



# 12

# Persuasion

## Starting point

1 Which of your decisions (both personal and work-related) are influenced by the following, and to what extent?

- family/friends
- colleagues/managers
- media/advertising
- sales people
- politicians
- statistics
- celebrities

2 Are you easily persuaded? Give examples to explain why/why not.

## Working with words | Persuasion and influence

1 How does advertising manipulate what we think and the choices we make? Read the text and compare your ideas.

### JUST HOW EASILY ARE YOU PERSUADED?

How many forms of advertising do you encounter on your journey to work every day? Can you remember any of the advertisements? Probably not, but somehow the images you see will make an impression, whether you are aware of it or not. Are we taken in by these messages? Of course we are, because it's the advertisers' job to generate demand for the product. But how do they do it? On a very simplistic level, advertising can be divided into three broad areas which identify how we are influenced.

**1 Need** Can you imagine a life without mobile phones? It wasn't actually that long ago (1992) when the Global System for Mobile communications (GSM) started, and less than 1% of people globally used a mobile phone. Clever marketing promoted the consumption of mobile phones by highlighting their usefulness and the 'necessity' of being reachable. Advertisers targeted our busy lifestyles and sold us a tool which made communication possible wherever we were. We didn't actually need mobile phones, but the need was created and the advertising was then tailored towards it. The mobile phone industry had taken off.

**2 Belonging** The images we are shown by advertisers tap into our fears of becoming an outsider. Two of the most basic human needs are love and a sense of belonging, so to show images of families and groups of people having fun together subconsciously plays on our emotions. This powerfully persuasive tool works especially well on young people. Take the soft drinks industry for example; the advertising tends to reinforce an association between young people and the product, appealing to young people's desire to be 'cool' and be part of the 'in' group. The product itself then becomes an icon for being 'in' and young people are keen to buy into this image.

**3 Esteem** As we get older, our urge to conform becomes less important and we are subconsciously attracted to things which gain us more respect or elevate our social status. Advertisers put across this message by using images which say 'if you buy this, you'll be more successful, healthier, younger, a leader ...', etc. Therefore, the person who has been holding out for recognition of his or her earning power may buy an expensive car. Often celebrities are selected to endorse a product because the target group aspires to live up to this person's image. Take the L'Oréal advertisements for expensive hair and beauty products; the celebrities may not all be young, but they look young and declare (in most languages), that it's 'because I'm worth it!'

2 Work with a partner. Think of your own examples of advertisements which target the areas of *need*, *belonging* or *esteem* and discuss how they achieve this.

## 3 Match phrases 1–13 to definitions a–m.

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1 reinforce an association between | a encourage people to buy something                        |
| 2 tailor something towards a need  | b promote the connection between two things                |
| 3 promote consumption of           | c create the need for something                            |
| 4 generate a demand for            | d adapt something to suit a requirement                    |
| 5 hold out for                     | e attract or interest someone in something                 |
| 6 appeal to                        | f wait until you get what you want                         |
| 7 live up to                       | g notice something and react to it                         |
| 8 play on (emotions)               | h use or exploit something for your own benefit            |
| 9 be taken in by                   | i be as good as someone expected                           |
| 10 buy into                        | j believe in something                                     |
| 11 pick up on                      | k be persuaded to believe something that might not be true |
| 12 put across (message/idea)       | l take advantage of someone's feelings                     |
| 13 tap into                        | m convey/communicate some information                      |

## 4 Work with a partner. Look at the three advertisements on the left. Using phrases from 3, discuss what each advertisement is trying to achieve.

## 5 ▶12.1 Work with a partner. Listen to the interview with Jacob McFarlane, a marketing specialist, and answer questions 1–3.

- 1 What does he say about how advertisers approach selling a product in the US?
- 2 How are Denmark, Russia and China different?
- 3 What might Jacob McFarlane say about advertising in your culture?

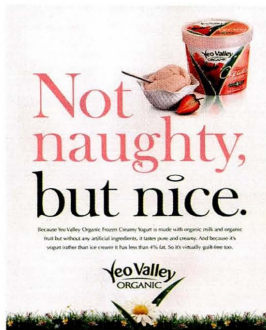
## 6 Complete comments 1–8 using the words from the listening in the list.

*materialistic exploitative consumer profile USP motivational aspirational status anxiety market penetration*

- 1 The way Sam is expected to take leave when he goes to trade conferences is awful. His company just takes advantage of him – it's so \_\_\_\_\_.
- 2 We need to think again – there's nothing at the moment to distinguish our product from the rest on the market. Can't you come up with an exciting \_\_\_\_\_?
- 3 Klara has a very \_\_\_\_\_ lifestyle. She's never satisfied with what she's got – she always wants to feel that she's moving onwards and upwards in her career and her life.
- 4 Jean-Noel is totally obsessed with money and possessions – he always wants to earn more so he can buy the latest designer products. He's incredibly \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5 We went to an external sales-training course last week. Absolutely fantastic! The trainer's approach was really \_\_\_\_\_ and I can't wait to try out his ideas.
- 6 How can we advertise this product when it's got such a high price tag? It won't be normal people we're targeting – only those who hate to feel they can't keep up with the neighbours and who have a high level of \_\_\_\_\_.
- 7 I've just heard the competition is developing a similar product to our X1-11. That means we have to ensure \_\_\_\_\_ is aggressive or we'll miss out.
- 8 The marketing of the new chocolate bar wasn't very successful. Surveys show the under-20s are buying it, but most potential customers aren't being reached. We'll have to analyse our \_\_\_\_\_ again.

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 12** on page 124.

## 7 Discuss your own company or a company you know well. How does it market itself? Is it effective? Would the marketing be effective in other cultures?



**Context**

Ranjit Shetty, an entrepreneur based in Edinburgh, has a flourishing advertising company (AA Ads) which has focused on print media up to now. He has the opportunity to break into multimedia advertising after recruiting a colleague with expertise in this field. He has also secured financial backing, but Ranjit now has to sell his diversification concept to his key staff.

**Business communication | Selling an idea**



- 1 Work with a partner and discuss questions 1–2.
  - 1 What are some of the reasons for a company to diversify?
  - 2 How important is it to gain staff acceptance of new ideas and plans?
- 2 ▶ **12.2–12.5** Listen to four extracts from Ranjit’s presentation and answer questions 1–4.
  - 1 What does Ranjit think will happen if the company doesn’t diversify now?
  - 2 What are the advantages of moving into multimedia advertising?
  - 3 What steps will be taken to help the company achieve this?
  - 4 Why does Ranjit think the company is in a strong position?
- 3 ▶ **12.2–12.5** Listen to the four extracts again and answer questions 1–2.
  - 1 Which of the following attitudes does Ranjit convey during the presentation?
    - assertive
    - upbeat
    - pushy
    - enthusiastic
    - tentative
    - insincere
  - 2 Which of the following techniques does he use to convince the audience of his concept and keep their attention? Tick (✓) the techniques he uses.

invites audience members to speak		uses rhetorical questions	
addresses the audience directly		uses word stress and intonation	
asks the audience to do an activity		shocks the audience	
uses visuals		speaks slowly	
keeps a fast pace		uses tripling (lists of three points)	
uses positive language/vocabulary		shouts at times	
plays music		speaks with enthusiasm	

## Key expressions

### Establishing the need for change

I know that, like me, you are concerned about ...  
 What comes across from talking to you is ...  
 It's become apparent that ...  
 We could be missing out on a great opportunity if we don't ...

### Building the argument

We not only benefit from ..., we also gain ...  
 Not only that. It's also essential that we ...  
 OK, that's the first benefit. Now, the second point ...  
 In addition to that ...

### Acknowledging different points of view

Having said that, it's important to remember ...  
 I accept that ... but we have to recognize that ... / put this into perspective ...  
 You could argue that ..., but on balance ...

### Reinforcing the message

So, as I said before, ...  
 ... is achievable. No question. We're in an extremely strong position. Why? Because ...  
 We're committed, we're motivated, and we believe in what we do.

### Asking for commitment / concluding

I very much hope that ...  
 Please give serious consideration to ...  
 We can't afford to miss this opportunity ...  
 I'm calling on you to ...

## 4 Match categories 1–5 to explanations a–e.

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| 1 reinforcing the message                | a saying why change is necessary       |
| 2 acknowledging different points of view | b making your beliefs absolutely clear |
| 3 establishing the need for a change     | c adding more information              |
| 4 asking for commitment                  | d dealing with counter-arguments       |
| 5 building the argument                  | e getting people on board              |

## 5 Match expressions a–j to categories 1–5 in 4.

- a Not only that. It's also essential that we ... \_\_\_  
 b ... having said that, it's important to remember ... \_\_\_  
 c We're committed, we're motivated, and we believe in what we do. \_\_\_  
 d I know that, like me, you are concerned about where we're going. \_\_\_  
 e We could be missing out on a great opportunity if we don't ... \_\_\_  
 f OK, that's the first benefit. Now, the second point ... \_\_\_  
 g You could argue that ..., but on balance ... \_\_\_  
 h ... *is* achievable. No question. \_\_\_  
 i Please give serious consideration to ... \_\_\_  
 j I'm calling on you to ... \_\_\_

## 6 Work with a partner. Look at the slides for this presentation and discuss which expressions from the *Key expressions* the speaker could use for each point. Then practise giving the presentation to each other.

1

### Why change from once-yearly to twice-yearly staff appraisals?

- Many staff want it
- Helps HR focus its goals
- Short-term goals are easier to visualize for staff

2

### How do we benefit?

- Avoid losing staff by picking up on employee dissatisfaction quickly
- Will ensure motivated staff
- Will keep us all proactive

3

### Possible issues with solutions

- Time-consuming – HR will assist
- Some staff resistance – voluntary basis to begin with
- Costs – more appraisals = more training? (not clear if this is true yet)

4

### What next?

- Great staff – make them even better!
- HR will support us
- Help retain our best staff – give them what they want!

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 12** on page 124.

## 7 Work with a partner. Think of an idea for your own department or company – it can either be completely new or one that has already been implemented. Prepare a mini-presentation to persuade your colleagues to adopt this. Find out if you have convinced them.

## Language at work | Discourse markers

## 1 ► 12.6 Listen to the presentation extracts and complete sentences 1–12.

- 1 I've been doing some research into our position in the market and what opportunities are available to us, and \_\_\_\_\_, I'm excited.
- 2 I'm excited because what comes across from talking to you is your collective enthusiasm in what we do and your genuine wish for us to succeed. \_\_\_\_\_, without your support my plans won't be possible.
- 3 \_\_\_\_\_, things are going well now, but ...
- 4 We could be missing out on a great opportunity if we don't diversify – \_\_\_\_\_, this won't be cheap and it won't be easy.
- 5 \_\_\_\_\_, I can't expect you to buy into this plan without some facts.
- 6 \_\_\_\_\_, studies show that most companies only invest a small percentage of their advertising budget in print media.
- 7 \_\_\_\_\_, most of our customers want agencies that offer a variety of advertising media – they want options.
- 8 \_\_\_\_\_, this information should ring alarm bells for us.
- 9 ... we're third in our region for print media. \_\_\_\_\_, I'm not happy with that.
- 10 Ravi, our key account manager, actually comes from the field of online advertising so he's going to be our guru, \_\_\_\_\_.
- 11 Now, \_\_\_\_\_ before, we've secured external investment for our diversification plan and we've employed a consultant.
- 12 ... we have to recognize that this person is an expert, and they may well see things, opportunities, that we might not. \_\_\_\_\_, he's on our side.

## 2 Match the discourse markers in 1 to categories a–e. Note that some discourse markers can fit into more than one category.

- a Indicates how open the speaker is going to be: \_\_\_\_\_
- b Connects information from before with something that will follow: \_\_\_\_\_
- c Emphasizes how clear/fundamental the following point is: \_\_\_\_\_
- d Indicates words are used which don't have their normal meaning: \_\_\_\_\_
- e Indicates change of topic: \_\_\_\_\_

» For more information, go to Unit 12 **Grammar reference** on page 133.

## 3 Complete these extracts from an internal presentation to a sales department with a discourse marker from 1. Use the information in brackets to help you.

Our department has faced a lot of criticism recently, <sup>1</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*I'm giving you some very frank information*), it's the worst we've had for a long time, so things must change. ...

<sup>2</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*I know this point weakens my position*), we should have recognized our sales had been consistently low, but we didn't and we've got to face the consequences. <sup>3</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*this point is expected*), management want to know what

we're going to do about things. <sup>4</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*this is clear*), I'm not going to blame anyone, <sup>5</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*I'm adding some additional, true information*), it's no one's fault. ...

So, moving on, <sup>6</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*this is the main idea*), we're suggesting we regroup. This will refresh the team and <sup>7</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*I've already mentioned this*), the low sales are no one's fault, so there's no one person who should feel unhappy about moving teams. <sup>8</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*here's*

*another true piece of information*), we are also thinking of redefining our sales strategy too. <sup>9</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*I'm contrasting that information with a less strong message*), we don't want to change things too much so the sales staff start to feel alienated. ...

<sup>10</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*I'm changing subject*), on Monday it's going to be a brand new start <sup>11</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*not literally, but figuratively*) and <sup>12</sup> \_\_\_\_\_ (*I'm telling you exactly how I feel*) I can't wait to begin!

» For more exercises, go to **Practice file 12** on page 125.

## 4 Work with a partner. Take turns to talk about recent news in some of the categories below. Use as many of the discourse markers from 1 as you can.

- company news
- international news
- celebrity news
- national news
- competitor activity
- personal news

## Practically speaking | Giving and responding to compliments

### Key word | *kill*

#### Match the use of *kill* in 1–6 to definitions a–f.

- 1 I'm going to have to sit down, my feet are *killing* me.
  - 2 I heard he *made a killing* from selling doughnuts at the World Cup!
  - 3 ... but don't tell Sandra – she'd *kill* me if she knew what I'd done!
  - 4 When I heard José wanted to become a singer, I *killed myself laughing* – I mean, he's tone deaf!
  - 5 *It won't kill you* to admit we targeted the wrong market with that advert.
  - 6 John asked Abi about her new job, but she hadn't been asked to second interview – it was a real *conversation killer*!
- a to make a lot of money from something  
b to laugh a lot about something  
c to be a lot of effort to do something  
d to be very angry about something  
e to hurt  
f to stop something abruptly

- 1 ▶ **12.7** Listen to six conversation extracts and answer questions a–c.
  - a Which extracts include a compliment on someone's appearance? \_\_\_\_
  - b Which extracts include a compliment on someone's work/achievement? \_\_\_\_
  - c In which extracts does one or both of the speakers seem uncomfortable? \_\_\_\_



- 2 ▶ **12.7** Listen again and decide why the speakers might feel uncomfortable in some of the extracts?
- 3 Look at phrases 1–15 from the extracts in 1. Decide which are used to compliment someone (C) and which are responses to a compliment (R).
  - 1 That was great. \_\_\_\_
  - 2 A very worthwhile meeting. \_\_\_\_
  - 3 Thanks. \_\_\_\_
  - 4 Thank you. I felt it went well. \_\_\_\_
  - 5 You're looking well. \_\_\_\_
  - 6 I like your ... \_\_\_\_
  - 7 I thoroughly enjoyed your talk. \_\_\_\_
  - 8 It was very interesting. \_\_\_\_
  - 9 I don't know how you can say that, but thanks anyway. \_\_\_\_
  - 10 I'm glad you enjoyed it. \_\_\_\_
  - 11 Great design. \_\_\_\_
  - 12 I love ... \_\_\_\_
  - 13 I was hoping it would be well received. \_\_\_\_
  - 14 Well done, you all did a great job. \_\_\_\_
  - 15 You have very nice ... \_\_\_\_

» For extension and revision, go to **Useful phrases** on page 136.

- 4 Work with a partner. Use phrases from 3 and have conversations 1–4. Avoid making your partner feel uncomfortable and respond to compliments appropriately.

#### Conversation 1

A You've just given a presentation.

B Compliment your partner on his/her presentation.

#### Conversation 2

B You've brought in a homemade cake for a colleague's birthday.

A Compliment your partner on his/her cake.

#### Conversation 3

A You've presented a new package design to your company.

B Compliment your partner on his/her design.

#### Conversation 4

B You have a new haircut.

A Compliment your partner on his/her hair.

### Culture question

- How would you feel if someone complimented you on a) your general appearance, b) a specific part of your appearance – eyes, hair etc., c) your belongings?
- Do you know of any cultures where these types of compliments are not appropriate?
- Does it depend how the compliment is made and who is making the compliment?