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"speak up journal"

The Anchor of Persuasion

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Grant Pearson Brown Consulting Ltd.

The Presentation & Business Development Specialists

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts

In this edition:

Changing people's minds is difficult.

We see this difficulty every day in the current political climate, and many of us experience it regularly in the world of business. There are numerous ideas out there to help you with this challenging task. In this article I will explore one such concept: "the anchor of persuasion" – a concept that helps you to structure what you say to give you the best chance of getting people to agree with you.

Jowett and O'Donnell (1992) first argued for the idea of the "anchor of persuasion". They claim that there are three ways in which a persuader attempts to influence someone: response *shaping*, response *reinforcing* or response *changing*. Response *shaping* is similar to teaching someone something new, where the persuader is the instructor and the audience is the student. Response *reinforcing* works by reminding the audience of their existing attitude towards something (either positive or negative): this reinforcement elevates the strength of feeling they have and so adds further to the overall solidity of their position. Finally, response *changing* occurs when a persuader asks their audience to switch from one belief, attitude or behaviour to another, e.g. from positive to negative (or vice versa) or from neutral to either positive or negative. As you can imagine, response *changing* is the most difficult of these three types of persuasion.

So far, perhaps so obvious. However, what may be less intuitive is the idea that your best chance of changing someone's mind comes from firstly tapping into some of the beliefs or attitudes that they already hold. Finding key beliefs or an attitude in your audience with which you can agree is a valuable starting point.

The deep-rooted idea(s) already present is the "anchor of persuasion". It is the thing(s) that is least likely to change, and it will be used to tie down in your audience's mind the new beliefs or behaviour that you are introducing in your persuasive case.

One major anchor to drop!

Lovely stuff in theory, but how might this work in practice? Well, when you are pitching or selling, for example, you are likely attempting response changing. That is, changing the response of your potential client or customer. They may begin from the position of "I already have a provider" or "I don't need a provider" or even "I want someone else to provide this": you want them to arrive at "I want *you* to be my provider". Here the temptation is often to jump straight into combatting the perceived existing ideas. We have heard many a pitch that starts along these (simplified) lines: "You may think that you don't need a new provider but let me tell you why you do…" or "We believe there are three key reasons why you should hire us".

Continued on page 2

The Anchor of Persuasion …. continued

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts

Yet, as Charteris-Black (2005 p.18) tells us, "*Messages become more persuasive when they evoke things that are already known or at least familiar.*" This makes a lot of sense.

The word "evoke" is important – the new ideas should remind us of what we already hold to be true. We are more persuaded by the arguments that are tied to what we already 'know' to be the case, as they are easier to accept.

The likely reason is that the new ideas seem to require a less substantial shift in our position; this reduces the impression in ourselves that we were wrong to hold those beliefs in the first place.

Make your pitch align with their beliefs

In the above instance, you could start your pitch with an alignment of other beliefs you know your audience feels (perhaps we could term this "dropping the anchor"), before fully anchoring what you understand to be the core belief of the client (in italics).

For example: "You already have a very good provider who has done an excellent job for you over the past two years. We believe they were highly suited to what you were attempting to do in the previous 24 months. *Yet all of us here agree that the next five years is a different ball game: these inevitable changes will require a different skill set.* We want to explain why we are better suited to help you with the key challenges in the next stage of your growth."

In this way, the new message (i.e. why the client should hire you) evokes the familiar argument already anchored, namely that the future will be different and need different skills.

Even in this short example it has surely become obvious that you need to know your audience's beliefs in as much detail as possible. Clearly, if the beliefs of this particular client are that their existing provider was abysmal or that change isn't coming, then the above opening won't help you!

It should also be clear that – as is so often the case – the best beliefs to tap into are emotional rather than intellectual. Feeling is usually more impactful than thought; and the stronger the existing belief the more likely it will contribute to the formation of a new one.

Like so much of our advice, it turns hugely on KYC, knowing your client. The more you understand the *real* attitude of your client, the stronger position you are in to use it as an anchor to persuade them of something they are yet to be convinced of.

The anchor allows you to align yourself really well with your client, not merely in lip-service, but in their values, which are *so* important.

This is a hugely powerful position from which to persuade. As Jowett and O'Donnell succinctly remind us, "*The persuader is a voice from without speaking the language of the audience's voice within*" (1992, p. 36).

By Richard Keith.

Sources: Charteris-Black, Jonathan, 2005. *Politicians and rhetoric : the persuasive power of metaphor* (Basingstoke : Palgrave Macmillan). Jowett, Garth S, and Victoria O'Donnell, 1992. *Propaganda & persuasion* (Sage Publications: London and Newbury Park).

Question & Waffle

Hasnaê Kerach

Should you answer the question, or fill in time with waffle?

At a networking event recently, I found myself enthralled as I listened to a renowned author and speaker talk about effective communication. The content and finesse and effortlessness of her delivery, and the ease with which she was able to intertwine her key messages with stories from her own life, gave me goose bumps.

"Finally..." I thought to myself "*I have found a compelling female role model in my field who has mastered the art of communication"*. I proceeded to listen diligently as she expounded on the basics of storytelling and the different techniques of structuring your content.

Being a communication adviser, I found myself analysing her voice and visual communication style. I noticed her hand gestures, the changes in her facial expressions and how they aligned seamlessly to add more impact to the message she was conveying.

While mentally processing all these pieces of information, I heard her announce the title of her next session: "*Handling Difficult Questions*". "*Just what I need*!" I thought. Leaning forward in my chair and turning to a fresh page in my notebook, I was ready! I was going to learn her approach to advising her clients on dealing with that prickly topic: handling difficult questions.

She opened this next session by using politicians as a good reference group of how to handle challenging questions. She elegantly proceeded to explain how tough questions can be handled without actually answering the question. "*Discuss the question and make sure to waffle on and on. You know, just like politicians do"* she said.

"*Really?! What a disappointment!"* I thought. My admiration for this lady began to wear off rather quickly. This wasn't what I had expected to hear. No offence to politicians, but the 'political waffle' was a no go for me. No, Nee![1]

The Ostrich approach to questions!

Just imagine if we started answering questions in our day-to-day business life the way our politicians do. Imagine your frustration and disappointment while your supplier or client is dodging or evading your questions. Feel your irritation build up like a pressure cooker while they needlessly divert your attention and transform a potentially meaningful conversation into a pointless and insignificant one.

Evading questions in this manner will put your credibility and integrity on the line and pave the way for the creation of a business culture tainted by distrust and contempt. It is no wonder that British government ministers and politicians are amongst the least trusted people in our society[2].

I understand that dealing with difficult questions might often feel like an emotionally draining hide and seek game, especially when the questioner's intention is to test your knowledge or put you under pressure. However, as a presenter, speaker or interviewee, you have the advantage of being able to brainstorm a list of questions that might be potentially nerve-racking and prepare clear and concise answers in advance.

Continued on page 4

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1. 'Nee' is the Dutch for 'no'.

2. Ipsos MORI Veracity Index November 2017

Question & Waffle…. continued

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts

There are, however, unpredictable situations where the questions thrown at you are entirely out of the scope of your preparation. You are then confronted with challenging questions that you may or may not want to answer, or not be able to answer.

In our view, it is important to resist the temptation to jump in with unconsidered answers or aimless “political waffle”. In those agonising moments, the best thing to do is to actively listen to all parts of the question and then PAUSE. Pausing before answering a question is like a shield designed to protect you from saying something that you later wish you had not said.

This ‘thinking’ pause may be brief, but it should give you ample time to digest the question and to come up with your best possible, and most sincere answer. It also helps you recover your composure, regain control of the discussion, and be able to respond from the right mental and emotional state.

Before you move on to responding to the question, make sure you correct, clarify or paraphrase the question as needed. Answering questions shouldn’t be a guessing game. You need to make sure that you understand the question and that both you and your questioner are on the same page. Once you’ve started answering, it is best to be clear and brief, not wandering off topic. After all, one of the many functions of answering a question is to clear up misunderstandings around an issue.

You’ve probably heard the saying; *“In every challenge lies an opportunity”.* This applies to difficult questions too. When you have very clearly answered the primary question to the best of your ability, you’ve earned the right to ‘Bridge’. You now have the opportunity to expand the topic or highlight an angle that you deem relevant, helpful, informative or positive.

A question is a built-in instrument of communication. It is the initiation of an exchange of words and concepts that is ultimately meant to clarify and reveal the truth of things. Unfortunately, you might sometimes be presented with a very hostile or impossible question. If you feel you have been asked a patently outrageous question, it is perfectly acceptable to express your dismay and block the question calmly and courteously, also informing the questioner why you’ve chosen not to respond.

It’s OK to not know the answer

This article has provided you with a simple method to follow when answering a tough question and, unlike the speaker at the networking event I attended, I hope you are well aware of the negative consequences of ‘’political waffle’’ on your credibility and authority as a professional.

Oftentimes, I hear clients and business owners wonder how to earn their stakeholders’ trust. I think that the question we need to pose instead is how to become so incredibly trustworthy that our clients and other relationships gravitate toward us. This might start with a well-crafted, honest answer to a difficult question.

By Hasnaê Kerach.

"Trusted in Important Affairs"

Growing trust with business partners has never been more important. A guest contributor helps us explore this area.

Des Harney

Mark Hollyoake

Regular readers will be very used to us covering the subject of persuasive communication, and how authenticity helps to develop both relationships and trust. Here Des reviews a contribution from an authority who corroborates some of our long-held views. Des gives some brief background, introduces you to communication-related elements of our guest's thinking and draws some parallels with GPB's own perspective.

GPB's views are based on 25 years spent helping clients to develop more effective communication. Mark Hollyoake arrived at his conclusions after more than five years of exhaustive academic research in his specialist field, coupled with surveys and thorough, data-supported, real-world exploration with major clients.

Source: baneofyourresistance.com

Mark is a Director of Customer Attuned Ltd. Boasting a wealth of experience across the FMCG, Financial Services, Healthcare and Tech. sectors, he holds an MBA in Strategy from Henley, is an Associate Lecturer at UWE Business School, and is finalising his Doctoral thesis at the University of Southampton, on business-to-business (B2B) Trust theory. Ahead of his final submission, Mark shared the fruits of his painstaking efforts: an exclusive Speak Up "scoop".

Einstein once claimed "*whoever is careless with truth in small matters cannot be trusted in important affairs*"[1], a resonant view which provides our title - but what exactly *IS* "trust", anyway?

Mark has developed the following definition of B2B Trust for his thesis: *"The willingness to be vulnerable to another party, coupled with the decision to engage in actions based upon an understanding of ability, credibility, and expectations of mutual value exchange, over time" (Hollyoake, 2018).*

He sees communication as fundamental in establishing, building and supporting trust in relationships (see first diagram, overleaf). Mark began by observing that trust is an over-used term in business, yet is a concept seldom fully appreciated or understood. For me, his point echoes an aphorism attributed to Lord Hanson, a successful late 20th century British businessman: *"Synergy is like the Yeti. It is often talked about but rarely seen."* Why might business trust share similar traits to those of Lord Hanson's Yeti?

"Relational Communication"

This theme, taken from Mark's model, is significant for anyone interested in effective persuasion. He writes about Trust DNA™ operating within and between what he refers to as "the dyad", an entity consisting of two parts, such as a B2B relationship between two organisations. It operates through two linked themes. Firstly, the relational commitment one side demonstrates to the other and, secondly, the way that relational intent is communicated and interpreted between the multiple levels within "the dyad". He examines approaches best suited to the building of trust business relationships, through two key areas:

A) Communication between both sides, and at every organisational level
B) The frequency and quality of that communication.

Mark identifies the value of effective communication, exploring the way it is undertaken both on a cognitive level (via use of suitable media) and on an affective level (through transmission of appropriate attitude, passion and positivity).

Continued on page 6

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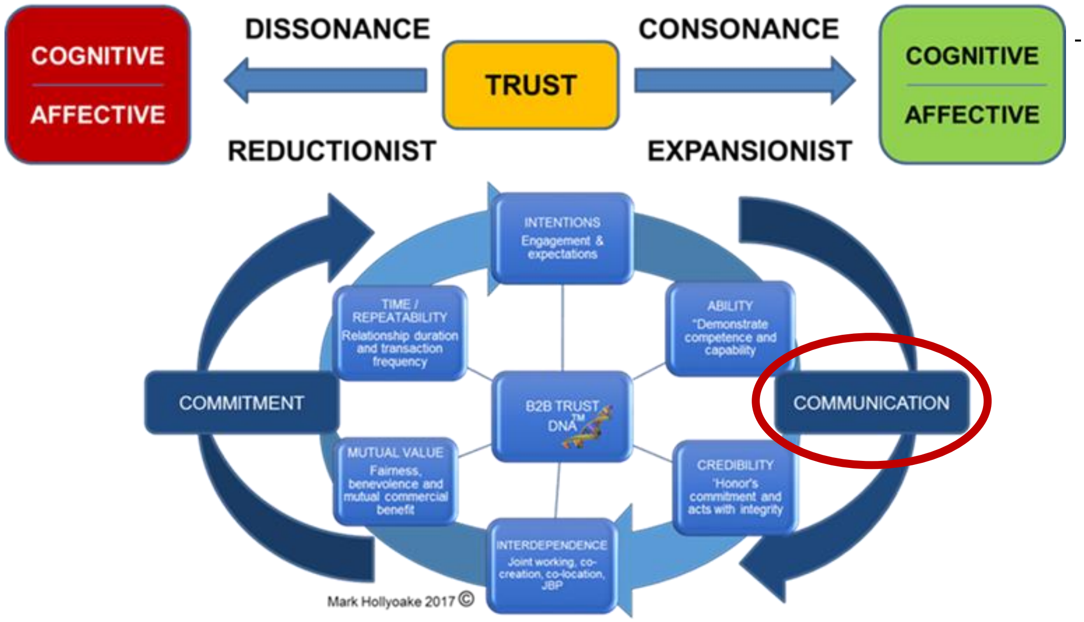
“Trusted in Important Affairs” ….continued



Communication (circled): fundamental in establishing and developing B2B Trust

The intentions of senior executives may well be truly positive; with the potential to deliver mutual incremental value. If this is communicated inappropriately, however, its persuasive power will almost certainly be lost (an extreme example would be a one-off, top-down e-mail, using routine business language). This risks introducing mistrust and dissonance.

In the context of B2B relationships, Mark highlights a potential for communication to create either unwanted dissonance (conflict and contradiction) or consonance (congruent signalling and messaging, via authentic, effective persuasion). Which of these outcomes arises depends on ensuring good execution. Communicating well reinforces and confirms the benefits of trust-based actions, helping establish feed-back loops in a relationship.

Added value for all?

Mark suggests reviewing client P&Ls in order to develop trusted B2B relationships more consistently. Interrogate whether these fairly represent the amount of time, effort and financial investment put in by each party to achieve them. Does the relationship look commercially balanced, when you assess the value it delivers? Who takes what proportion of the benefits and does this represent a ‘fair share’ of the incremental value generated? There doesn’t necessarily need to be a 50/50 sharing of enhanced benefits.

Any split should, however, reflect a share that is fair and reasonable for both sides. Such a situation will further engender mutual trust. Which should then be celebrated and acknowledged in positive communication; cascaded throughout both organisations, to reinforce and amplify the supportive behaviours that have initially generated such success.

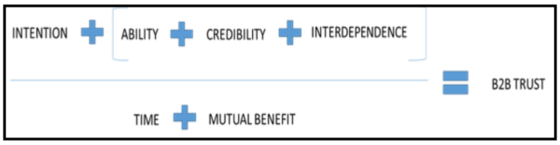
Mark’s new model

There are six inter-linked key elements at the heart of Mark’s B2B Trust model, as shown above: Intentions; Ability; Credibility; Interdependence, Mutual Value and Time/Repeatability. These are all supported by Commitment and Communication. When the latter are correctly harnessed, they help to build trust positively (expansionist consonance effects). Failure to do so risks negative trust dilution (“reductionist dissonance impacts”). The ‘Credibility’ factors Mark maps call to mind David Maisters’ “Trust Equation”. I asked Mark about his view of Maisters’ work. He made some fascinating observations, whilst also providing an alternative equation model (see opposite).

Continued on page 7

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts

"Trusted in Important Affairs" ....continued

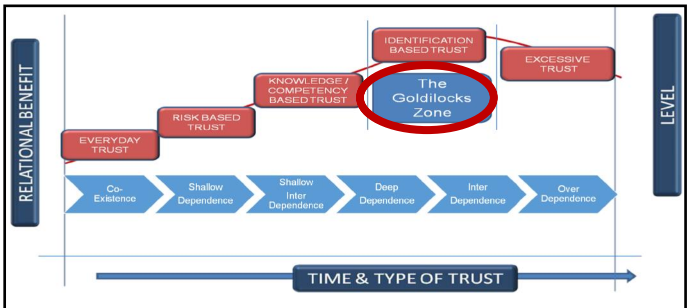


Hollyoake's Trust Equation

During his years of exhaustive study, Mark has not come across evidence in any academic research to support applications of Maisters' definition in a B2B context. While his 'self-orientation' concept could be liable to generate distrust, if openly used as a descriptive term. Mark's thesis incorporates at least two elements he feels have been over-looked in all previous work in this field, including that of Maisters. Namely the creation of mutual benefit, and the impact of passing time in evolving differing levels and types of trust.

Finding Goldilocks in "The Forest"

Once trust is established, leaders must remain vigilant, aware that trust benefits from inhabiting an identified "Goldilocks Zone"; a zone where neither too much nor too little trust is allowed to operate across the relationship. Neither would generate the optimal degree of incremental benefit. The aim is to achieve the level of trust that is 'just right'. Mark also identifies a "dark" side of trust, to be avoided. He calls this "Excessive Trust" (on the right, in the diagram below). It's found in partnerships where there is an over-dependence; often exemplified in relationships established between a small group of key staff in each business, where over-reliance takes root, due to a lack of appropriate oversight.



: Source; Lewicki & Bunker(1995), Sheppard & Sherman (1998), Garguilo & Ertug (2006

Applications

How can business leaders best deploy effective communication to help build trust, then? Mark calls communication the metaphorical 'oil' of the business trust 'engine': lubricating, protecting and facilitating a smoother, longer-lasting process. His research again reinforces some of GPB's own key messages on communication. Pro-active leaders develop trust as a key success factor via a genuine commitment to sharing authentic relationship intentions. These are then clearly communicated onwards for action throughout all levels of their organisation - and are reciprocated through those of the client partner.

All communication should be succinct, clear and accurate, but this is especially true where the development of vital trusting relationships is at stake. It must also be consistent across the leadership team, making sure conflicting messages don't creep in; avoiding communication of any intent recognised to be unrealistic (which could return to haunt you, weaken your position and fatally undermine the future development of trust).

If any conflicts of message or attitude are perceived within your organisation's leadership group, there is a risk that implementing managers may align to the views of those senior leaders most in step with their own preferred (perhaps ill-informed or historical) behaviours and attitudes. In order to project a shared and cohesive corporate stance, personal positions must be signposted as having been abandoned and 'baggage' left behind by individuals, throughout the chain of command. This will optimise the delivery of the organisation's goals.

Leadership communication should never be delivered as a one-off or rarity, either. It should be seen as a valuable opportunity for ongoing dialogue. To be persuasive, leaders must be seen to 'walk their talk'; deploying all influential media and channels, and not relying purely on, say, the odd e-mail.

One survey respondent observed: *"... email should be used only as a confirmation; not as a lobbed instruction into the ether... there are no subtleties and nuances and people interpret what they think you've written"*. Ain't that the truth?!

Continued on page 8

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts

“Trusted in Important Affairs” ….continued

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts

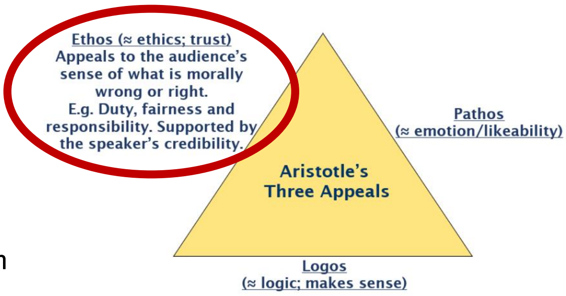
It is notoriously difficult to capture and project consistent meaning to a wide audience, via e-mail alone. Not least if it might be just one of hundreds received on any given day.

Conclusions

Using impactful communication can turn positive intent into business reality more often. Delivering enhanced trust in relationships, in turn leads to incremental value gains for both parties. Consistently communicating persuasively and effectively, time and time again, even in the face of uncertainty, will build trust in your organisation - and in you as a leader and partner - with both your current and your potential future clients.

Effective briefing of staff at all levels on corporate intentions, with strong reinforcing communication between respective managerial levels, is key in optimising the activation of trust at an organisational level. It is also vital in cascading and projecting the original partnership intentions into a greater proportion of those inter-personal relationships whose development is essential, across the participating entities. By contrast, mis-used, abused, or simply poorly used communication (contradictory, discongruent and/or conflicting) is one basis for emerging dissonance and distrust, which will undermine the development and evolution of value-adding relationships.

GPB has previously championed similar key messages to Mark’s, regarding communication and trust. We strongly advocate using all three of Aristotle’s Appeals[2]. One of these, his “Ethos” appeal, depends on Trust, Authority, Duty, Ethics, Responsibility and Fairness (see following diagram). Decades of research by Petty, Cacioppo et al[3] powerfully validates Aristotle’s ancient theories. Establishing an Ethos (Trust) appeal is not only important, but an absolute prerequisite for delivering effective, persuasive communication. It’s a proverbial two-way street: Trust



engenders persuasive communication; good communication can build trust.

Mark’s independent research is the latest investigation into the impacts of communication in ‘real-world’ business environments. He offers a new B2B perspective on well-recognised themes. If you want to discuss Mark’s thesis, ideas and working methods, and/or the impacts these could have in your organisation, or area of influence, GPB will gladly put you in contact with him.

If you would like clients to trust you and your team in “Important Affairs” more often than Lord Hanson sighted his synergy ‘yeti’, or you have doubts about your firm’s ability to achieve this, we’d happily help with all the communication aspects of trust-building.

Many things evolve and change in this crazy world, but the credentials required to be considered trustworthy, honest and authentic have remained broadly consistent at least since Shakespeare’s time, 400 years ago: “*I know you wise… constant…* for *I well believe Thou wilt not utter what thou dost not know; And so far will I trust thee.*”[4]

In fact, they’ve probably remained largely unchanged over the last 2,400 years, since Aristotle was a lad.

By Desmond Harney and Mark Hollyoake.

Mark Hollyoake’s doctoral thesis is due for publication later in 2019. We wish him the very best of luck with the rest of the process that lies ahead of him.

Sources: 1. Albert Einstein, quoted in “Albert Einstein: Historical and Cultural Perspectives”, Ed. Holton & Elkana (1982) 2. Aristotle -“Rhetoric” (from c. 367 BC) 3. Petty, Richard E; Cacioppo, John T (1986) - “The elaboration likelihood model of persuasion. Advances in Experimental Social Psychology”.
4. William Shakespeare’s character Harry Hotspur, in “Henry IV, Pt. I” - Act II, scene 3 (c. 1597).

Time to pause and think

Lynda Russell-Whitaker

Shhh! Let them have time to digest your golden nuggets

Whether or not you are a fan of Nicola Sturgeon, the current First Minister of Scotland, she is an impressive public speaker. As a long-standing Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts, in October last year I was fortunate to have a ringside seat for a talk she gave on the political hot potato that is Brexit (apologies for using the 'B' word in my very first paragraph!).

Nicola Sturgeon's speech at the RSA

The First Minister's speech was measured and articulate. She spoke with passion and conviction. Her pacing, rhythm and in particular the pauses she took after her making her most significant and important points allowed us, as audience members, the time to digest what she had just said.

All too often this skill is sorely lacking in those we choose (or have) to listen to at various meetings, conferences and workshops throughout the year. And even trainers often fail to deploy this skill themselves when delivering group training workshops!

We have all witnessed people delivering presentations and speeches while barely taking a breath. They fill any possible space with their favourite disfluency or pet phrase, rather than pausing to give their audience a reasonable time to think about the point they just made.

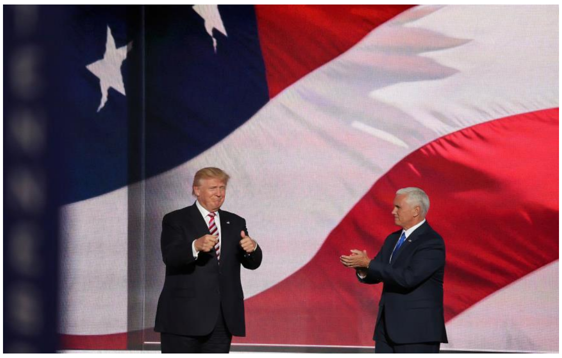
Indeed, many people who present seem to be in a tearing hurry to get to the end of their talk, barely engaging the members of their audience. This hardly inspires us as listeners - and the presenter has missed their opportunity to persuade us to do, think or feel something through the exhibit of a well-expressed point.

Pausing and allowing people to process what you just said is crucial if you want to land those golden nuggets on your audience and create a positive impression. Indeed, it's not only important when we speak or present in public. If you use coaching in the day-to-day management of staff, you will understand the importance of pauses in a 1-to-1 session. They have the same role in a group workshop.

These silences and pauses are where people are given time to review and reflect. They can consider what you said and what it might mean to them. They may even be thinking about what action they want to take as a result.

If you watch or listen to the speeches made by any of the great orators of the 20th and 21st centuries you will notice that they make great use of 'the power of the pause': Martin Luther King, Sir Winston Churchill, Presidents John Kennedy and Barrack Obama are all examples of speech givers who use this technique well.

In his book '*Thank you for arguin*g', the New York Times' bestselling author and language expert, Jay Heinrichs, writes about Donald Trump's particular technique and fondness for soundbites when giving a speech.



Trump.... At it again....

Continued on page 10

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts

Time to pause and think ….continued

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts

Heinrichs spotted a pattern in Trump's speeches which aroused his curiosity. He explains:

"There is ancient method to the seeming madness. Watching one of the speeches, I decided to time those bursts. Each one lasted about 12 seconds. Interesting".

This led Heinrichs to carry out some research on YouTube of speeches in Hollywood films, "*from Braveheart to Hoosiers*". He made an interesting discovery, after watching countless such scenes, timing each one:

"*From the moment the music wells up - signaling the climax of the speech - to the end. Twelve seconds, on average. Rarely more than thirteen or less than eleven. Very interesting. Why? Because 12 seconds last about the length of a well-drawn human breath"*

This often-used and well-known (to speech makers at least) centuries old rhetorical device is known as the '*periodos*', originally a Greek word.

The ancient rhetoricians believed that a well-expressed thought lasts the same length of time, i.e. twelve seconds. They also believed that an audience member's ability to absorb that thought lasts twelve seconds.

That brings me back to my starting point of the importance of giving yourself and your audience time by employing the power of the pause.

Why not experiment with this before your next important speech or presentation? Keep your mobile phone handy and set the timer or get the sound recorder app out.

Allow yourself to breathe fully and deeply. It's an excellent way both to help manage any nerves you may have, and to prepare for the point you are about to make.

Be conscious of, time, and make a note of the length of the points you are making. Following the point you made, pause for several seconds. This will give your audience time to process what you've just said.

Do this for a number of your key points and notice the difference in how you feel. Play the sound file back, and/or play it to a friend or colleague, asking for their feedback.

Practise this way a few times and use this technique for your next talk. How was it different for you? What about your audience members?

Nicola Sturgeon's lecture is available on the RSA website, and on YouTube. The YouTube link is below.

By Lynda Russell-Whitaker.

See Nicola Sturgeon YouTube video: https://www.youtube.com. Then type in " *Keynote Address by First Minister of Scotland | Nicola Sturgeon | RSA Replay".*

Emotions or moods?

It's easy to be confused about which is which, but it is important to be able to tell them apart.

Ewan Pearson

Paul Ekman is one of GPB's few gurus. Guru is very old English(!), it's a Sanskrit word and conventionally it means various things such as 'teacher', 'expert' or 'master'. In some cultures it means much more, suggesting a moral compass, or a values leader. We are pretty cautious about many of the many in our field. Those for instance who are business people rather than academics, and whose work has not been peer group reviewed, published in a learned journal, or whose experimental results have not been repeated with the same outcomes.

Ekman though was a Psychology professor at UCSF[1] for over 30 years and is also an author. So to us he is a guru. It was his work on the Facial Action Coding System (FACS), a worldwide system that controversially is innate (not learned) and which underpins our Visual Analysis of facial expression. But he is also well known for the Fox TV series 'Lie to Me' where he was the sage behind the camera, and for his work on Microexpressions. All this has led him into a lengthy analysis of emotions.

He was able to show with FACS that we can all read a face and from that reliably tell a person's emotional state. This is what we use in our Visual Analysis, as what your face says about your emotional state is such an important aspect of communication. It is clear from the huge body of research done that the 'display' of emotions - via the verbal, vocal and visual channels - is key to acts of effective persuasion.

When we share our Scientific Analysis results with our clients, there is a strong theme running through of what the emotions on display are, and whether they are congruent or discongruent with the content of the discourse. However, some clients are initially unsure whether what they feel is an emotion, sometimes describing non-emotive words as emotions. Nervousness for example is a condition, not an emotion.

So, what is an emotion and what is a mood? This would seem an easy question to answer, but even though we all have emotions and can easily recognise them in others, when you give the question a prod, it can be hard to tell them apart.

Wikipedia defines an emotion as a strong feeling that comes from one's mood, circumstances or relationships with others, and a mood as a temporary state of mind or feeling. Glad that's clear!

The various emotional states have been catalogued by researchers, and I have read that there are over 34,000 such identifiable and distinguishable emotions! Prof. James Russell in 1989 came up with an early version of this list, with his Circumplex Model. He helpfully plotted them all on two axis - positive-negative and arousal-subdued. Here is a simplified version, showing 28 core emotions:

1989 JAMES A. RUSSELL

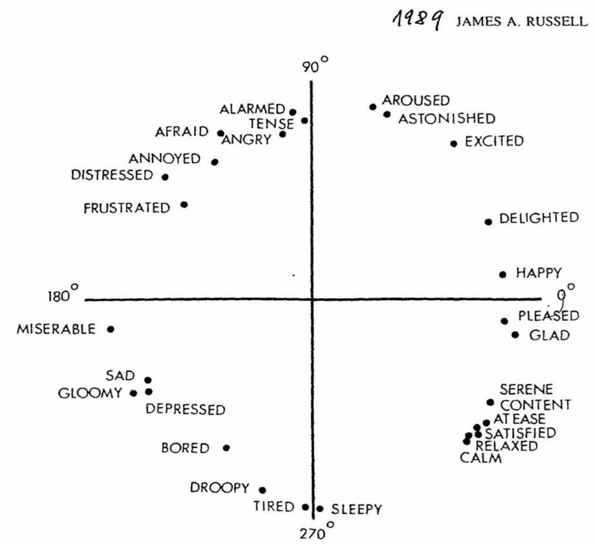


FIGURE 4.1. Circumplex model of emotion-related categories.

Mostly, emotional states are transient, easy come easy go, whilst moods last longer, perhaps from hours to days, and are harder to shake off.

Continued on page 12

Advice *squeezed* straight from the experts

Emotions or moods? ….continued

If though the state lasts weeks to months, it is likely to be an affective disorder rather than a mood. You can of course also be ‘in a mood’ and have an emotional episode on top….

So here is our guide to distinguishing emotions from moods, with thanks to Ekman for sharing. He has also published a book called ‘*The Nature of Emotion’,* if you would like to read more. Ekman suggests that the difference is determined by 5 main factors: Duration, Provocation, Modulation, Awareness and (of course) Facial Expression.

Duration

Mostly, emotional states last for seconds to minutes, perhaps to hours (Ekman, 1984). It would be easy to agree that moods last longer than an emotional episode, perhaps from hours to days, and also that they are harder to shake off. If you think you are in one emotional state for hours, it is more likely that you have experienced a sequence of recurrent episodes of the same emotion. Hence, when it comes to, say, public speaking, one can feel anxious before and at the start, but this can quickly dissipate and a feeling of happiness or calmness can take its place (yes, it’s possible!). But anxiety can return.

Provocation

The onset of an emotional episode requires a stimulus or provocation. It seems that the amount of stimulus required to trigger an emotion is less if that person is already in a related mood. For example, if you are feeling in a fairly positive mood today, then you should find it easier to feel elated, and so laugh and smile; it’s harder if however your day is not going so well. The same is true for negative emotions - an irritable mood can quickly lead to anger.

Modulation

Modulate here means to regulate, or control your emotions, as distinct from our other use of the word in vocal pitch patterns. If there is a contemporaneous underlying mood, it appears that its harder to control or remove the overlaying emotion, or for that emotion to decay back to a neutral or non-emotive state. In addition, the emotion may be expressed at a more severe or advanced level.

Awareness

Ekman suggests that we can all probably tell someone else what caused a particular emotion in us. Indeed we often refer to these as ‘emotional reactions’, so there must be a cause of the emotion that we can refer back to. However, he suggests we’d find it harder to identify the trigger for the mood we’re in. Perhaps it’s our environment, and it’s even possible we imagined or created the trigger for the mood.

Facial Expression

FACS makes it clear that we show emotions on our faces, and they are easy to read. Moods though do not have easily identifiable facial expressions, and indeed there may be nothing on display at all.

It’s easy to tell happy from angry faces

I do hope that by understanding moods and emotions better, you will become a little more self-aware (but not self-conscious), and that this in turn allows you to read others’ emotions and moods more effectively. Surely that is ‘grist to the mill’ for any of you engaged in persuasive communication.

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