

The Anatomy of *Persuasion*

Aubuchon & Associates

Volume 1, 2007

Page 1

Finally—A Program for the Technically Educated!

Government, business and professional people are painfully aware that communication skills impact their careers even more than personal appearance, behavior or education.

One of these, the ability to persuade and motivate others, is an essential thinking and decision-making skill needed by people everywhere.

And nowhere is the need more critical than among the technically-educated—those working in our research and development labs, engineering departments, and IT groups.

For it is these professionals that are responsible for fresh ideas; for developing the “new and improved” products for which world consumers thirst.

But all too often, potentially brilliant and saleable ideas advance no further than the conceptual stage, because

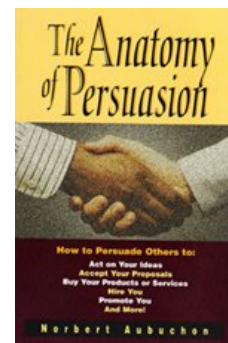
poorly-informed management teams fear bringing the wrong products to market.

So, you may ask, how can we bridge the communication gap?

Some believe the first step is to educate the technicians. Over many years of research, we have observed that a great many technically-gifted people believe the merits of their innovations are self-evident. As a result, their presentations to senior management lack the necessary persuasiveness to inspire faith or action.

If these same researchers and innovators could only be schooled in better presentation and communication skills, then the chances for success would multiply significantly.

But it is unlikely that this group will readily embrace the tenets of traditional sales or business communication training.



So, a more scientific approach is in order. *The Anatomy of Persuasion*® is one such program. It is a step-by-step, critical thinking process that helps people organize and present information in a logical and persuasive manner.

Since its inception in 1983, tens-of-thousands of people have attended the seminar, which has been positively received and its effectiveness proven time after time. To see how this program might benefit your organization, visit www.theanatomyofpersuasion.com

Five Characteristics of a Professional

In a recent article, California-based author, speech coach and speaker **Patricia Fripp** identified characteristics common to professionally successful business and community leaders. Here's a list of the top five:

1. Take advantage of every opportunity. Opportunity doesn't knock just once. It knocks all the time, though you may not recognize the sound. One technique is to learn from successful people by finding out how they achieved their success.
2. Ask questions. Successful people will share their knowledge and experiences with you if you ask good questions that stimulate their thinking and responses. The quality of the information you receive depends on the quality of your questions. The key to connecting with others is conversation, and the secret of conversation is to ask the right questions. A conversation can lead to a relationship, and a nurtured relationship can produce amazing results.
3. Dedicate yourself. Two questions you should ask yourself on a fairly regular basis are, "What can I do to contribute to my profession--to my employer and my professional association?" and "How can I be professionally accountable?" When you can do this, you'll get so much more than you give.

4. Use stories. Be inventive in selling yourself and your profession. Learn to network, one on one, by using memorable stories. Sometimes, it's appropriate to fade into the background. Most of us are shy in some situations. But, to be professionally accountable, you must be able to stand out and speak up. When you are in any situation where you're meeting the public, how do you introduce yourself? When people ask what you do, can you tell them in a way that will stick in their minds? I challenge you to come up with a one-sentence way of presenting yourself and your profession so that people will never forget. Create a vivid, visual picture of your job, its challenges and triumphs. People will remember the picture you create in their minds, rather than your words.
5. Develop your persuasive powers. Being professionally accountable means knowing how to influence people. President Dwight Eisenhower, said, "Leadership is the ability to decide what has to be done and then getting people to want to do it." How do you influence people? One of my clients is Horst Schulze, president of the Ritz Carlton hotels. He advises prospective employees, "We are all ladies and gentlemen serving ladies and gentlemen. Our guests pay our prices to have an experience, and it is your job to be part of that experience. You will never say, 'That is not in my job description,' and you will never bring your own problems to work." Obviously, this works at the Ritz Carlton. Do you have a similar motivator for yourself, your colleagues, and your fellow professionals? Are you persuasive in representing your company, department or association in public?

"The future belongs to the competent," Fripp says. "We need to be multifaceted in our competence and become charismatic communicators with technical competence and excellent people skills, especially in negotiating."

Three Deadly Enemies of Innovation – Is Your Organization Prepared?

In the face of staggering global competition innovation via American ingenuity is the great hope for continued world leadership.

First a definition: Innovation is the process of making something new actually happen. Or, as Watts Humprey put it, "the process of turning ideas into manufacturable, marketable form." This, of course, requires hard work and open communication within business organizations.

Next, the all-important question: Will American ingenuity intercede and provide the magnificent competitive power of innovation to American companies?

If the answer to this question is to be "yes," then American business must be prepared to deal with innovation's three deadly enemies.

Enemy #1 – Top Management

In too many organizations, management defeats innovation by squelching open communication and by adopting a one-way style of communication – that way, of course, being down!

In many cases, top management also fails to recognize and breakdown barriers created by certain middle-management people.

Enemy #2 – Middle Management

Either due to ambition or insecurity, too many among this group regularly and skillfully ambush proposed ideas that threaten their status or goals.

The mantra in either case is that change brings about job jeopardy, so the status quo is fiercely defended at the expense of innovation.

Enemy #3 – Idea People

The very creative minds that generate great ideas are often the ones that have no idea how to move

those ideas upstream in the organization to acceptance and use.

"Innovation is the process of turning ideas into manufacturable, marketable form."

—Watts Humprey

In a great many cases, the "build a better mouse trap..." theory is the culprit, and in others it's the lethal [to fresh ideas] combination of this belief and the effects of enemies number one and two.

The innovative organization is one that promotes a culture of taking the initiative and bi-directional communication. Some appropriate risk-taking is involved, as is training in the art of persuasive communication skills at all levels. Only then will people believe that innovation is a true goal.

Is your organization prepared?