

THE
INFLUENCE
CHEAT SHEET

61 Science-Based Sales Techniques



TIM DAVID

Beginning with Robert Cialdini's six techniques from his classic book, *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*, this handy reference guide briefly details influence techniques gathered from a wide range of psychological literature.

This is by no means a comprehensive list. Nor am I suggesting that all the following elements **MUST** be present in every persuasive encounter. The more influential components your communication contains, the more likely it is to succeed.

1. Reciprocity

When you give something to someone, it increases their desire to give something back to you.

2. Commitment & Consistency

A small step in a certain direction will likely lead to more steps. People don't like to engage in behaviors that contradict.

3. Social proof

When other people engage in a behavior, it increases the likelihood that we will also. Especially when we are uncertain how to proceed. Use genuine client testimonials and case studies whenever possible.

4. Authority

We are more likely to be influenced by those perceived to be in a position of authority.

5. Liking

All things being equal, people do business with who they know, like, and trust. All things **NOT** being equal, people **STILL** do business with who they know, like, and trust. Build rapport as soon as possible and maintain it throughout the entire client relationship.

6. Scarcity

When the supply *appears* to be limited, the demand goes up.

7. Urgency

A close cousin of scarcity, urgency relates to a limited amount of time. When the clock is ticking, prospects are more motivated to act.

8. “Then/Now/How” Story

Stories in general are effective at engaging and influencing the human mind. Start with your own “then”. How was it for you when you were in the prospect’s shoes? Relate to them. After that, describe your “now”. This is a desirable outcome that you’ve attained. Finally, describe “how” you got there. Your “how” should be connected in some way to the product or service that you’re offering.

9. Priming

The art of using words, actions, activities, or sensory input to put the prospect’s mind into a state from which s/he is likely to buy.

10. Anchoring

In a negotiation, whichever price is mentioned first acts like an anchor. The final agreed-upon number is usually not too far away from it.

11. Arbitrary Coherence

If the first number mentioned is unrelated to the price discussion (ie – “What are the last two digits of your social security number?” or “What is the temperature outside today?”) – or even when the number is arbitrary (“Name a random three-digit number.”) – it still acts as an anchor (see above.)

12. Positioning

Any phrase, action, or literature that gives the impression that your product or service is difficult to attain. Positioning works in your favor when prospects are forced to jump through a series of hoops to do business with you.

13. The Takeaway

Withdrawing an offer, in whole or in part, increases a prospect's desire for that offer. (For example, "If it's too expensive, then we can remove the bonus features.")

14. Presupposition

Language and/or mindset that assumes the sale is going to be made. (For example, "I know you aren't willing to commit to this, yet.")

15. Buyer Identity

Describing your ideal buyer or someone who should *not* buy. (For example, "This product is not for you if you believe a program like this is an expense instead of an investment.")

16. But Eraser

Whenever the prospect mentions something that might motivate him/her away from your product/service, the next word out of your mouth is "but".

17. "Yes, and" Agreement

Conversely, whenever the prospect mentions something that might motivate him/her toward your product/service, the next words out of your mouth are "yes, and..."

18. Set Buying Criteria

Teaching the prospect how to be a savvy shopper while describing the features and benefits of your offer. (For example, "Look for a gym that has a women's only area. You don't want to be ogled while working out.")

19. Magic Word: "If"

Salespeople use this word to get prospects past objections and get early commitment. (For example, "If I could put you in that car for less than \$300 per month, do we have a deal today?")

20. Mirroring

By strategically mimicking body movements, facial expressions, and vocal tonality, salespeople can create a connection with prospects more quickly.

21. Timing

When a prospect is hungry or tired, s/he is more likely to say no to any complex buying decision. Choose meeting times either earlier in the morning or immediately after lunch.

22. Power Posing

By taking up more physical space, you will feel more confident and project more confidence.

23. Alignment Against a Common Enemy

The enemy of my enemy is my friend. For example, saying, "We're not like those insurance companies who increase your premiums just because you filed a claim!" If you and the prospect can agree that THOSE types of insurance companies are doing it "wrong," then you are both on the same team.

24. Act Like a Dog

Being genuinely happy to see your prospect will make you more likeable and, in turn, more likely to close the sale.

25. Upsell

The best time to ask for a sale is immediately after making a sale. McDonald's has made a fortune with the simple question, "Would you like fries with that?"

26. Downsell

When a prospect gives a hard no to your offer, try offering something else at a lower price.

27. Packaging

By giving the prospect a choice between Packages A, B, and C, you have a better chance of making a sale than if you only presented them with one option and asked "Yes or no?" Choices allow prospects to maintain their sense of autonomy and control.

28. Ninja Pricing

Let's say Package A is \$500. Package B has everything in Package A, PLUS more stuff and is \$750. Package C contains even MORE value than Package B and yet, it is still priced at \$750. Making the "medium" and "large" options the same price will cause significantly more prospects to choose Package C than if you only offered Packages A and C.

29. Free Bonuses

The word "free" is incredibly powerful. Free bonuses can be used to incentivize a prospect to buy now or buy a higher-priced product.

30. Free Sample

Again tapping the power of "free," a free sample is given to the prospect BEFORE they buy instead of after. Experiencing the product first hand will cause the prospect to feel a sense of ownership of the product and want more.

31. The Exit Survey

When a sale is apparently lost, a wise salesperson will use the opportunity to ask questions of the prospect. For example, "I understand that it's a 'no' today and that's fine. I'd just like to ask you a couple of questions to find out what we can do better next time." By finding out why the prospect didn't buy you can not only improve your process, but you might also save the current sale by uncovering objections that can be addressed.

32. Apples to Oranges

Comparing your products to a competitor's is a great technique to paint your product in a favorable light. However, be careful not to compare apples to apples. For example, "You could spend thousands of dollars to attend an Internet marketing seminar, or you could discover the same strategies in my \$40 book." Compared to most other books? \$40 is expensive. (Apples to apples comparison.) However, compared to a seminar \$40 is cheap (Apples to oranges comparison).

33. Pattern Interrupt

This is anything you say or do that is different from what they've been conditioned to expect – thus grabbing their attention and making you more memorable. (For example, opening a presentation with a slide that says, “The seven reasons NOT to do business with me”).

34. Yes Momentum

The more a prospect says yes to little things, the more likely s/he is to say yes to big things later.

35. Modeling

By taking a specific action yourself, anyone who observes you becomes more likely to also take that same action. For example, nodding your head will make the prospect more likely to nod as well.

36. “Ly”-ing

Words that end in “ly” boost agreement. (Examples: “obviously,” “naturally,” “clearly,” “absolutely,” etc.)

37. The Pain Poke

Nothing motivates a sale like pain points. Find the pain point and “poke” it with questions like, “Why do you think that is happening?” and “If you had to put a number on it, what is that costing you every month?” and “What happens if nothing changes?”

38. Digging Deep

The opposite of the pain poke, digging deep refers to the process of transitioning features into emotional benefits through a series of questions like, “What is important about that?” and “If you had that, what would it mean for you personally?”

39. Humor

Shared laughter is a strong bonding moment. Salespeople have a saying, “Say something funny, then ask for the money.”

40. Proximity

Influence gets easier the closer you are to a prospect. One-on-one is better than a group setting, which is better than a phone call, which is better than an email, etc.

41. Physical Touch

This is proximity taken to its extreme. Waitresses who APPROPRIATELY touch patrons (lightly on the arm) received bigger tips than those who did not.

42. The “No” Invite

Add this line to your sales outline, “At any point of my presentation, you don’t feel like this is a fit for any reason, I want you to be absolutely comfortable saying ‘no,’ fair enough?” This makes the prospect more relaxed and receptive to your message.

43. Risk Removal

Fear of loss and risk aversion are major factors that prevent sales from happening. Using a formal guarantee, or even just the word, “guaranteed” can help alleviate risk aversion in prospects.

44. Repetition

Any thought, phrase, image, idea, slogan, brand, etc. becomes more accepted and more liked with each repeated exposure.

45. Rhyme

Phrases that rhyme are accepted as true more often than phrases that don’t. (For example, “If it doesn’t fit, you must acquit!” is more persuasive than “The glove needs to fit the defendant if you are going to render a guilty verdict.”)

46. Use Their Name

A person’s name focuses their attention and salespeople who use prospects’ names in conversation will create a stronger connection and be more likely to close the sale. Just don’t overdo it.

47. Affirm and Reverse

The person who is asking the questions is in control of the conversation. If the prospect tries to take over with a question like, "How much do you charge?" affirm their question with, "I understand price is important to you and I'm happy to answer that question today." Then take back control with a question of your own, "Is price the only factor or are there other considerations equally as important?"

48. Show Appreciation

Part "tactic" and part "right thing to do," showing appreciation for your prospect's time and attention is of utmost importance. Send a handwritten thank you card whether or not you make the sale.

49. Call to Action

Nothing is simpler (or more often forgotten) than simply asking the prospect to buy. Never end a conversation without either a decision or a follow-up appointment scheduled. Every point of contact (including your business card) should include a call to action. (See mine below.)

50. Anticipation of Regret

No one likes to feel regret and we go to great lengths to avoid it. By planting a seed that they may later feel regret for not doing business with you, you increase the likelihood of making the sale.

51. Reverse Psychology

Prospects are accustomed to resisting salespeople. The clever salesperson intentionally makes statements the prospect will disagree with. (For example, "I understand if you think that our program isn't a fit for you." Or "Maybe the deluxe model is out of your price range, let's take a look at the basic edition.")

52. The Obvious Choice

A salesperson's job is to make the prospect feel like they are making a good choice. A salesperson never wants to make the prospect feel dumb, inferior, or outwitted with language like, "If you don't buy this today, then there's something wrong with you." Instead, they present an obvious choice. (For example, "You could invest thousands of dollars and years of your life like I did, or you can skip the learning curve and have it all tomorrow. Which do you prefer?")

53. Self-Assessment

Example, "There are three kinds of people I talk to. 'Whiners,' who only want to complain. 'Babies,' who want everything done for them. And serious business owners who are ready to take action. To save us all some time, I'm going to ask you up front – which one are you?" Another example, "Do you struggle with sleeplessness? Are you sick of waking up tired? Does your spouse complain about your tossing and turning?"

54. Framing

How information is presented, or "framed," is often more important than the information itself. Possible negatives can be turned into positives with proper framing. (For example, "Because we are a small firm, we are more agile, we respond faster, and we cherish our client relationships more.")

55. Add an "S"

No one likes hard work. By adding an "s" to certain words, you can frame your product in a way that makes it sound like the product is doing the heavy lifting. (For example, "Boost your sales" becomes "Boosts your sales.")

56. Gain to Pain

Turning "gain benefits" into "pain avoiders" makes your pitch twice as compelling to the human brain. (For example, "Boosts your sales" becomes "Turns around your sagging sales numbers.")

57. Imagine

Engaging a prospect's imagination is one of the most powerful techniques available. (For example, "Imagine how your employees will feel at the next annual meeting when you tell them they will all be receiving bonuses. Imagine how YOU will feel.")

58. Potential Beats Achievement

When deciding who to hire, customers are more excited by future potential than past achievement. Focus on what you can achieve together in the future more than on your past accomplishments or your résumé.

59. Cure Beats Prevention

When selling a "prevention" product like insurance, frame your benefit in the future tense. So, instead of "Invest in this now so you can be covered later." Say, "Let's say you've been hit by a bus and are now disabled. You're worried about getting your bills paid and your spouse may need to take on a second job. All you have to do is call this number and we'll pay for everything."

60. The Intrinsic Scale Technique

Ask the prospect how ready they are to move forward on a scale of 1-10. If they respond with a 9 or 10, then stop selling and close the sale. However, if they respond with anything less than a 9 or 10, then say, "Really? I thought you were only a 2 or 3." They will immediately begin explaining why they are closer to the sale than you thought.

61. LISTEN

Salespeople should only do between 15-20% of the talking. Most talking should be in the form of questions designed to get the prospect talking. I've saved the best for last as this is probably the most important selling technique of all.

62. Under-Promise and Over-Deliver

Always give them more than they expect and not only will they come back over and over, but they'll also spread the word.

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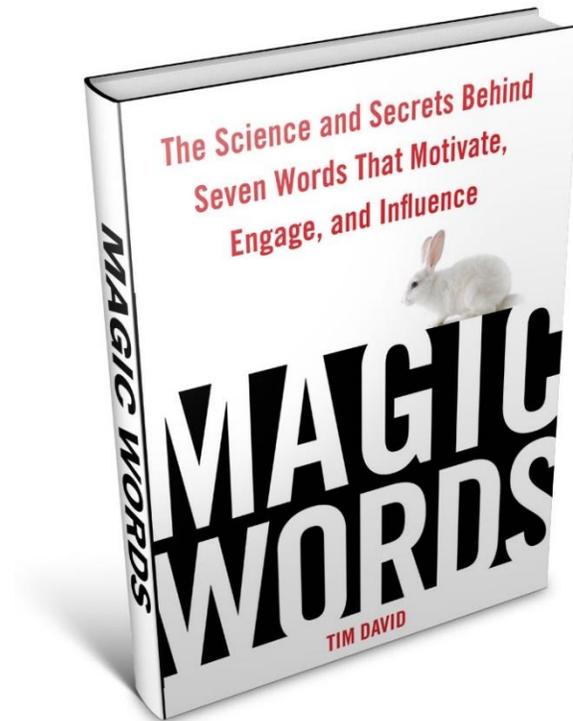
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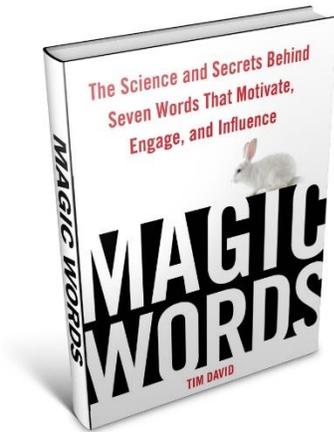
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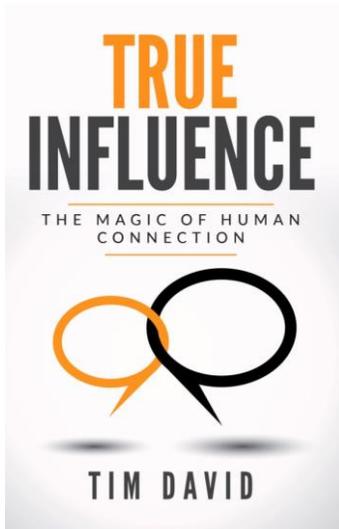
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ABOUT TIM DAVID:



Tim David is an ex-magician turned author, speaker, and podcast host. He is a regular contributor to PsychologyToday.com and the Huffington Post and his work has been featured in the New York Times, Forbes, Inc., Investor's Business Daily, Harvard Business Review, the Today Show, and hundreds of other media outlets around the world.

He is obsessed with the human mind and a self-professed psychology nerd and neuroscience addict. He believes that being good at people is the most important influence skill in business and in life because with more understanding, comes more human connection.

And yes, having two first names can be awfully confusing. He'll forgive you if you call him David.

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