

PERSUASION

THE ART OF GETTING WHAT YOU WANT



Dave Lakhani



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This book is dedicated with love to the four most important women in my life:

My grandmother—Edith Ramsey McManus

My mother—Joanna Lakhani-Willard

My wife—Stephanie Lakhani

My daughter—Austria Raine Lakhani

Also to my brothers:

Bill Willard Jr.

Mike Willard

And my closest friends:

Thomas "Ted" Goodier

Bill Braseth

Rodney Schlienzen

Steve Watts

Ronald "John" Stukey



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FOREWORD

Everyone wants it their way.

You have been trying to persuade people since you were a baby. Crying, smiling, banging your hands on the table. Primitive, to be sure—but effective.

Remember the aisle of the grocery store with your mom? Begging for that candy bar? *That* was persuasion.

Remember high school dating? *That* was persuasion.

But it seems that after you got your business cards printed, some of the tenacity associated with your persuasion skills has been missing.

Fear not. This book has the persuasion answers you're looking for, whether it's sales, service, internal communications, friends, or family.

Getting others to see your perspective, agree with your ideas, do what you want them to do, or just simply agree with you is a skill and a science. And in this book you will learn that skill.

Persuasion is not just a selling skill. Persuasion is a life skill.

Throughout this book you will gently be prodded to change your ways of thinking and interacting with others with regard to everything from what you wear to what your body says. You'll be asked to do things, take actions. And you will do them. What better way to learn persuasion than to see yourself being persuaded, taking action as a result of it, and loving it?

The key to persuasion is to let the other person feel great after he or she has decided to see it or do it your way. In order to accomplish this, there has to be an understanding of how to best persuade.

The easiest persuasion answer is given inside this book: Get others to persuade themselves. This is done by asking questions.

Persuasion is an outcome. The secret of persuasion's happy outcome is two words: manipulation free. Manipulated persuasion is short lived. True persuasion exists when it lasts beyond the moment.

Persuasion is an art.

Persuasion is a science.

Persuasion is compromise.

Persuasion is excellent communication skills.

Persuasion is asking questions that clarify the situation.

Persuasion is getting the other guy to convince himself.

Persuasion is reading this book—and putting the principles
into action.

Persuasion is an outcome.

Persuasion is a victory.

"I did it my way!" is *not* the way that song should have ended. If Frank or Elvis were masters of persuasion, they would have sung:

"I did it my way, and everyone agreed with me!"

Why not learn more ways of getting others to see it your way?

If you agree with me so far, just turn to the next page. . . .

Jeffrey Gitomer



PREFACE

Leave me penniless and naked in any town in America and by the end of the day I'll have clothes, food, lodging, a way of earning an income, a following, and enough money in my pocket to start again. Why? Because I know exactly how to persuade people to do what I need them to do for both of us to achieve our goals.

—Dave Lakhani

Virtually every element of human interaction involves some level of persuasion, but particularly sales, negotiation, copywriting, advertising, and media relations. Many scholars, philosophers, and scientists have explored the process, yet few get it right consistently. They dismiss the fundamental survival requirement of persuasion. They've analyzed it as a process that can be used if necessary, but don't understand that persuasion isn't a tool we use optionally; it is one we are required to use in order to survive. The essence of

life itself is persuasion, how well we persuade ourselves, how well we persuade those around us, and how we are ourselves persuaded by those who persuade us.

This book began with my first study of the persuasion process more than 24 years ago and has continued to develop since then. Throughout the book I demonstrate how persuasion works in person, in the media, in advertising, and in sales. I also demonstrate specific steps you can use to develop your persuasiveness, charisma, and ability to influence others in order to get what you want. I show you how to incorporate the process into your everyday life so that you are able to influence and persuade effectively and unconsciously. It will become as natural as speaking or walking.

This book is different than any book you've read about persuasion, sales, or negotiation. The differences are profound in several ways. First, it is not my intention to scientifically break down exactly why people make the decisions they do and the psychological methodologies for creating change in people. What I do is demonstrate, in the first section, the difference between persuasion and manipulation. The second portion of the book focuses on the key areas and elements involved in rapid persuasion.

My only real interest (and I believe yours, as well) is to persuade . . . fast. Therefore, I believe the best way to do that is to give you an overview of the elements and a description of why it is important to you and then dig right into how to make it work for you. I'm not going to bother you with a lot of arcane references, only those most appropriate to your success.

Finally, in the third section of the book I demonstrate the Persuasion Equation™, which ties it all together and gives you a practical format for quickly persuading anyone. This portion of

the book has been described as dangerous and genius alike by those who have attended my seminars and speaking engagements. Quite simply, the Persuasion Equation demonstrates how to apply every technique you learn in the second section of the book in order to move people to your position or to take the action you want them to take. People think it is genius because of the simplicity of the program and dangerous because it is also the very same process you use to manipulate another person. Your intention will ultimately determine whether you've persuaded or manipulated, and if you decided to manipulate someone, whether it was appropriate. Ultimately only you can make that judgment call.

Interestingly, whether you are persuading as a profession or just need to get a date with the perfect man or woman, the processes that I teach you will work perfectly. I have broken down a few areas that I think you'll find very valuable. For example, I have included sections on writing, negotiation, advertising, and selling. Those sections will help you understand how to use the process in very specific professional persuasion situations and to improve your ability in each.

I began studying persuasion for a rather unusual reason. I was raised by a brilliant single mother who wanted the very best for my brothers and me. Mom was literate, creative, well spoken, motivated, and focused on a better life for all of us . . . so she decided to raise us in a religious cult.

Before I explain why that led to my study of persuasion, let me tell you a bit about this unique cult because it really was the impetus for my very thorough study of persuasion, manipulation, and influence.

When I say "religious cult," I'm not talking about a mainstream fundamental Christian church, quite the opposite in fact.

Although there was a fundamental belief in God as Savior, that is where the similarity to traditional religion ended. They believed that women had very little value in society beyond giving birth and caring for their children, their home, and their husbands. Education was strongly discouraged, boys were to be out of school by the eighth grade at the latest, and many young women were out of school by the sixth or seventh grade and "home schooled" through the years required by the state. There was also no television, no radio, no dancing, no dating outside the church, and no divorce was allowed. Women could not cut their hair, wear makeup, or wear any garment that pertained to a man (pants in particular), and men were required to keep very short haircuts, be clean-shaven, and be the primary breadwinner for the family.

Church services were very strict, too: Tuesdays, Thursdays, twice on Sunday, and often a Friday-night prayer meeting. Services were the fire and brimstone kind and they often lasted longer than three hours. There was no talking, moving, or fiddling around in church, either. The deacons enforced that and any young children who dared disobey (or even to be bored out of their minds enough to fidget) were immediately taken to the back of the church and punished if their parents didn't do it in a timely manner. When it was time for punishment, there was no sparing the rod or spoiling the child.

One of my younger brothers suffered terribly during those years. He had what would now likely be diagnosed as attention deficit disorder and what has since tested as a very high IQ. The leaders of the church diagnosed him as "having the Devil in him," and prescribed regular beatings to get the Devil out of him. I often marveled at the power of the Devil in my brother, because no amount of beating or other physical punishment

could dislodge it. (In truth, I hold both my brothers in highest regard and awe for their ability to endure and survive what surely would have ruined if not killed others, and for coming out of it well adjusted and successful.) Beating a child so severely and regularly that he often could barely walk would dislodge most devils.

You see, it was important to get the Devil out because the "Bible Believers," as the followers of the end-time prophet William Branham were called, knew that there was going to be a very literal rapture in the very near future and only those who were "Bible Believers" like them would be taken up in the rapture and given access to God's kingdom. Everyone else would suffer in tribulation on the earth until the resurrection when the dead would rise and then everything in the book of Revelation would occur literally and the largest majority of those left would be hastened to the lake of fire.

Sounds almost surreal, doesn't it? Even my condensed version of the story demonstrates obvious problems in logic. But what amazed me most, as I grew older, was the number of people that accepted this story I've just told you without question. Many of those people were well educated, and from well-adjusted homes, though not all. Day after day, year after year, those very same people willingly gave up much of what they earned to support a minister (to whom many of the rules didn't apply), and a church, all while spreading the good word and attracting even more people to the church and drawing them in systematically until they, too, were completely hooked.

I was involved in the church from the time I was 7 years old until I was 16 when I finally made a decision on my own that I'd have to leave the church if I intended to complete my education and if I wanted to stop bringing additional problems home to my

family. In order to leave the church, I'd also have to leave home. So, shortly after my sixteenth birthday I made my intentions known to my mother and to the church and was summarily excommunicated with a prayer to God that He would turn my soul over to Satan for the destruction of my flesh that I might see the error of my ways, repent, and return to church (I have to laughingly admit, a few times through my life I've wondered if their prayer was working).

The very next day I moved away from home and retreated to the one place where I'd always found solace and a never-ending source of food for my question-filled brain . . . the library. At the library I began studying what exactly drew people to cults, specifically, how someone as bright and creative and wonderful as my mom could be convinced that everything she knew and held true was wrong and everything these new people said was right, and how I could persuade her that there was a better, smarter, and healthier way for all of us to live.

The story I have shared with you is a story not of persuasion, but rather one of manipulation. This is not a book about cults, although I discuss how to create a cult-like customer following. It is not about the negative sort of manipulation that does not create a lasting relationship, although I teach you precisely how to manipulate so you can understand how it occurs and defend yourself from it and ensure you are not guilty of it. In the beginning of the book I discuss manipulation, how it happens, and why it works . . . for a while. You'll see that many facets of effective persuasion are inherent in manipulation, but it is the subtle differences and outcomes that set the two clearly apart. Ultimately, manipulation always fails, but true persuasion lasts.

This is a book about persuasion and the art of using persua-

sion to get exactly what you want. In getting what you want, you'll also position yourself as an expert in helping others get what they want and that is the highest form of persuasion. What I found out over those ensuing years I share with you here because the strategy and tactics I learned for changing minds, for creating winning situations for all, for getting what I wanted will allow you to quickly and easily get everything you've ever wanted out of life.

The strategies I am about to share with you are not the strategies of the manipulative cultist, but the specific ethical patterns, processes, and tactics you can use to get more of what you want out of this life. By simply understanding the elements of persuasion that must be present for you to succeed, you succeed more often. True persuasion is based in truth, honesty, inquisitiveness, and the ability to tell a good story and to elicit the persuasion criteria of those you hope to persuade so you can meet their expectations easily. I also show you how manipulation happens and why manipulation is always bad and never works long term, and how to use the positive and very powerful tools of persuasion that instantly change minds and compel people to action to get exactly what you want out of life, just as I have.

By learning how to ethically persuade I have achieved every major goal I have ever set for myself by being able to quickly and efficiently persuade not only others but also myself. Along the way, I have helped many people whom I have persuaded reach one of their goals, too. I have consistently achieved an income that puts me in the top 3 to 5 percent of income earners in the United States. I have been able to get the best jobs, access to the best minds, and access to the very best people (like you) to learn with and support my efforts. I have done more in my 40-plus

years than most people will do in a lifetime and, like you, I have so much more to do before it is over.

My mom did finally see the many thinking errors of the church and eventually left about three years after I left home, but the pull was so strong and the influence so high that on her deathbed she questioned whether she had made a big mistake by leaving the church.

After Mom's death in 1999, I began to ponder deeply what caused her to continue to question her decision even after she saw the error of the beliefs that kept her connected to the church for so long. The longer I thought about the issue the more I began to think about it in the context of business as well.

And that thought made me ask this question: "Shouldn't your customers wonder if they leave you if they just made the biggest mistake of their lives?" Throughout the pages of this book I demonstrate how you can create a cult-like following of customers who, even if they leave, will always wonder if they made the right decision. That concern, combined with your ethical ability to serve them better, will draw them back—or will keep most of them from ever leaving in the first place. Belief perseverance is a powerful concept we'll explore in much more detail later.

If you have ever dreamed that there is more to life than what you are getting right now, if you have ever wanted a raise, a better job, more sales, better deals, better "things," the perfect partner, or a better life, I am going to show you what insiders, the "born salespeople," and the true persuaders know. I am going to show you how to get exactly what you want whenever you want it. I also show you how to avoid the mistakes I made along the way to shorten your learning curve.

If you will allow me, over the next few pages I will personally teach you, groom you, coach you, and lead you through a new skill your parents didn't know they should teach you, isn't taught in any school, and often isn't discussed in polite company, but one that will serve you well for the rest of your life. I will demonstrate how you can master *Persuasion—The Art of Getting What You Want*.



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Finally, to my wife and daughter, who thought I'd gotten lost or trapped in my office, thanks for the snacks and the laughs, but most of all the understanding. You make all I do worthwhile. I love you.

Dave Lakhani