



225: The Art and Science of Persuasion A New Professionals Soft Skills Forum

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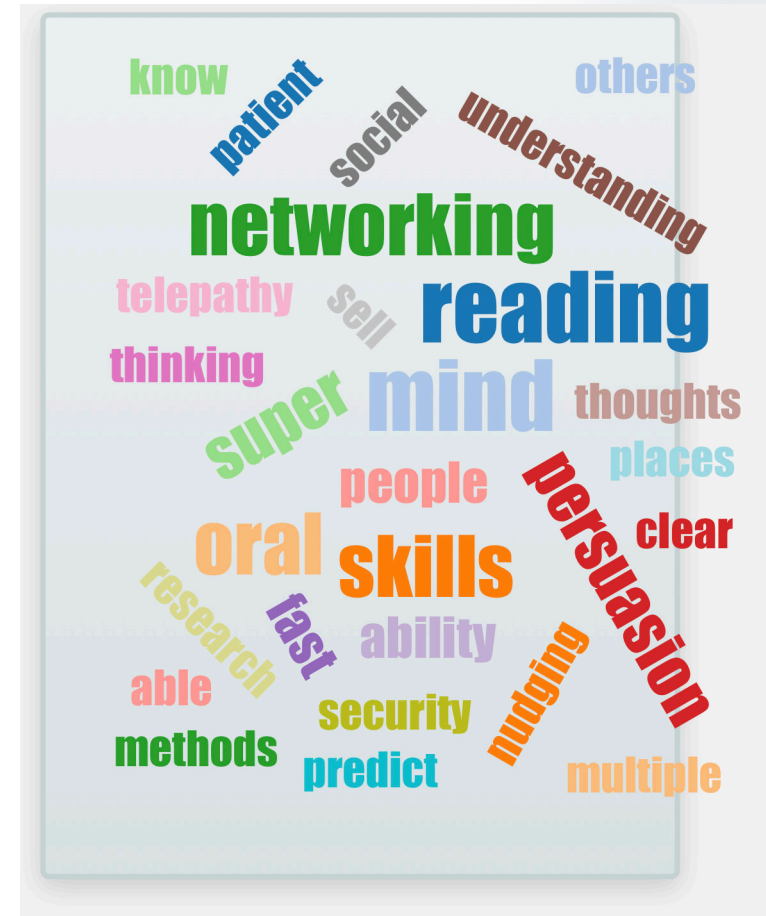
Welcome!

Let's briefly get to know our panel ...

- Ka Keat Lim – Research Fellow, King's College, London
- Kate Noble – Director, Remap Consulting
- Ritu Ora – HEOR Manager, Novo Nordisk

Polling Question 1:

As a new HEOR professional, what is one super-power that you'd like to have?

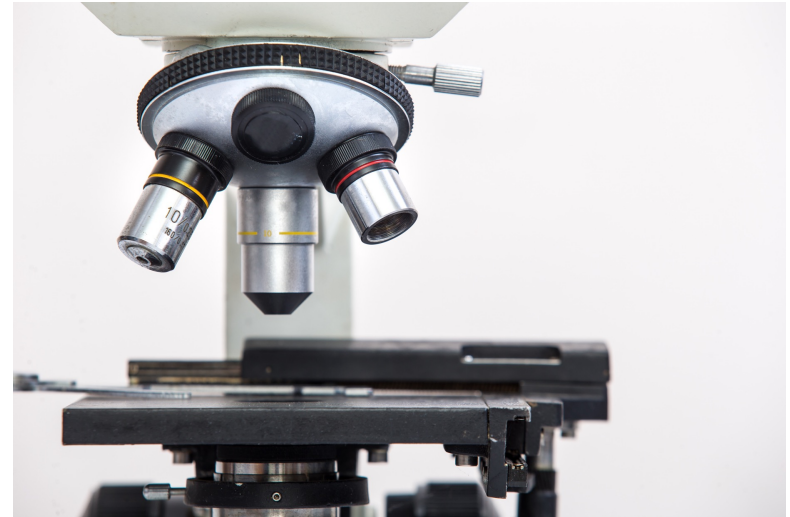


The skills that we call 'soft skills' can sometimes look like super-powers ...

- People who have them seem to wield them effortlessly and with 'supernatural' effect
- They seem to be an innate attribute of the individual, not the result of a method or process
- They sometimes seem to have the result of saving an impossible or intractable situation

But they can be learned and practised.

Art or science? Rational or emotional?



Emotions are much more closely tied to human decision-making than you might think

“Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions, and can never pretend to any other office than to serve and obey them.”

Hume, D. (1739) *A Treatise of Human Nature*

“Most theories of choice assume that decisions derive from an assessment of the future outcomes of various options and alternatives through some type of cost-benefit analyses.

The influence of emotions on decision-making is largely ignored.

The studies of decision-making in neurological patients who can no longer process emotional information normally suggest that people make judgments not only by evaluating the consequences and their probability of occurring, but also and even sometimes primarily at a gut or emotional level.”

Bechara, A. (2004) ‘The role of emotion in decision-making: evidence from neurological patients with orbitofrontal damage’, *Brain & Cognition*. 2004 Jun;55(1):30-40.

We can use a taxonomy of decision-making types to help choose our tactics

Style	Description	The Trap:	Persuader's Strategy
Thinker (~11%)	Toughest to persuade, cerebral, logical, risk-averse, needs extensive detail.	Asking them to 'get on board' when they haven't had time to read & think	Be well prepared. Use your data to make logical inferences and arguments.
Charismatic (~25%)	Easily enthralled, but bases final decisions on balanced information. Will be swayed by passion and commitment, but emphasizes results.	Bombarding them with detail, especially about process or methodology	Use visual language and metaphor; talk about the future.
Skeptic (~19%)	Challenges every point. Wants to know you have been through enough 'hoops'.	Attempting to get straight to a persuasive set of data in one attempt; 'heading off' their questions	Show you are just much of a sceptic – be patient! Don't be surprised when your preparation still isn't enough.
Follower (~36%)	Relies on own or others' past decisions to make current choices. Late adopter.	Asking them to lead. Telling them that 'it's going to be great, we're breaking new ground, no-one has done this before'.	Show examples, analogues, international comparisons; offer political 'shelter'.
Dictator (~9%)	Unemotional, analytical. Abhors uncertainty. Trusts no one. Only implements own ideas.	Misdiagnosing a sceptic. Appealing to their better nature!	Give them a task in the process; look for allies and other stakeholders.

Williams, G. and Roberts, R. (2002) 'Change the way you persuade', *Harvard Business Review*. 2002 May

Polling Question 2:

Suppose you encounter someone who's a SKEPTIC – what could you do to IRRITATE them?



Polling Question 3:

Suppose you encounter someone who's a CHARISMATIC – what could you do to DELIGHT them?



Using different question types, and observing the different responses that arise, can help us learn more about the situation

Closed Questions

What: Can be answered with “Yes” or “No,” or they have a limited set of possible answers

Why:

- Funnel, focus or summarize a conversation
- Confirm our understanding
- Restrict the other person to providing a short answer

When: You need specific information

“Do you think I’m taking the right approach?”

Open / Informative Questions

What: Allow someone to give a free-form answer

Why:

- Get the other person involved in the discussion
- Learn what the other person is thinking, what they know/don’t know/want to know

When: You want to learn and understand more

“How does my approach compare to others you’ve seen?”

High-Gain / Insightful Questions

What: Allow someone to give a free-form answer based on prioritization and making a choice.

Why:

- Get the other person to think evaluatively about the topic
- Earn permission to ask ‘why’ about what the other person is thinking, what they know/don’t know/want to know

When: You want to understand ‘why’ they think or believe as they do

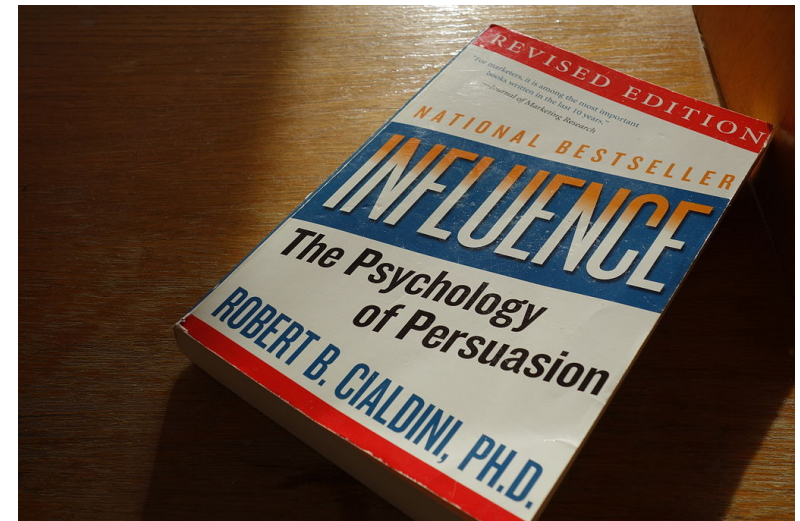
“What’s the biggest risk in my current approach?”

People try to make decisions based on the evidence before them

... but when the evidence is equivocal, they use a range of different kinds of intuition to break the deadlock

Psychologist Robert Cialdini wrote his famous book
Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion

He identified six key principles – and things stayed that way, for a while



Cialdini's 7 Principles of Persuasion

Scarcity



"There's a great opportunity here, but only if we can get it done in the next couple of days"

Liking



"How are you? I thought it would be fun if we work on this together!"

Authority



"I asked your boss, and she said I should talk to you"

Social Proof



"You know Charles and Dominique? They're already working with me on this"

Commitment



"Let's pick this idea up again, since we already started on it"

Reciprocity



"Can I ask you to return a favour?"

Unity



~~"As one Taylor Swift fan to another ..."~~

"As one ISPOR member to another ..."

Adapted from Cialdini, R. B. (2007). *Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion*.

**Thank you for
your
participation!**



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