

Your Pre-Persuasion Checklist:

To be an effective persuader, you cannot use the same tactics for all people all the time. You have to customize your message to fit the demographics, interests, and values of your audience. This chapter goes through what I call the Pre-Persuasion Checklist. It will help you to effectively adapt your persuasive techniques to your target audience. The foundation of the Pre-Persuasion Checklist is rooted in a solid understanding of human psychology, the ways to handle resistance, and the methods of effectively structuring a persuasive argument. This is the knowledge necessary to make the Pre-Persuasion Checklist work in any persuasive situation.

All battles are first won in the mind. You have to be mentally ready to persuade. Prepare yourself by knowing as much about your audience as possible. The persuasion process can be thought of as “persuasion engineering.” You have to draw up the blueprint for your persuasive techniques instead of “flying by the seat of your pants.” Master the techniques you learned: the laws of persuasion, the characteristics of influence, and the structure of power. It’s like reading the roadmap before you drive. You need to understand where you are going, what route you should take, what the driving conditions will be, etc. Pre-persuasion operates the same way. Just remember the three D’s: discover, design, and deliver. Discover what your prospects want and need to hear. Design and structure a winning persuasive argument. Deliver the message with passion, compassion, and purpose.

We all have our own “personal code.” As a Master Persuader, you must unlock your prospects’ codes. Most of this code is hidden from the untrained eye, so you’ll have to know what to look for. Consider how code is used in designing web pages. We have all surfed the Internet and seen hundreds, even thousands, of different web pages. Underneath each page is HTML code. This code makes each page look and act differently. Many pages have hidden code that is difficult to find and understand. Similarly, we each have code that is apparent and some other code that is *not* apparent. Our code is the sum of our beliefs, experiences, motivations, thoughts, attitudes, values, personality, and so on that makes us who we are. The key for a Master Persuader is to decode the situation or prospect, so you can know how to most effectively persuade your audience.

Finding and interpreting code comes with knowledge and experience, and the more knowledge and more experience you have, the easier it becomes to find and crack the code.