

Emotion: Winning People's Hearts

While logic is the language of the conscious mind, emotion is the language of the unconscious mind. We know that emotions are reactions to perceived and imagined stimuli, not based on logic, but on one's own personal experiences. Emotions often outweigh our logic. Imagine placing a plank of wood on the ground and walking its length a few times. Easy enough, right? But suppose you placed it a hundred feet in the air between two buildings. You *know* you can walk that plank – you just did it over and over again. Yet now, emotions and fears outweigh logic. Your “what-ifs” and your imagination supersede the concrete knowledge of your ability to walk the plank.

In his book *Emotional Intelligence*, Daniel Goleman asserts that understanding emotions is more pertinent to leading a successful life than having a high intelligence. Often people of high IQ struggle at work because of their weaknesses in fundamental human relation skills. Goleman calls this skill “emotional intelligence.” He emphasizes that emotional intelligence largely determines our success in relationships, work, and even physical wellness. Emotional intelligence “is a type of social intelligence that involves the ability to monitor one's own and others' emotions, to discriminate among them, and to use the information to guide one's thinking and actions.” Emotional intelligence includes emotional management, personal motivation, empathy, self-awareness, and social skills.

When you are persuading someone, emotions provide the springboard for a successful execution of your argument. In fact, I would even say emotions are the energy and very fuel of the persuasion process. Without tapping into your audience's emotions, there is no strength or energy in your message. Emotion is a power you can harness and use in practically every aspect of persuasion. Remember, logic is important, but emotion helps you catapult an otherwise dull or flat exchange to the next level.

Consider the following advantages of emotion over logic:

1. Arousing the emotions of your audience engages them and distracts them from your intention to persuade.
2. Emotion requires less effort than logic. Logic solicits cognitive effort, whereas emotion is automatic.
3. Presentations aimed at engaging the audience's emotions are usually more interesting than logical ones.
4. Emotion-based arguments are often easier to recall than logic-based arguments.
5. Emotion almost always leads more quickly to change than logic does.

You must know when to create positive or negative emotions and when to dispel negative emotions. You have to find ways to tap into your prospects' emotions, such as hope, love, pride, gratitude, and excitement. If you can do this, you can inspire anyone. Decide ahead of time what emotional climate you want to create, capture those emotions within yourself, and you'll be surprised how you can transfer those emotions to your audience.