmark of comparison to make judgments, especially when we are talking about unfamiliar situations. People make comparisons based on knowledge and past experience. By showing your prospects contrast, you are creating comparisons for them. The mind can't process everything at once, so it develops shortcuts to help make decisions. Instead of making a completely internal judgment, we look for boundaries, patterns, and polar opposites. We want to know the difference between our options, so we naturally contrast the two items. We mentally place things in our mind from best to worst, first to last, or highest to lowest. Do you want your prospects to compare your product or service to the second-hand thrift store or a shop on Rodeo Drive? You get to decide where you want them to start their benchmark.

When using this technique, keep in mind the powerful differences between positive and negative information. Psychologists have asserted for years that people automatically and subconsciously have extremely high expectations for the good over the bad. Because of this consistent tendency, negative information, when it comes, always seems to be given considerable weight because it is such a jarring contrast to what was expected. For example, have you ever had a salesperson get you all excited about some incredible product you were about to purchase? You're totally thrilled with all the things this product is going to do for you, and then BAM! The salesperson hits you with the ghastly price. Suddenly the hefty price tag – just one negative detail – outweighs all of the twenty other terrific features. Negative information has taken precedence over all the positive information. In fact, now this one negative detail totally consumes your thoughts. You drive home only able to think about how the precious item is going to cost you an arm and a leg.

## **6. I'm OK**

This is a common thread we find at The Persuasion Institute. The psychological characteristics make all the difference in the world. You can't read a book, go to a seminar, and then fix everything in one day. It is a process that will happen over time. I have never met a high producer that does not work at it on a daily basis. Many persuaders make the mistake of adopting attitudes like, "I'm Ok, I don't have a problem with that, I don't need to work on that", etc. If you ever find yourself saying those kinds of things, you are worse off than you thought. Recognize that the only way to build your future is to build you.

Your psyche is the mental aspect of the game. It's a critical skill for all successful salespeople, but it works equally well in all fields. You will not be able to achieve your goals until you believe you can achieve your goals. All the best techniques and tools will not help you until you first believe in yourself. Unfortunately, most of the people we know tend to bring us down. When you tell them about your dreams and the things you want to accomplish in life, they can be very discouraging. Do you know people like that? When you have the right psyche, you know where you're going and what you want to accomplish, and anything that people say is not going to matter. The right psyche involves knowing what you want and having a plan to get it. When your psyche is in its proper place, you will always follow your heart.

Why are some people super-successful, while others dwell in mediocrity? Ask almost anyone out there, and they want more out of life. They want to be better, to accomplish those buried and forgotten goals. So why do so many of us fall short of achieving our dreams? We all want success. We all want to be happy. We all want to be self-disciplined and to have everyone's respect. We want great achievement, to accomplish great feats, to be the best at what we do. And we want it all now. We know many of the things we should be doing to be happier, more physically fit, and more financially secure. We know we should set our goals, manage our time, spend more time with the family, exercise, eat right, work hard, sleep more, and have a positive mental attitude. So why aren't we doing these things? The desire is there, right? Why does it sometimes seem impossible? The good news is if you really want success, you can have it. Success is an open book test.

Sometimes we find ourselves surrounded by people who seem to work the same amount we do, or even *less*, and they still get better results. Drives you crazy, doesn't it? The key thing to realize is that working *harder* is not necessarily the same thing as working *smarter*. How do you work smarter? You need to have the right tools. Consider any professional who uses tools for a living. Having the right tool makes the job easier. Suppose you had to cut down a tree, but you had to do it with a hammer. *Eventually* the job would get done. But what if you had an axe, or a saw? The same job would get done better and faster – two factors we would all appreciate more of in whatever our jobs may be. Sometimes when using a new tool for the first time we need some special training. Then we need practice, and finally, repeated practice will lead to seasoned experience. Acquiring the Exponential Factor can be compared to training and exercising to get your body in tip-top shape when you haven't had an exercise routine in years, or ever in your life. There may be some pain and discomfort in the beginning stages, but keep at it and it starts to feel good. You are being stretched and pulled out of your comfort zone, but in the end, it's definitely worth it.

Life is a fantastic game. We can either spend our time training and winning or spend our time in the bleachers of life waiting, watching and wishing we were on the field doing the things we really know we can do and want to do. You are in charge of your life. How you live is your decision. You can make excuses and rationalize all day why you are not on the field, but until you decide you want to be in the game to enjoy the victories and suffer the bruises and defeats, you will not be happy or reach the success you know you deserve or are capable of achieving.

## **7. The facts and studies show...**

We can present all the facts, figures, studies and statistics; but it will not always convince your prospect/client. All decisions are comprised of part emotion, part logic. The skill is to know what parts to use. It depends on the situation and your prospect's personality. The bottom line is, we make decisions with our subconscious mind and come up with the reasons why we did it later.

In the past, we did not know how our consumers thought, what persuaded them to buy, or take action. Most people in sales and marketing were shooting in the dark. We hoped or guessed what we were doing was working. Sure it worked some of the time, but I hope you are not happy with that success rate. Dr Damasio of Harvard University said more may have been learned about the brain and the mind in the last decade than during the entire previous history of psychology and neuroscience. Persuasion and influence is both an art and a science.

We are intrigued by reason, but we are moved by emotion. We use logic to justify our actions to others and ourselves. Take note that emotion will always win over logic and that imagination will always win over reality. Think about talking to children about their fear of the dark, or to someone about their phobia of snakes. You know it is useless to use logic to persuade them that their thoughts and actions don't make sense. They are still convinced that there is a problem. In his book *Triggers*, Joseph Sugarman estimates that 95 percent of the reasoning behind a consumer's purchase is associated with a subconscious decision. In other words, most buying is done for reasons a person hasn't even fully formulated. Dr. Gregory Neidert estimates that our brains actually run on idle 90 to 95 percent of the time.

There are two paths to persuasion: the conscious and the subconscious. Both paths can persuade others to your way of thinking, but each path uses a very different means of processing information. In the conscious path, both you and your audience make an active or conscious attempt to understand, define, and process an argument. A person who is interested in your persuasive attempts will be highly motivated to listen. As such, she will also be able to consciously evaluate your message by carefully weighing the pros and cons of the evidence you present.

On the subconscious path, the listener spends little or no time processing the information. This approach results in those automatic triggers we previously talked about. These knee-jerk reactions happen when you follow your intuition or use a mental shortcut. Your mind reaches a decision without doing any logical processing. These subconscious decisions are largely driven by instinct and emotion. Individuals who spend lots of time on the subconscious path do so because they lack the time, motivation, desire, or ability to really listen to your message. They're not really involved in the subject. They use their instinct or emotions instead of their intellect. Passive processing and automatic decision triggers rule their decision-making.

The key is knowing when to use which method. Successful application of all the principles I've outlined requires that you become skilled at quickly identifying which ones will be the most effective in which situations. In persuasion, your message has to focus on emotions, all the while maintaining a balance between logic and feelings. Logic and emotion are the two elements that make for perfect persuasion. We can be persuaded using only logic or only emotion, but the effect will be short-term and unbalanced. A master persuader will create a proper balance between logic and emotion in order to create the perfect persuasive message.

## **8. I'm great at warming up my prospect – I can small talk with anyone**

At times this can be a great skill, one that can win friends. We live in a different society today. Time is of the essence. You have to be prepared to get to the point. Most people don't appreciate useless dribble drabble. Here is what the research is telling us. The majority of prospects do not appreciate unsolicited small talk, and many find it offensive. People buy from others who understand their wants and needs. This skill can be a great asset or a great liability. You need to read your prospect and understand when small talk is appropriate. For many it is after the relationship has been established and they know you care and are sincere. You could be going down the wrong road asking about someone's family and their interests before they know who you are and what you represent. For some you can mix business with chitchat after you get to the point. You have heard it with the telemarketers – the first thing they say is, "Hi, how are you this evening?" And you are thinking, what do you care or you don't really mean it. If the prospect wants the small talk, they will initiate it. Follow their lead.

Many persuaders don't know how to maintain rapport throughout the entire persuasive situation. You see people in sales break the ice, build rapport for the first five minutes, and then launch into their presentation. All of a sudden, they get serious and change their demeanor. What is the prospect supposed to think? The person they have been talking to for the past five minutes has now changed. Which one is the real person? The two were getting along, having fun, and all of a sudden, without warning, the salesperson becomes serious and dives into a sales pitch. This breaks rapport and seems incongruent to the prospect. You both know why you are there and what the ultimate goal will be, so continue to build on that rapport.

The call to action is the most important part of your presentation. This is where your audience understands exactly what you want them to do. It is where you define yourself as a persuader instead of a presenter. This conclusion should not come as a shock to your audience. Throughout your presentation, you should gently lead them to the conclusion that you are going to present at the end. Prompt them so they end up wanting what you are going to propose anyway. You should prepare your audience for this conclusion before you even start on the rest of the presentation. Your entire presentation should be built around the call to action. In your preparation, make sure your conclusion is explicit and that the audience is not left on their own to make sense of and understand your message. You need to tell them what to believe; you draw the conclusion for them. Make the call to action easy for them to follow and simple for them to do. There should be no doubt in your prospects' minds about exactly what you want them to do. When planning and preparing your call to action, remember that it should not be long and painful. Be short, brief, and to the point.

## **9. Persistence is the key**

Persistence is an incredible quality to have. Persistence is the number one reason why people are successful in life. It's also the driving force that determines why certain people are wealthy. Their success is not due to financial backing or education. They owe their achievements to persistence. There's an old sales adage: "Some will; some won't."

So what? Who's next?" I want to focus on smart persistence. If you get lots of no's, you might be wasting your time and the prospect's time. There is a fine line between smart persistence and being a pain in the butt. You need to be able to sense when and where the best time to contact is, how to make contact, and if you should continue contacting your prospect. When you are doing it the right way, your customer will let you know they appreciate your correspondence. You can be persistent trying to break down the brick wall with your head, but there is a time and place for good, smart persistence. Don't make it a badge of honor counting up your rejections. Sure rejection is part of being a persuader. Let's just keep it down to a manageable level. We know we can't persuade all the people all the time. We should know when to walk away and find other prospects to spend time with. I could be in NYC handing out \$100 bills to pedestrians and many would not take the bills. They would not have the time to think about it...there has to be a catch, etc.

Working harder is useless if the prospect doesn't see a need for your product or service. Find your ability to read what they need and the best way to be persistent. Are they a qualified buyer? Persuaders contact prospects almost everyday and wonder why they don't return their calls. The persuader feels they have a great potential buyer and they are interested and it is just a matter of time. They know the sell is inevitable. Then we contact the prospect to get the truth. This is what we find out: They have not had intentions of buying, they are sick of all the messages; they did not have a need, want, interest, or even the money to buy. But our faithful persistent persuader did not take no for an answer. Again persistence is a great trait, but let's add the smart aspect to it.

Another important point is when you are contacting your prospect again, remember the emotion has left the building and you need to revisit why they were interested in the first place. Maybe they were going to think about it, but they probably have not had the time to think about it or to look at your beautiful literature. You have to recapture their interest and needs when you make the second contact. If they are no longer hot, you have to restart the fire. If you do leave a message, make sure you give them a great and legitimate reason to call you back. Do you have more info? Has there been a product enhancement, has the pricing changed? Get them involved as much as possible.

Research suggests that the more you engage the five senses, the more effective and persuasive you'll be. As a master persuader, your goal is to decrease the distance someone has to go to reach your objective. When you get a prospect to start something, it is most likely they will follow through and complete your desired outcome. The more involved they become, the less psychological distance between the start and the finish. The desired outcome becomes more and more realistic instead of just an idea you are proposing. If you put on your shoes to go to the store, you are more likely to continue in that direction. If you sit down and turn on the TV, your goal of going to the store is less likely to be reached.

If you are dealing with a stubborn person who absolutely will not change their mind about anything, don't panic. There are reasons why this person is closed-minded

and always says "no" to everything. They might not have a clear idea about what you are proposing, they may have been hurt in the past, they are afraid of being judged, or they may feel their ideas are not appreciated. Don't take it personally; it will happen from time to time.

### **10. I'll figure it out on my own**

This phrase has cost me millions of dollars. It was a great day when I realized that all the problems and obstacles I was having in life, or in persuasion, had already been solved or figured out by someone else. That means these people have answers! Poverty thinking is "I will figure it out on my own and take three years of time and countless money trying to reinvent the wheel." The big challenge is that we cannot coach ourselves. We can't see all our strengths and weakness, what we need to improve and work on. All great players have mentors and coaches. Look around you. Who can you talk to, who can you take to lunch, who can be your coach? We know getting the book is a great start and will teach you great things, but if it is true excellence that you're going for, you need coaching. If you want to learn how to play basketball from reading a book, you would never achieve greatness on the court. You need to interact with the best. The best growth in my life has come from mentoring and coaching with the best.

You don't have the time or resources to wait to figure it out on your own. It amazes me how many persuaders go down this road. Persuasion is not rocket science, but you do need to learn how to master your craft. In the past we would be able to get along, slowly learning, but times have changed. The train is picking up speed. We used to be able to play and miss the train and run and catch up if we were late. But the speed the world is moving at and the competition you are facing will not allow you to figure it out on your own. You can invest in yourself right now and find the best to teach you the skills or be on the long road to little income, few skills, and the inability to persuade. If you wanted to rebuild the engine in your car, learn how to fly, or rewire your house, would you just try to figure it out on your own? Would you get the best book on learning how to fly and just hop in a plane and learn along the way? NO! Then don't treat your career or your ability to persuade the same way. I remember going to a stock market seminar about learning how to trade. It cost over \$10,000 to attend this training. I got burned when I decided I'd just figure it out on my own and lost three times that amount in the market. The students attending the class invested upfront and learned the skills and became great traders. I lost and did not learn the right skills. The answers are there, closer than you think. You would be surprised by how much people can help you succeed.

Pay the price to become a professional in your field. Don't settle for mediocrity; become the best you can be at what you do. Who is the best in basketball? Right – Michael Jordan. He knew he could not become the best without daily practice of fundamental skills along with the addition of new skills. He also knew he could not excel without a team, and especially not without a coach. True excellence comes from knowledge, continuing education, and consistent practice.

This life is not a trial run or a dress rehearsal. There is no reset button, do-overs, or mulligans. This is it. We deserve and desire to be happy and truly successful and have an enjoyable life. We are here to be happy. You need to enjoy the journey of life and know what it takes to achieve success and happiness. Things will not change with hope and desire, although that is a great starting point. You need to take action. You need to have a plan and take control of your life. We have to find that winning edge that will propel us to the top and help us to things we know we are able to accomplish. Once we can get ourselves to do the right things, we can start working on success skills that make the difference. We can gain that winning edge which is the difference between top and average performers.

## **Conclusion**

Learning how to persuade and influence will make the difference between hoping for a better income and having a better income. It is the missing puzzle piece that will crack the code to dramatically increase your income, improve your relationships, and help you get what you want, when you want, and win friends for life. Ask yourself how much money and income you have lost because of your inability to persuade and influence. Think about it. Sure you've seen some success, but think of the times you couldn't get it done. Has there ever been a time when you did not get your point across? Were you unable to convince someone to do something? Have you reached your full potential? Are you able to motivate yourself and others to achieve more and accomplish their goals? What about your relationships?

Imagine being able to overcome objections before they happen, know what your prospect is thinking and feeling, feel more confident in your ability to persuade. Do you see the power of this?

Are You Tired of...

Not closing the sales

Employee's not listening

Being told no

Losing the negotiation

Not getting your way

Paying too much for property... Paying too much for anything

It's time to learn how to:

Read people instantly

Make people instinctively like and trust you

Understand the four secret motivators

Apply the twelve laws of persuasion

Put the sixteen most powerful words to use

Discover persuasion techniques known only by the top 1%

Influence anyone to give you anything, anywhere, anytime!

For a free persuasion IQ analysis to help you see where you rank and what you need to improve, visit [www.persuasioniq.com](http://www.persuasioniq.com).

Kurt W. Mortensen is the author of *Maximum Influence: The 12 Universal Laws of Power Persuasion*, and founder of the Persuasion Institute. Kurt W. Mortensen is one of America's leading authorities on persuasion, motivation, and influence. He offers his speaking training, and consulting programs worldwide, helping thousands achieve unprecedented success in business and personal endeavors.