

Traits of Top Persuaders

When the public is asked to identify the common traits and characteristics of great persuaders, the resulting responses are interesting. Some are self-evident, while others may surprise you:

Informed	Great communicator	Determined
Educated	Hardworking	Accurate
Knowledgeable	Punctual	Humble
Honest	Solution-oriented	Admits mistakes
Organized	Empathic	Sincere
Cooperative	Candid	Creative
Adaptable	Dependable	Pleasant disposition
Good listener	Friendly	Great personality
Resilient	Proactive	Continuous learner

Sure, this list sounds great. Anyone would love to possess all these talents or traits. The shocking news is most great persuaders don't possess all these talents or traits. What consumers define as a great persuader, or what you think constitutes a great persuader, could be far from reality. So, what talents and traits do great persuaders possess?

Many people are like the man I met on the airplane. They have great intentions, they work hard on their career or business, they put in the hours, but all that energy and effort aren't going to the right place. All the other stuff doesn't really matter if you don't have the right mindset, persuasion, or people skills (PQ). K. A. Ericsson's studies show there is no correlation between your ability to persuade (performance) and your intelligence (IQ).¹⁰ And why are the majority of individuals not persuasive? For most people, persuasiveness is not innate. It is a learned skill. Unfortunately, many of the major universities don't teach persuasion, sales, or interpersonal relations, so it is hard to turn to formal education to help reinforce these most fundamental business necessities, even in a business program!

The *Wall Street Journal* reported on the importance of persuasion and sales training in MBA programs. It found that this training usually ended up as a footnote at most graduate schools. How can you be ready for success, life, and business without being trained in these basic skills? The ability to sell, market, close deals, communicate your ideas effectively, understand consumer behavior, give presentations, influence people, get clients, or raise money is the ticket to success. If you are good at persuasion you can write your own ticket.

So if you're going to put time, energy, and effort into honing your skills, be sure to focus on the ones that will give you the fastest and most dramatic improvements first—your persuasion skills. If you can hone your persuasive abilities, your natural gifts and abilities will emerge and blossom even more because your persuasiveness will help get more people and more resources on your side. When this happens, your hard work won't feel so hard anymore. Instead of killing yourself to make things happen, you'll find that your work becomes fun. In our persuasion workshops, I ask persuaders and entrepreneurs if they want to double their income. Of course, they always answer in the affirmative. They then quickly realize that the only way to double their income is to double their effort, or double their ability to persuade and influence.

Why haven't most persuaders caught up with the times? Why are so many still using the old tools that should have been put to rest long ago? Are you one of them? When you are meeting with prospects, clients, or employees, are you a guest? An enemy? A pest? A product pusher? A pushover? Are you welcome or are you annoying? Think twice. Most people think they are a welcome guest, but the reality is—and the research shows—that you are more likely to be an annoying pest. They just never tell you. Times have changed, and we are no longer able to push people into buying a product or service. We need to be able to help them persuade themselves. To be an effective persuader, you must be able to bring your audience around to your way of thinking.

How often have you faced someone who needed, wanted, liked, and could afford your product, service, or idea but wasn't buying, simply because you were unable to persuade him? It was a perfect fit for both parties. What happened?

We have all seen great persuaders in action. We have been in the presence of persuasive experts who automatically attract everyone to them. Wherever they go, people are captivated and influenced by such individuals' radiant energy and dynamic personality. People just naturally want to be persuaded by them. Most people wear an invisible badge that says, "Convince me! Help me make the right decision!" They are thinking, "There is too much information. I need someone to trust, someone to guide me in the right direction."

All this takes us back, full circle, to the challenge. Where do master persuaders learn the skills, habits, and traits to reach the top? Are these capabilities acquired through osmosis? Are they ingrained in the persuader? Can they be learned? The answer to all of these questions is a resounding yes; these learning methods are all part of the persuasion formula.

How do you (1) discover the skills you need to become more persuasive, (2) begin to embody these skills so that they are a natural part of who you are, and (3) create massive success? Here is the first step you need to take: Take the Persuasion IQ Test in Appendix B or online for instant results and analysis.

When you have your Persuasion IQ results you will have a clear understanding of your starting point, you will know just what steps to take next, and you will make faster progress. It will make the skills, traits, and characteristics of this book come alive. The Persuasion IQ evaluation is based on research compiled by the Persuasion Institute. We have gathered and analyzed information from all over the world about how and why persuasion works. As a result, the Persuasion IQ assessment will help you discover point-by-point and step-by-step what you need to do to transform yourself into a master persuader. Where do you rank, what are your strengths, and what are your weaknesses?

If we do not change our direction, we are likely to end up where we are headed.

—CHINESE PROVERB

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