

# How to master the art of persuasion

People will forget what you said and did, but not how you made them feel

**W**hat's possible if you become a master of persuasion? Let's listen to ATI Coach Eric Twiggs explain how you can accomplish this in your shop.

As I ponder this question, I'm reminded of something that happened back when I was a shop manager in need of a new car. The shop was 45 minutes away from home, so I was looking for a reliable and dependable vehicle. The plan was to get a car that I could drive until the wheels fell off!

My first stop was to the Honda dealer. The salesman told me all about the affordable price and superior fuel economy while I was test driving a blue Honda Accord Ex.

It made sense logically, but I left without buying and went to the Toyota dealer. At Toyota, the salesman and I looked at a black Toyota Camry LE, and he told me all about the smooth-riding, long-wearing tires, and how that model was ranked as the No. 1 mid-size car according to Consumer Reports.

The Camry seemed to be a logical choice, but I decided to keep looking. On my way home, I stopped by the local BMW dealer just to window-shop.

The salesman had me test drive a silver BMW 325i and asked me to imagine the look on my friends' faces as I drove by in my "Bimmer." I threw up an objection by mentioning that my financial documents were at home. He responded by allowing me to drive the BMW home to get the necessary paperwork!

This may surprise you, but I decided to purchase the BMW! Later, whenever

people asked me why, I would tell them about how well it handled on the highway, the ABS brake system, and its durability. In reality, I made an emotional decision that I used logic to justify. Your customers are just like me. When they make a purchase decision, emotion is the ultimate driving machine.

So, the key to mastering the art of persuasion is to focus on making emotional connections. Keep reading as I use logic to justify my previous statement.

**WE TEND TO ARRIVE AT PURCHASE DECISIONS BASED ON AN INTUITIVE EMOTIONAL RESPONSE THAT WE LATER EXPLAIN USING LOGIC.**

## What science says

By now you're probably thinking, "Nice try, Twiggs, but my customers are different!" Well, according to research conducted by Harvard University professor Gerald Zaltman, they aren't.

His study found that 95 percent of all purchase decisions take place unconsciously. In other words, we tend to arrive at purchase decisions based on an intuitive emotional response that we later explain using logic.

When it comes to automotive service, is your shop merely the logical choice? You've been in business for 30 years, you're family owned and operated, you're cheaper than the dealer, and you even have WiFi in your waiting room. Yet, in spite of these logical reasons, you have customers who leave

your shop without buying, because they've decided to keep looking.

So, what can you do to master the art of persuasion? Read on to discover the three building blocks of effective persuasion as outlined by the Greek philosopher Aristotle in his book, *Rhetoric*.

## Authority

The Greek word that Aristotle uses for authority is "ethos." This refers to the perceived credibility of the individual or business. We tend to be persuaded by people we perceive to be an established authority and will defer to them when making purchase decisions.

Advertisers leverage this principle by having your favorite celebrity in their commercial driving the car they want you to buy. Your accountant may tell you it's not in the budget, but the authority of the celebrity could sway you to make the purchase anyway.

At your shop, getting five-star internet reviews, writing blog posts (the root word for "authority" is "author") and being interviewed on your local TV and radio stations, are ways you can position yourself as the automotive authority in your community.

## Logic

The Greek word for logic is "logos." This is where data, facts and reason are used to persuade. Yes, logic does factor into the persuasion equation. However, my previously mentioned Honda and Toyota salesmen would agree that attempting to persuade solely on logic is a recipe for failure.

In a selling situation, the features of a product or service represent the logic,

while the benefits tie back to the emotion.

Here's the most common mistake I come across when I role play selling scenarios with service writers: They use what I've coined as, "The all AND nothing approach!" They run down the list of ALL the features and say NOTHING about the benefits to the customer.

I recommend using the 30/70 rule of selling by talking about the features 30 percent of the time and spending 70 percent of your time FOCUSED ON THE BENEFITS!

**Emotion**

The Greek word for emotion is "pathos." This involves persuading through emotion and empathy. The BMW salesman convinced me to purchase the car by focusing on my favorite radio station: — WIIFM: What's In It For Me!

He recognized that I wasn't just buying a car. I was investing in status and prestige. Your customer listens to WIIFM as well. As a result, she's not really buying what you may think. For example, she's not just buying front brakes. She's investing in her daughter's safety while she's away at school. She's not just buying four tires. She's buying a secure trip to soccer practice.

This makes visiting the car with the customer a critical step in the process. At the car, you have a golden opportunity to ask questions to discover what she really wants, and to tailor your con-

**LESSONS LEARNED FROM AN FBI NEGOTIATOR**

**SHERYL DRIGGERS //**

Contributing Editor

One thing we all do every day is negotiate. Any time we are trying to get someone to do something, we are negotiating. That is why I love the book *Never Split the Difference* by Chris Voss, the former lead international hostage negotiator for the FBI.

Successful negotiations are not bully sessions. Most importantly, negotiation is the heart of collaboration.

Mirroring is simply an imitation of what the other person is saying — repeating back the last two to three key words of what someone said. When you do this, you signal

to their subconscious we are alike, and it keeps people talking in order to gather information and build trust. Using a mirror is a great way to encourage your counterpart to expand on what they said and show them you have been paying attention. This also helps you get to the bottom of why they don't want to do what you want. One important thing Voss points out is to never ask "why." We were ingrained from an early age that asking why is negative. As a child, did you ever hear, "Why did you do that?" You immediately knew you did something wrong. Instead of asking "Why?" replace it with how, what or when. Continue reading at [MotorAge.com/negotiate](http://MotorAge.com/negotiate).

versation accordingly.

We've already established that emotion is the ultimate driving machine. Focusing on what they really want will ensure that you make an emotional connection with your customers.

**Conclusion**

So, there you have it. Making an emotional connection by leveraging the three building blocks will allow you to master the art of persuasion!

I'm living proof that this works. Recently while shopping for a car, my wife persuaded me to buy a shiny, silver Toyota Camry.

Do you want to get better at the art of persuasion? Do you want to have better communication with your staff and customers? Then you need to get your copy of the "7 Triggers to Yes Checklist." To get your free copy, simply go to [www.automationtraining.com/2019-04](http://www.automationtraining.com/2019-04) for a limited time. 

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