

Methods & Mediums of Persuasion

Field Interview on Persuasion

[Student Name]

[School]

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[Instructor Name]

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### Introduction

Persuasion is an influential technique in business management. This strategy allows a manager to gain support for different projects and ideas that can help the company. Persuasion is a critical procedure in the change process and its presentation is also crucial. This report includes the interviews of two managers from different sectors and attempts to examine the ways in which business leaders and managers persuade their workers to undertake new ideas.

### First Interview

The first interview was with Aim One Auto Group's manager, Mr. Johnson. Aim one auto group is a car dealership company that deals with high-end luxury cars. The company has a specific target market of well to do customers and hence the high emphasis on high service delivery. The interview with Mr. Johnson was successful as I managed to gather information on various approaches and aspects of persuasion. The adoption of new ideas is not an easy task and Mr. Johnson offers more information on the skill and how to apply it.

Mr. Johnson main persuasion strategy is being credible and authenticity to the company and employees. In this strategy, it is his duty to be accountable to his employees so that they can trust his decisions and believe in his agenda. Mr. Johnson underlines credibility and notes that it leads to effective leadership and a shared vision. Also, awarding those who choose to participate fully is also a strategy of persuasion strategy that the manager highlights. The culture of awarding employees within the organization acts as a way to influence them by motivating and encouraging them to work hard and strive to improve their skills.

Besides, Mr. Johnson informs me of the challenges one faces in the process of persuasion. He notes that dialogue is his primary conflict management tool as he aims at ensuring all parties

amend. He also adds that he uses authority as a last resort to ensure that the company's goal is attained in a case where he faces a challenge from an employee. Further, Mr. Johnson notes that negative persuasion strategies can be very effective as they motivate the employee to work hard and implement new techniques in order to avoid poor productivity.

### Second Interview

The second interview was with the lively Mr. Brow who is the manager at the Art Commercial Company. The company specializes in service delivery and workers have to be structured to be keen and excellent in service delivery. Mr. Brow has adopted the approach of sharing the vision of the company each time and letting the employees know the direction that the company is heading and the vision of its leaders. In a reflective note, he adds that once employees are aware of where the company is headed, it is easier to convince them to apply new ideas.

Mr. Brow underlines active listening as the skill that has helped him persuade his employees. He advised on active listening noting that I will create an environment of openness and sharing that fosters understanding. He notes that awarding employees in a good performance and promoting career development of an employee is his approach to maximizing persuasion and motivating employees to be better. He notes that commitment and consistency have to be recognized thus influencing others to work harder.

Through Mr. Brow, I learn how to handle challenges that arise due to failed persuasion. He informed me that it is essential to talk to the employee and find a common ground where ideas can compromise each other. On the other hand, Mr. Brow expounds that it is highly to engage the employees in the first stages to avoid having confrontations. Brow advise against the use of authority in persuasion and instead recommends coordination or using teamwork strategies. He

notes that using authority creates an atmosphere of distrust. Also, he notes that he does not use negative persuasion strategies as they may influence the commitment of employees. Instead, he uses a positive approach which recognizes performers and also encourages poor performers to put more effort.

Each interviewee has his own preferences with regards to persuasion. However, there were similarities that one notes from the approaches used by the two managers. Even though each manager had his own strategy, they were all centered on the principle of commitment and consistency. To one the commitment was on credibility to the other it was on a shared vision. The application of rewards in the workplace setting has been used by both parties as a means of recognizing excellence. Also, the problem-solving approach is similar as both managers prefer talking and sharing with employees as a means of facing issues with employees. The two managers also identify commitment and consistency as an approach used in persuasion. The similarities identify the essential strategies that can assure effective persuasion in any industry.

#### Similarities

The differences were mainly on the choice of strategy. Even though they shared a similar concept, they were different in application and interpretation. This shows that the workplace is diverse and one has to formulate persuasion strategy that fits his workplace population. Also while one openly endorsed the use of authority, the other relented its use noting it can have negative effects on the productivity of his company. The skills identified were also not similar as one identified effective communication and negotiation skills while the other noted that active listening was paramount in persuasion. The preferences of the two managers also vary on whether to use positive or negative persuasion strategies.

### Differences

Persuasion strategies rely on different aspects such as the abilities of the manager and the composition and number of employees. Thus, it is important to establish a strategy that fits the company and its area of operation. Also, commitment and consistency is an effective strategy that can be applied to any setup and redesigned to fit the elements of an organization. By showing this technique, the leader influences his employees to become followers of his agenda and to subscribe to his ideas. Further, the authority should be used cautiously as it had repulsive effects on the productivity of employees. It hinders consensus and offers little room for other strategies such as liking and reciprocity.

### Conclusion

Persuasion is a process that relies on various factors such as the skills of the manager for it to be effective. Being an effective influencer affects the productivity of the workforce as it encourages employees to be diverse and open to new ideas (Johnson, Griffith, & Buckley, 2016). The two interviews shed more light on my understanding of persuasion and the techniques to use in different situations. It also enlightened me in the skills and attributes I should improve to become an effective influencer.

## References

Johnson, G., Griffith, J. A., & Buckley, M. R. (2016). A new model of impression management: Emotions in the 'black box 'of organizational persuasion. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 89(1), 111-140.

## Appendix A

Company name: Aim one Auto Group

Name: Johnson

Position: Manager

1. What do you do to influence others?

I have created a culture of credibility within the company such that I ensure am authentic and credible to my employees. By doing this, I aim at gaining their trust and letting them believe in the mission I have for the company. Once we are on the same page and they believe in what I do, I am be able to lead them effectively with an assurance of 100% support from them to any company agenda such as change. Thus, they will easily adopt the new ideas that I propose since they believe in my credibility and also my leadership.

2. Can you give some specific examples of how you needed to persuade someone or a group regarding a project or idea? Specific times when you influenced others, including the circumstances of the situation, what you did specifically and the eventual outcome.

In the course of last year, the company experienced stagnating growth and the number of sales was not as projected earlier. All our competitors had moved into new sales strategies and marketing plans. We needed to improve on our customer service as well as marketing. The company decided to adopt the online marketing approach and each employee was mandated to have a social media presence. Convincing all employees on this was tough and I had to us a reciprocity approach to handle the situation. All those who adopted the new idea were included in new plans and agenda and their issues were sorted immediately. Eventually, I had influenced each member to adopt the new ideas and a pay rise was commissioned due to increased sales.

3. What do you think is the most important attribute for someone to have in order to be persuasive or an influencer?

Being an influencer relies on a collection of skills and appropriate strategies. Among all those attributes and necessities, effective communication strategies are efficient in performing the task of an influencer. Once one understands how to communicate effectively and a little bit of negotiation, influencing employees becomes an easy task.

4. Your company deals with a high end customers, how have you influenced your employees on the levels of service and discipline within the company?

In the company we deal with few clients for longer durations. Hence I have to ensure that each employee has the skills and capabilities to depict a good picture of the company. To achieve this I have created a culture of awarding commitment and consistency to outstanding employees who are well groomed and disciplined.

5. Of course you have encountered challenges or conflicts relating to a failed persuasion, how did you handle the situation?

In this scenario, the best thing to do is to have a talk with the employees. In this I have to create an environment where the employee feels free to share his/her thoughts on the issue at hand and then seek amends.

6. Would you recommend the use of authority in administering persuasion?

It depends with the situation and the level of authority. In most cases one does not have to use authority to enforce new ideas. However, when one employee opposes a crucial step of implementation of the new idea, I will have a talk and if that fails I will use authority to ensure the company's goal is achieved.

7. Are negative persuasion strategies effective within your organization?

In most cases negative persuasion can be very effective. For instance in my company we perform evaluations of the output of employees. An unsatisfactory review leads to disciplinary actions that puts one on probation. This makes most of the employees work hard as they have to avoid probation. This breeds hard work and motivation within an organization.

## Appendix B

Company name: The Art Commercial Company

Name: Brow

Position: Manager

1. What do you do to influence others?

I simply share the vision I have for the company and regularly remind employees of this vision.

The vision is a cut out plan that aims at ensuring the company grows and attain set goals. This has enable me to achieve goals as employees have in mind the final plan for the organisation.

2. What skills have you developed that help you to persuade your employees?

One of the core skills I have learned about persuasion is active listening. In persuading an employee one has to learn to listen to his concern before making a decision. By listening one gains an understanding of the agenda fully and making compliments where possible. Active listening also build a rapport of understanding as the other party is also likely to listen to my agenda keenly.

3. Your industry requires high quality of service, how have you influenced your employees on the levels of service and discipline within the workplace?

The culture within the company allows close interactions with employees. Over the years, I have learnt to bank on motivation and encouragement. The organizational culture ensures each employee has the chance to succeed and also we award the best performances and also the most disciplined workers. Hence the environment works in favor of career development and prosperity in the process the company benefits from maximum cooperation.

4. Of course you have encountered challenges or conflicts relating to a failed persuasion, how did you handle the situation?

I handle failed persuasions by providing the employee with an opportunity to express his thoughts on the matter. In most cases, we realise a common ground and work towards it. In special cases, the employee may have to leave the organisation but in accordance to the job contracts set. I always try to avoid this by sharing decisions with employees and involving them.

5. Would you recommend the use of authority in administering persuasion?

No, I don't think it is an effective approach. I never use it because it always creates an atmosphere of distrust and rebellion which affects the productivity of the company. Instead I prefer engagement and limited and coordination as I see my employees as my team.

6. Are negative persuasion strategies effective within your organization?

Not really as the type of service we offer relies on the commitment of the employee. Instead we try to motivate and influence the commitment of employees by using positive approaches such as acknowledging good performers and encouraging the poor performance to put more effort. This is a practice the organization lives by as we believe each employee is on a learning process and the right inputs and encouragement can maximize his/her output.