



Influence

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INFLUENCE

*The Psychology
of
Persuasion*

ROBERT B. CIALDINI PH.D.

This book is dedicated to Chris,
who glows in his father's eye

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INTRODUCTION

I can admit it freely now. All my life I've been a patsy. For as long as I can recall, I've been an easy mark for the pitches of peddlers, fundraisers, and operators of one sort or another. True, only some of these people have had dishonorable motives. The others—representatives of certain charitable agencies, for instance—have had the best of intentions. No matter. With personally disquieting frequency, I have always found myself in possession of unwanted magazine subscriptions or tickets to the sanitation workers' ball. Probably this long-standing status as sucker accounts for my interest in the study of compliance: Just what are the factors that cause one person to say yes to another person? And which techniques most effectively use these factors to bring about such compliance? I wondered why it is that a request stated in a certain way will be rejected, while a request that asks for the same favor in a slightly different fashion will be successful.

So in my role as an experimental social psychologist, I began to do research into the psychology of compliance. At first the research

took the form of experiments performed, for the most part, in my laboratory and on college students. I wanted to find out which psychological principles influence the tendency to comply with a request. Right now, psychologists know quite a bit about these principles—what they are and how they work. I have characterized such principles as weapons of influence and will report on some of the most important in the upcoming chapters.

After a time, though, I began to realize that the experimental work, while necessary, wasn't enough. It didn't allow me to judge the importance of the principles in the world beyond the psychology building and the campus where I was examining them. It became clear that if I was to understand fully the psychology of compliance, I would need to broaden my scope of investigation. I would need to look to the compliance professionals—the people who had been using the principles on me all my life. They know what works and what doesn't; the law of survival of the fittest assures it. Their business is to make us comply, and their livelihoods depend on it. Those who don't know how to get people to say yes soon fall away; those who do, stay and flourish.

Of course, the compliance professionals aren't the only ones who know about and use these principles to help them get their way. We all employ them and fall victim to them, to some degree, in our daily interactions with neighbors, friends, lovers, and offspring. But the compliance practitioners have much more than the vague and amateurish understanding of what works than the rest of us have. As I thought about it, I knew that they represented the richest vein of information about compliance available to me. For nearly three years, then, I combined my experimental studies with a decidedly more entertaining program of systematic immersion into the world of compliance professionals—sales operators, fund-raisers, recruiters, advertisers, and others.

The purpose was to observe, from the inside, the techniques and strategies most commonly and effectively used by a broad range of compliance practitioners. That program of observation sometimes took the form of interviews with the practitioners themselves and sometimes with the natural enemies (for example, police buncosquad officers, consumer agencies) of certain of the practitioners. At other times it involved an intensive examination of the written materials by which compliance techniques are passed down from one generation to another—sales manuals and the like.

Most frequently, though, it has taken the form of participant observation. Participant observation is a research approach in which the researcher becomes a spy of sorts. With disguised identity and intent, the investigator infiltrates the setting of interest and becomes a full-fledged

participant in the group to be studied. So when I wanted to learn about the compliance tactics of encyclopedia (or vacuum-cleaner, or portrait-photography, or dance-lesson) sales organizations, I would answer a newspaper ad for sales trainees and have them teach me their methods. Using similar but not identical approaches, I was able to penetrate advertising, public-relations, and fund-raising agencies to examine their techniques. Much of the evidence presented in this book, then, comes from my experience posing as a compliance professional, or aspiring professional, in a large variety of organizations dedicated to getting us to say yes.

One aspect of what I learned in this three-year period of participant observation was most instructive. Although there are thousands of different tactics that compliance practitioners employ to produce yes, the majority fall within six basic categories. Each of these categories is governed by a fundamental psychological principle that directs human behavior and, in so doing, gives the tactics their power. The book is organized around these six principles, one to a chapter. The principles—consistency, reciprocation, social proof, authority, liking, and scarcity—are each discussed in terms of their function in the society and in terms of how their enormous force can be commissioned by a compliance professional who deftly incorporates them into requests for purchases, donations, concessions, votes, assent, etc. It is worthy of note that I have not included among the six principles the simple rule of material self-interest—that people want to get the most and pay the least for their choices. This omission does not stem from any perception on my part that the desire to maximize benefits and minimize costs is unimportant in driving our decisions. Nor does it come from any evidence I have that compliance professionals ignore the power of this rule. Quite the opposite: In my investigations, I frequently saw practitioners use (sometimes honestly, sometimes not) the compelling “I can give you a good deal” approach. I choose not to treat the material self-interest rule separately in this book because I see it as a motivational given, as a goes-without-saying factor that deserves acknowledgment but not extensive description.

Finally, each principle is examined as to its ability to produce a distinct kind of automatic, mindless compliance from people, that is, a willingness to say yes without thinking first. The evidence suggests that the ever-accelerating pace and informational crush of modern life will make this particular form of unthinking compliance more and more prevalent in the future. It will be increasingly important for the society, therefore, to understand the how and why of automatic influence.

It has been some time since the first edition of *Influence* was published.

In the interim, some things have happened that I feel deserve a place in this new edition. First, we now know more about the influence process than before. The study of persuasion, compliance, and change has advanced, and the pages that follow have been adapted to reflect that progress. In addition to an overall update of the material, I have included a new feature that was stimulated by the responses of prior readers.

That new feature highlights the experiences of individuals who have read *Influence*, recognized how one of the principles worked on (or for) them in a particular instance, and wrote to me describing the event. Their descriptions, which appear in the Reader's Reports at the end of each chapter, illustrate how easily and frequently we can fall victim to the pull of the influence process in our everyday lives.

I wish to thank the following individuals who—either directly or through their course instructors—contributed the Reader's Reports used in this edition: Pat Bobbs, Mark Hastings, James Michaels, Paul R. Nail, Alan J. Resnik, Daryl Retzlaff, Dan Swift, and Karla Vasks. In addition, I would like to invite new readers to submit similar reports for possible publication in a future edition. They may be sent to me at the Department of Psychology, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287-1104.

—ROBERT B. CIALDINI

Chapter 1

WEAPONS OF INFLUENCE

Everything should be made as simple as possible, but not simpler.

—ALBERT EINSTEIN

I GOT A PHONE CALL ONE DAY FROM A FRIEND WHO HAD RECENTLY opened an Indian jewelry store in Arizona. She was giddy with a curious piece of news. Something fascinating had just happened, and she thought that, as a psychologist, I might be able to explain it to her. The story involved a certain allotment of turquoise jewelry she had been having trouble selling. It was the peak of the tourist season, the store was unusually full of customers, the turquoise pieces were of good quality for the prices she was asking; yet they had not sold. My friend had attempted a couple of standard sales tricks to get them moving. She tried calling attention to them by shifting their location to a more central display area; no luck. She even told her sales staff to “push” the items hard, again without success.

Finally, the night before leaving on an out-of-town buying trip, she scribbled an exasperated note to her head saleswoman, “Everything in this display case, price $\times \frac{1}{2}$,” hoping just to be rid of the offending pieces, even if at a loss. When she returned a few days later, she was not surprised to find that every article had been sold. She was shocked, though, to discover that, because the employee had read the “ $\frac{1}{2}$ ” in her scrawled message as a “2,” the entire allotment had sold out at twice the original price!

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That's when she called me. I thought I knew what had happened but told her that, if I were to explain things properly, she would have to listen to a story of mine. Actually, it isn't my story; it's about mother turkeys, and it belongs to the relatively new science of ethology—the study of animals in their natural settings. Turkey mothers are good mothers—loving, watchful, and protective. They spend much of their time tending, warming, cleaning, and huddling the young beneath them. But there *is* something odd about their method. Virtually all of this mothering is triggered by one thing: the “cheep-cheep” sound of young turkey chicks. Other identifying features of the chicks, such as their smell, touch, or appearance, seem to play minor roles in the mothering process. If a chick makes the “cheep-cheep” noise, its mother will care for it; if not, the mother will ignore or sometimes kill it.

The extreme reliance of maternal turkeys upon this one sound was dramatically illustrated by animal behaviorist M. W. Fox in his description of an experiment involving a mother turkey and a stuffed polecat.¹ For a mother turkey, a polecat is a natural enemy whose approach is to be greeted with squawking, pecking, clawing rage. Indeed, the experimenters found that even a stuffed model of a polecat, when drawn by a string toward a mother turkey, received an immediate and furious attack. When, however, the same stuffed replica carried inside it a small recorder that played the “cheep-cheep” sound of baby turkeys, the mother not only accepted the oncoming polecat but gathered it underneath her. When the machine was turned off, the polecat model again drew a vicious attack.

How ridiculous a female turkey seems under these circumstances: She will embrace a natural enemy just because it goes “cheep-cheep,” and she will mistreat or murder one of her own chicks just because it does not. She looks like an automaton whose maternal instincts are under the automatic control of that single sound. The ethologists tell us that this sort of thing is far from unique to the turkey. They have begun to identify regular, blindly mechanical patterns of action in a wide variety of species.

Called fixed-action patterns, they can involve intricate sequences of behavior, such as entire courtship or mating rituals. A fundamental characteristic of these patterns is that the behaviors that compose them occur in virtually the same fashion and in the same order every time. It is almost as if the patterns were recorded on tapes within the animals. When the situation calls for courtship, the courtship tape gets played; when the situation calls for mothering, the maternal-behavior tape gets

played. *Click* and the appropriate tape is activated; *whirr* and out rolls the standard sequence of behaviors.

The most interesting thing about all this is the way the tapes are activated. When a male animal acts to defend his territory, for instance, it is the intrusion of another male of the same species that cues the territorial-defense tape of rigid vigilance, threat, and, if need be, combat behaviors. But there is a quirk in the system. It is not the rival male as a whole that is the trigger; it is some specific feature of him, the *trigger feature*. Often the trigger feature will be just one tiny aspect of the totality that is the approaching intruder. Sometimes a shade of color is the trigger feature. The experiments of ethologists have shown, for instance, that a male robin, acting as if a rival robin had entered its territory, will vigorously attack nothing more than a clump of robin-redbreast feathers placed there. At the same time, it will virtually ignore a perfect stuffed replica of a male robin *without* red breast feathers; similar results have been found in another species of bird, the bluethroat, where it appears that the trigger for territorial defense is a specific shade of blue breast feathers.²

Before we enjoy too smugly the ease with which lower animals can be tricked by trigger features into reacting in ways wholly inappropriate to the situation, we might realize two things. First, the automatic, fixed-action patterns of these animals work very well the great majority of the time. For example, because only healthy, normal turkey chicks make the peculiar sound of baby turkeys, it makes sense for mother turkeys to respond maternally to that single "cheep-cheep" noise. By reacting to just that one stimulus, the average mother turkey will nearly always behave correctly. It takes a trickster like a scientist to make her tapelike response seem silly. The second important thing to understand is that we, too, have our preprogrammed tapes; and, although they usually work to our advantage, the trigger features that activate them can be used to dupe *us* into playing them at the wrong times.³

This parallel form of human automatic action is aptly demonstrated in an experiment by Harvard social psychologist Ellen Langer. A well-known principle of human behavior says that when we ask someone to do us a favor we will be more successful if we provide a reason. People simply like to have reasons for what they do. Langer demonstrated this unsurprising fact by asking a small favor of people waiting in line to use a library copying machine: *Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I'm in a rush?* The effectiveness of this request-plus-reason was nearly total: Ninety-four percent of those asked let her skip ahead of them in line. Compare this success rate to the results when she made the request only: *Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use*

the Xerox machine? Under those circumstances, only 60 percent of those asked complied. At first glance, it appears that the crucial difference between the two requests was the additional information provided by the words “because I’m in a rush.” But a third type of request tried by Langer showed that this was not the case. It seems that it was not the whole series of words, but the first one, “because,” that made the difference. Instead of including a real reason for compliance, Langer’s third type of request used the word “because” and then, adding nothing new, merely restated the obvious: *Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I have to make some copies?* The result was that once again nearly all (93 percent) agreed, even though no real reason, no new information, was added to justify their compliance. Just as the “cheep-cheep” sound of turkey chicks triggered an automatic mothering response from maternal turkeys—even when it emanated from a stuffed polecat—so, too, did the word “because” trigger an automatic compliance response from Langer’s subjects, even when they were given no subsequent reason to comply. *Click, whirr!*⁴

Although some of Langer’s additional findings show that there are many situations in which human behavior does not work in a mechanical, tape-activated way, what is astonishing is how often it does. For instance, consider the strange behavior of those jewelry-store customers who swooped down on an allotment of turquoise pieces only after the items had been mistakenly offered at double their original price. I can make no sense of their behavior, unless it is viewed in *click, whirr* terms.

The customers, mostly well-to-do vacationers with little knowledge of turquoise, were using a standard principle—a stereotype—to guide their buying: “expensive = good.” Thus the vacationers, who wanted “good” jewelry, saw the turquoise pieces as decidedly more valuable and desirable when nothing about them was enhanced but the price. Price alone had become a trigger feature for quality; and a dramatic increase in price alone had led to a dramatic increase in sales among the quality-hungry buyers. *Click, whirr!*

It is easy to fault the tourists for their foolish purchase decisions. But a close look offers a kinder view. These were people who had been brought up on the rule “You get what you pay for” and who had seen that rule borne out over and over in their lives. Before long, they had translated the rule to mean “expensive = good.” The “expensive = good” stereotype had worked quite well for them in the past, since normally the price of an item increases along with its worth; a higher price typically reflects higher quality. So when they found themselves in the position of wanting good turquoise jewelry without much knowledge of

turquoise, they understandably relied on the old standby feature of cost to determine the jewelry's merits.

Although they probably did not realize it, by reacting solely to the price feature of the turquoise, they were playing a shortcut version of betting the odds. Instead of stacking all the odds in their favor by trying painstakingly to master each of the things that indicate the worth of turquoise jewelry, they were counting on just one—the one they knew to be usually associated with the quality of any item. They were betting that price alone would tell them all they needed to know. This time, because someone mistook a "½" for a "2," they bet wrong. But in the long run, over all the past and future situations of their lives, betting those shortcut odds may represent the most rational approach possible.

In fact, automatic, stereotyped behavior is prevalent in much of human action, because in many cases it is the most efficient form of behaving, and in other cases it is simply necessary. You and I exist in an extraordinarily complicated stimulus environment, easily the most rapidly moving and complex that has ever existed on this planet. To deal with it, we *need* shortcuts. We can't be expected to recognize and analyze all the aspects in each person, event, and situation we encounter in even one day. We haven't the time, energy, or capacity for it. Instead, we must very often use our stereotypes, our rules of thumb to classify things according to a few key features and then to respond mindlessly when one or another of these trigger features is present.

Sometimes the behavior that unrolls will not be appropriate for the situation, because not even the best stereotypes and trigger features work every time. But we accept their imperfection, since there is really no other choice. Without them we would stand frozen—cataloging, appraising, and calibrating—as the time for action sped by and away. And from all indications, we will be relying on them to an even greater extent in the future. As the stimuli saturating our lives continue to grow more intricate and variable, we will have to depend increasingly on our shortcuts to handle them all.

The renowned British philosopher Alfred North Whitehead recognized this inescapable quality of modern life when he asserted that "civilization advances by extending the number of operations we can perform without thinking about them." Take, for example, the "advance" offered to civilization by the discount coupon, which allows consumers to assume that they will receive a reduced purchase price by presenting the coupon. The extent to which we have learned to operate mechanically on that assumption is illustrated in the experience of one automobile-tire company. Mailed-out coupons that—because of a printing error—offered no savings to recipients produced just as much customer response as did error-free coupons that offered substantial

savings. The obvious but instructive point here is that we expect discount coupons to do double duty. Not only do we expect them to save us money, we also expect them to save us the time and mental energy required to think about how to do it. In today's world, we need the first advantage to handle pocketbook strain; but we need the second advantage to handle something potentially more important—brain strain.

It is odd that despite their current widespread use and looming future importance, most of us know very little about our automatic behavior patterns. Perhaps that is so precisely because of the mechanistic, unthinking manner in which they occur. Whatever the reason, it is vital that we clearly recognize one of their properties: They make us terribly vulnerable to anyone who does know how they work.

To understand fully the nature of our vulnerability, another glance at the work of the ethologists is in order. It turns out that these animal behaviorists with their recorded “cheep-cheeps” and their clumps of colored breast feathers are not the only ones who have discovered how to activate the behavior tapes of various species. There is a group of organisms, often termed mimics, that copy the trigger features of other animals in an attempt to trick these animals into mistakenly playing the right behavior tapes at the wrong times. The mimic will then exploit this altogether inappropriate action for its own benefit.

Take, for example, the deadly trick played by the killer females of one genus of firefly (*Photuris*) on the males of another firefly genus (*Photinus*). Understandably, the *Photinus* males scrupulously avoid contact with the bloodthirsty *Photuris* females. But through centuries of experience, the female hunters have located a weakness in their prey—a special blinking courtship code by which members of the victims' species tell one another they are ready to mate. Somehow, the *Photuris* female has cracked the *Photinus* courtship code. By mimicking the flashing mating signals of her prey, the murderess is able to feast on the bodies of males whose triggered courtship tapes cause them to fly mechanically into death's, not love's, embrace.

Insects seem to be the most severe exploiters of the automaticity of their prey; it is not uncommon to find their victims duped to death. But less uncompromising forms of exploitation occur as well. There is, for instance, a little fish, the saber-toothed blenny, that takes advantage of an unusual program of cooperation worked out by members of two other species of fish. The cooperating fish form a Mutt and Jeff team consisting of a large grouper fish on the one hand and a much smaller type of fish on the other. The smaller fish serves as a cleaner to the larger one, which allows the cleaner to approach it and even enter its mouth to pick off fungus and other parasites that have attached themselves to

the big fish's teeth or gills. It is a beautiful arrangement: The big grouper gets cleaned of harmful pests, and the cleaner fish gets an easy dinner. The larger fish normally devours any other small fish foolish enough to come close to it. But when the cleaner approaches, the big fish suddenly stops all movement and floats open-mouthed and nearly immobile in response to an undulating dance that the cleaner performs. This dance appears to be the trigger feature of the cleaner that activates the dramatic passivity of the big fish. It also provides the saber-toothed blenny with an angle—a chance to take advantage of the cleaning ritual of the cooperators. The blenny will approach the large predator, copying the undulations of the cleaner's dance and automatically producing the tranquil, unmoving posture of the big fish. Then, true to its name, it will quickly rip a mouthful from the larger fish's flesh and dart away before its startled victim can recover.

There is a strong but sad parallel in the human jungle. We too have exploiters who mimic trigger features for our own brand of automatic responding. Unlike the mostly instinctive response sequences of non-humans, our automatic tapes usually develop from psychological principles or stereotypes we have learned to accept. Although they vary in their force, some of these principles possess a tremendous ability to direct human action. We have been subjected to them from such an early point in our lives, and they have moved us about so pervasively since then, that you and I rarely perceive their power. In the eyes of others, though, each such principle is a detectable and ready weapon—a weapon of automatic influence.

There is a group of people who know very well where the weapons of automatic influence lie and who employ them regularly and expertly to get what they want. They go from social encounter to social encounter requesting others to comply with their wishes; their frequency of success is dazzling. The secret of their effectiveness lies in the way they structure their requests, the way they arm themselves with one or another of the weapons of influence that exist within the social environment. To do this may take no more than one correctly chosen word that engages a strong psychological principle and sets an automatic behavior tape rolling within us. And trust the human exploiters to learn quickly exactly how to profit from our tendency to respond mechanically according to these principles.

Remember my friend the jewelry-store owner? Although she benefited by accident the first time, it did not take her long to begin exploiting the "expensive = good" stereotype regularly and intentionally. Now, during the tourist season, she first tries to speed the sale of an item that has been difficult to move by increasing its price substantially. She claims that this is marvelously cost-effective. When it works on the

unsuspecting vacationers—as it frequently does—it results in an enormous profit margin. And even when it is not initially successful, she can mark the article “Reduced from _____” and sell it at its original price while still taking advantage of the “expensive = good” reaction to the inflated figure.

By no means is my friend original in this last use of the “expensive = good” rule to snare those seeking a bargain. Culturist and author Leo Rosten gives the example of the Drubeck brothers, Sid and Harry, who owned a men’s tailor shop in Rosten’s neighborhood while he was growing up in the 1930s. Whenever the salesman, Sid, had a new customer trying on suits in front of the shop’s three-sided mirror, he would admit to a hearing problem, and, as they talked, he would repeatedly request that the man speak more loudly to him. Once the customer had found a suit he liked and had asked for the price, Sid would call to his brother, the head tailor, at the back of the room, “Harry, how much for this suit?” Looking up from his work—and greatly exaggerating the suit’s true price—Harry would call back, “For that beautiful all-wool suit, forty-two dollars.” Pretending not to have heard and cupping his hand to his ear, Sid would ask again. Once more Harry would reply, “Forty-two dollars.” At this point, Sid would turn to the customer and report, “He says twenty-two dollars.” Many a man would hurry to buy the suit and scramble out of the shop with his “expensive = good” bargain before Poor Sid discovered the “mistake.”

There are several components shared by most of the weapons of automatic influence to be described in this book. We have already discussed two of them—the nearly mechanical process by which the power within these weapons can be activated, and the consequent exploitability of this power by anyone who knows how to trigger them. A third component involves the way that the weapons of automatic influence lend their force to those who use them. It’s not that the weapons, like a set of heavy clubs, provide a conspicuous arsenal to be used by one person to bludgeon another into submission.

The process is much more sophisticated and subtle. With proper execution, the exploiters need hardly strain a muscle to get their way. All that is required is to trigger the great stores of influence that already exist in the situation and direct them toward the intended target. In this sense, the approach is not unlike that of the Japanese martial-art form called jujitsu. A woman employing jujitsu would utilize her own strength only minimally against an opponent. Instead, she would exploit the power inherent in such naturally present principles as gravity, leverage, momentum, and inertia. If she knows how and where to engage the action of these principles, she can easily defeat a physically

stronger rival. And so it is for the exploiters of the weapons of automatic influence that exist naturally around us. The exploiters can commission the power of these weapons for use against their targets while exerting little personal force. This last feature of the process allows the exploiters an enormous additional benefit—the ability to manipulate without the appearance of manipulation. Even the victims themselves tend to see their compliance as determined by the action of natural forces rather than by the designs of the person who profits from that compliance.

An example is in order. There is a principle in human perception, the contrast principle, that affects the way we see the difference between two things that are presented one after another. Simply put, if the second item is fairly different from the first, we will tend to see it as more different than it actually is. So if we lift a light object first and then lift a heavy object, we will estimate the second object to be heavier than if we had lifted it without first trying the light one. The contrast principle is well established in the field of psychophysics and applies to all sorts of perceptions besides weight. If we are talking to a beautiful woman at a cocktail party and are then joined by an unattractive one, the second woman will strike us as less attractive than she actually is.

In fact, studies done on the contrast principle at Arizona State and Montana State universities suggest that we may be less satisfied with the physical attractiveness of our own lovers because of the way the popular media bombard us with examples of unrealistically attractive models. In one study college students rated a picture of an average-looking member of the opposite sex as less attractive if they had first looked through the ads in some popular magazines. In another study, male college-dormitory residents rated the photo of a potential blind date. Those who did so while watching an episode of the *Charlie's Angels* TV series viewed the blind date as a less attractive woman than those who rated her while watching a different show. Apparently it was the uncommon beauty of the *Angels* female stars that made the blind date seem less attractive.⁶

A nice demonstration of perceptual contrast is sometimes employed in psychophysics laboratories to introduce students to the principle firsthand. Each student takes a turn sitting in front of three pails of water—one cold, one at room temperature, and one hot. After placing one hand in the cold water and one in the hot water, the student is told to place both in the lukewarm water simultaneously. The look of amused bewilderment that immediately registers tells the story: Even though both hands are in the same bucket, the hand that has been in the cold water feels as if it is now in hot water, while the one that was in the hot water feels as if it is now in cold water. The point is that the same

thing—in this instance, room-temperature water—can be made to seem very different, depending on the nature of the event that precedes it.

Be assured that the nice little weapon of influence provided by the contrast principle does not go unexploited. The great advantage of this principle is not only that it works but also that it is virtually undetectable. Those who employ it can cash in on its influence without any appearance of having structured the situation in their favor. Retail clothiers are a good example. Suppose a man enters a fashionable men's store and says that he wants to buy a three-piece suit and a sweater. If you were the salesperson, which would you show him first to make him likely to spend the most money? Clothing stores instruct their sales personnel to sell the costly item first. Common sense might suggest the reverse: If a man has just spent a lot of money to purchase a suit, he may be reluctant to spend very much more on the purchase of a sweater. But the clothiers know better. They behave in accordance with what the contrast principle would suggest: Sell the suit first, because when it comes time to look at sweaters, even expensive ones, their prices will not seem as high in comparison. A man might balk at the idea of spending \$95 for a sweater, but if he has just bought a \$495 suit, a \$95 sweater does not seem excessive. The same principle applies to a man who wishes to buy the accessories (shirt, shoes, belt) to go along with his new suit. Contrary to the commonsense view, the evidence supports the contrast-principle prediction. As sales motivation analysts Whitney, Hubin, and Murphy state, "The interesting thing is that even when a man enters a clothing store with the express purpose of purchasing a suit, he will almost always *pay more* for whatever accessories he buys if he buys them *after* the suit purchase than before."

It is much more profitable for salespeople to present the expensive item first, not only because to fail to do so will lose the influence of the contrast principle; to fail to do so will also cause the principle to work actively against them. Presenting an inexpensive product first and following it with an expensive one will cause the expensive item to seem even more costly as a result—hardly a desirable consequence for most sales organizations. So, just as it is possible to make the same bucket of water appear to be hotter or colder, depending on the temperature of previously presented water, it is possible to make the price of the same item seem higher or lower, depending on the price of a previously presented item.

Clever use of perceptual contrast is by no means confined to clothiers. I came across a technique that engaged the contrast principle while I was investigating, undercover, the compliance tactics of real-estate companies. To "learn the ropes," I was accompanying a company realty salesman on a weekend of showing houses to prospective home buyers.



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**To'liq qismini Shu tugmani
bosish orqali sotib oling!**