



# How To Craft The Ultimate Persuasion Message

## Why does this system exist?

This system exists to ensure that my message has maximum persuasion power.

## When do you use this system?

Whenever I need to have maximum impact in a persuasive process

## Summarize this system in one or two steps:

Follow the steps.



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## Step 1: Fully define your product, service, or proposal.

In this step you want to gain as clear and broad a picture of your product, service or proposal as possible. Do not simply write down an answer such as "consulting services" or "wonder widgets." This will be of little help. Instead, try to look at what it is you are selling in as many different levels as possible.

Ask yourself:

How will your product help them?

Will it help them do something they couldn't do before?

Will it teach them something they didn't know before?

Is it something they need?

If so, do they already know they need it, or must you sell them on this first?

This last question is especially critical. I can't tell you how many people I work with falsely assume the need is already felt and make the fatal error of selling the product before selling the need.

If possible, ask a partner or friend these same questions for an even broader perspective. Summarize your findings from these questions. Are there opportunities for framing your message in ways you didn't see before?

Uncover new insights about it and you just might uncover a new market for it as well.



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### Step 2: Determine how you will measure success.

How are you going to know it is a success, a failure or something in-between? How will you measure it? Is it possible to test the message in phases in order to minimize risk? Now is the time to ask.

### Step 3: Explore the context of your prospect.

Write down every important fact you want to communicate about their product or service.

Now we know exactly where not to start the process of writing your copy.

In other words, it's time to get outside our own perspective and into the mind of our prospect.

With this in mind, ask yourself:

Who is your audience?

What do you want the person to do, think or believe that they wouldn't have done so before encountering your message?

What are they doing, thinking or believing now?

What do they want to hear? (Not what you want them to hear)

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### Step 3 (Cont'd.) : Explore the context of your prospect.

What will they hear - what will stop them in their tracks?

This isn't necessarily the same as what they want to hear. This question is directed at those things they aren't consciously seeking but will respond to if presented within the message.

What do they expect to hear?

This question is designed to help you consider any preconceived notions that could affect your ability to communicate with them. For example, do they already "know" all about you or your pitch? If so, what do they "know"? Do they view you in a positive or negative light? How will these preconceived notions affect your ability to get your message across?

In what context will they likely encounter your message?

For this question, try to put yourself in the shoes of your prospect and imagine where they might be, what they might be thinking, and who they might be with when they encounter your message.

Will they be alone?

Will they be with friends or family?

Will they be distracted or focused?



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### Step 4: Determine the major components of your message.

At this point we should have more than enough information to begin identifying the points we will attempt to get across in our communication. We have a broad understanding of the nature of our message, how we'll test it, and an excellent overview of our prospect and the context surrounding our prospect.

Up to now our task has been largely analytical. At this step and in our next one, our creative abilities must come into play using the data derived from our earlier steps. It is best to think of this data as both raw material from which to build a message and a set of questions and considerations to help guide your efforts.

Since every communication is obviously unique, I can only address some general points you might want to consider when determining the major components of your message. In that regard, the key things to focus on in this step are comparing the more promising ideas regarding your message gained in step 1 with potential opportunities and problems identified in step 3. For example, does your prospect have specific preconceived notions about you or your product that can either be utilized to your advantage or that might need to be overcome? Do you need to illustrate the need for your product before you can sell the product itself? And so on.



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### Step 4 (Cont'd.): Determine the major components of your message.

Is there an opportunity to address one or more hidden addictions? Are they looking for a sense of hope? A scapegoat? A sense of power? Etc. These are clearly areas that will not only help gain attention but will help draw them in closer.

In answering these and other questions that may come to mind based on the previous 3 steps you will begin to derive a shape and focus for your message. Again, this is a creative step and as such, there are no hard and fast rules you can use to avoid the thinking required here. Still, one does not have to be a creative artist to create powerfully persuasive communication.

One of the biggest mistakes people make in creating persuasive communication has less to do with the mechanics or creativity of their materials as it does a lack of objectivity on the part of the communicator. In other words, people become so focused on their message that they fail to consider the overall context in which the message must do its work.

As a result of this step you should have the most basic components of your message. You will not have a script, an outline or even a brief summary. You will have the major themes you must communicate and that will help guide you in creating the specifics of your material.



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### Step 5: Determine how to convey your message.

At this point, we know the major themes we wish to communicate and it becomes a relatively simple task to structure them in an appropriate manner. Again, given the fact that every situation is unique, there are numerous ways we might tell our story. However, this is where many people go awry in their communication; they try to tell their story.

You want to avoid coming right out and telling the viewer any of the major points we wish to drive home. This allows the viewer to come to these conclusions naturally and with less resistance than had they simply been told these very same things.

For example, a magician rolls up his sleeves in what might look like a casual move but is really trying to convey to his audience that he isn't hiding anything.

Or he might run a hoop up and down his assistant's body to "prove" there aren't any cables or wires holding her suspended in the air. Only the crudest of magicians would say, "Look, there's nothing up my sleeve" or "Notice, there isn't anything holding up my assistant. She's really floating!" Would this impress you? Me neither. But by orchestrating events so that we will naturally arrive at these conclusions, the magician has pulled off perhaps the most critical aspect of his performance.



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### Step 5 (Cont'd.): Determine how to convey your message.

Filmmakers also employ a similar concept as evidenced by their "show, don't tell" rule. For example, when the "bad guy" walks into a room and you instantly know he's the "bad guy", ask yourself how you knew it. Rarely will it be in the dialogue. Instead, it will be in the subtle change of background music, the quality of the lighting or maybe the reaction of other characters. But it will almost never be so blunt as "Oh no, it's Black Baron!" To help drive this point home, try this sometime. Either watch part of a movie with the sound turned off, or listen to part of a movie without watching the picture. Then go back and watch the same portion of the movie with both audio and video and notice how much more information comes across and how dramatically different your experience is.

Once you identify your strategies for conveying these points, you've completed all the steps and all that remains is the mechanics of putting your message together. Since the greatest opportunity for empowering your message lies at the contextual level, you've already done the hardest part. The rest is just details.