

Types of Emotions: Emotional Mastery

Over the centuries, philosophers have tried to categorize the very many complex emotions of humanity – no easy task. Aristotle came up with fourteen emotions.

- Anger
- Friendship
- Fear
- Shame
- Emulation
- Kindness
- Indignation
- Patience
- Enmity
- Confidence
- Shamelessness
- Contempt
- Pity
- Envy

Other philosophers argued emotions are largely influenced by one's time period and culture. We will focus on a few major, elemental emotions, both positive and negative. In the persuasive process, you want to eliminate negative emotions while constructing positive emotions. You don't want your message to end with negative feelings.

Worry

When your prospect is worried or preoccupied with something occurring now or about to happen in the future, your ability to persuade declines. Worry is feeling anxious, uneasy, or concerned about something that will or has happened. I have heard worry referred to as "negative goal setting." Anxiety creates tension – a fear that occupies our thoughts, which, if encouraged will grow and continue to dominate our thoughts.

You can combat worry in your prospects by modifying their anxiety into thoughts of reality. Bring them back to reality by having them realize we can't change many things in life. Stress that most of the things we worry about are those very things we can't change and won't likely ever happen in the first place. Help your prospects substitute their negative mental images with positive ones.

Fear

Fear is anxiety or tension caused by danger, apprehension, harm, pain, or destruction. The possibility of harm can be real or imagined. Fear motivates and moves us away from unpleasant circumstances or potential destruction. Fear persuades us to do many things we might not otherwise do. We buy life insurance, air bags, home alarms, and guns out of fear.

Fear does not work in every circumstance, however; if we were solely motivated by fear, we would never speed or start smoking. The proper dose of fear is essential in persuasion. If the dose is too small, it will not stimulate action. If the fear is too large, it will trigger resistance and acceptance will decrease. For fear to stick and create action and persuasion, it must include the following steps:

1. The image of fear must be unpleasant, such as threat of pain, destruction, or grief.
2. It must be imminent. Your prospects must feel not only that the fearful event is likely to happen, but also that they could be victimized by its occurrence. They must feel vulnerable.
3. You must provide a solution to the fear. Give your prospects a recommended action to suspend or eliminate the fear.
4. Your prospects must believe they are capable of doing what is asked of them and that doing so will work for them.

Anger

Anger is a secondary emotion. It is usually an indicator that something else is askew and/or that your prospect needs and wants attention. You can assist in subsiding a person's anger by determining the key issue he is upset about. It is also often effective to ask for his help, opinions, or advice. This will usually diffuse his anger or even change his attitude and demeanor completely. In some circumstances, a persuader may want to use anger to make a certain point or to evoke a certain reaction.

Sympathy and Compassion

You can generate action for your cause by creating sympathy for it. When we see others victimized by misfortune that was beyond their control, we feel more sympathetic toward them and more motivated to help them. You've probably seen this technique used by marketers when they show you pictures of starving children, battered women, abandoned animals, and disabled adults.

Jealousy

Jealousy is the pain caused by seeing others' good fortune, not because we want what they have, but because we resent them for having it. The cause of jealousy is the false perception that one's worth lies in the possession of those goods.

Shame

Shame is pain and disrespect felt in connection to regrettable behaviors, experiences, or events. It often involves disgrace or loss of respect for oneself because we feel we have fallen in the eyes of our family, friends, or loved ones. We feel shame because of our vices, our abuses, or any of our perceived failures.

Pity

Pity is pain we feel toward someone who has been unjustly trespassed against. We often feel pity for others due to death, injury, sickness, calamity, natural disaster, accidents, and so on. We can feel pity for people who are close to us as well as towards people we don't know at all.

When using emotions in persuasion, remember to pay attention to the circumstances that surround your speech. Aristotle highlighted three aspects you should consider:

1. The nature of the actual experience (funeral, party, sporting event, fundraiser, or business meeting).
2. Those toward whom the message will be directed (blue or white collar, male or female, religion, race, common interests, or hobbies).
3. The likely emotion that will be created in participants (what is going to happen?).

Tip the Scale

A Master Persuader will use the dual engine of Balance. This dual engine will allow you to fly straight and true in any persuasive situation. Become a student of both logic and emotion and develop the ability to articulate logic that rings true to your audience. Learn how to use your human emotion radar. This will help you determine important aspects of your audience such as: what your prospects is feeling, what emotions they are trying to hid, and how you can use each of these emotions in the persuasive process. Master Persuaders know what emotion to use, when to use it, how to trigger specific emotions, and how to balance the audience's emotion with logic. Engineer your persuasive message with Balance.

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