

Create the Climate

To maintain order of the world, our brains link objects, gestures, and symbols with our feelings, memories, and life experiences. We mentally associate ourselves with such things as endorsements, sights, sounds, colors, music, and symbols, just to name a few. This association allows us to make judgment calls when we don't have the required time to do thorough research.

Master Persuaders take advantage of association to evoke positive feelings and thoughts that correspond with the message they are trying to convey. In this sense, you, as a persuader, can actually arouse a certain feeling in your audience by finding the right association key to unlock the door. Associations are not the same for all people – obviously, each person has their own set of triggers. However, once you understand the general rules, you can find the right associations to match any prospect. And of course, some associations are universal for an entire culture.

The Law of Association is constantly at work. If an audience likes a picture, a logo, or a musical jingle that appears in an advertisement for a product, they also tend to like the product. Why is it we must dress up for a job interview? It is because we know a slovenly appearance will bring into bearing certain unwanted assumptions or associations about us. Have you ever heard about past cultures where the messenger was actually killed when he brought back bad news? Why do you think it is that restaurants decorate a certain way, have their lighting a certain way, and play certain types of music? All these things are defined in the Law of Association.

I remember having a corporate credit card when I was working for this unnamed corporation. They had a nasty habit of not paying their bills. One day I got a phone call from a collection agency claiming that because my name was on the credit card, I was responsible for making the payments due. I informed the representative of the situation, but he was quite persistent. Of course, I was not responsible, but the interesting association was that the representative's name was Thor, the god of thunder (or so he said). It makes an interesting note. If you want to create the feeling of a tough, persistent, strong person, then Thor is the perfect name to go by. Suppose his name had been Stanley or Herbert or Shannon instead? Not quite as threatening, are they?

The Law of Association is a powerful tool in helping you persuade your audience. If used correctly, you will be able to create the desired feelings, emotions, and behavior in your prospects. It is in this way that you can use association to bring about the best experiences and create a persuasive environment. Whatever it is your subject is drawn to, impressed by, or desirous of, seek to incorporate it into your message, your product, or your service.