

The Power of Subconscious Influencing

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Terry is married with two grown up children and, in addition to walking his dogs through the local countryside, describes his main passion ("very close to 'anorak' territory") as jazz & blues guitar.

You are welcome to visit his web site to benefit from the free downloads www.terrygillen.co.uk

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Survival and the 2-speed brain

Evolution has given us a brain that functions at two different speeds. The primitive part processes incoming information much faster than the more 'modern', rational part of our brain. Furthermore, as the primitive part has more neuronal connections to eyes and ears than the modern part, it receives more incoming information. Consequently, by the time the rational part of our brain receives incoming information, the primitive part has already decided how it feels about it. In short, evolution has programmed us to *feel* before we *think*.



We can capitalise on this brain architecture by using a range of tools that make it easy for people to feel comfortable with what we say.

A sample of subconscious influencing tools

The sample tools	Your notes and ideas
<p>Framing</p> <p>Our brains love to categorise incoming information so they know exactly how to interpret it, react to it and file it so why not ensure that people receive your message the way you would like them to?</p> <p><i>"We've got a lot of wonderful, fascinating and useful So here we are in these lovely surroundings. We've been refreshed with a welcome coffee and croissant and now we're ready to explore this wonderful and interesting subject."</i></p>	
<p>Chunk up</p> <p>As there is more scope to disagree on detail than on major principles, linking what you say to something already agreed or beyond doubt and your point has a tail wind.</p> <p><i>"Our managers are dedicated and hardworking but there's a question; are they working on management tasks or those their staff have 'delegated' to them? By learning coaching skills, our managers can help their staff develop, freeing up more of their own time for the strategic thinking and planning we've agreed is essential to combat global competition."</i></p>	

Steer them towards or away from

While there are many motivators, a core direction is towards or away from.

"We know from bitter experience that disciplinary cases can be a painful haemorrhage on time, resources and team motivation so I'd like to show you how a few common sense precautions can keep us free from the majority of these unwelcome intrusions."

Add momentum to that direction

Most people accept a subtle underlying assumption so you can include assumptions that work in your favour.

"How quickly do you want to see your staff using these skills?"

"How high a priority is this training to your department's objectives?"

Use emotional appeal

Good orators and motivational speakers don't use the sensible (and boring) language we use to justify proposals at work; they use words and phrases that scare us, reassure us or make us feel good. In short, they appeal to our emotions.

"I have a dream" has much more impact than "Here is my proposal".

<p>Use their mental projector screen</p> <p>Good orators also use sensory words to <i>paint pictures</i> in our minds and help us experience the <i>sweat smell of success</i>. That's why we give them <i>loud and resounding</i> applause.</p>	
<p>Embed a bit</p> <p>Ideas, suggestions and even instructions can be 'hidden' by other words and phrases.</p> <p><i>"You don't have to <u>go into a trance</u> until you feel completely relaxed and ready to <u>go into a trance</u>."</i></p>	
<p>Slip in with metaphors</p> <p>As metaphors aren't meant to be taken literally, the powerful parallel message in a well-chosen metaphor can bypass people's resistance and prepare their brain to accommodate an idea they might otherwise resist.</p>	

Two final thoughts

First, good chefs know that, when adding herbs & spices, just a little will transform simple ingredients into a special meal. Second, in the same way that music by Mozart and 'gangsta rapsters' employs exactly the same twelve musical notes, these tools can be used in different ways - positively or manipulatively, for example. As what goes around usually comes around, I would encourage you to always use them positively.