



The Art of Woo: Using Strategic Persuasion to Sell Your Ideas

G. Richard Shell , Mario Moussa

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Your projects, programs, and career turn on the difference between “no” and “yes.” Yet selling ideas—especially the kinds of ideas that make organizations work—is a skill shrouded in mystery. Part emotional intelligence, part politics, part rhetoric, and part psychology, selling ideas is not like tricking someone out of his money. It’s about helping others to see things your way—engaging their minds and imaginations.

Charles Lindbergh needed woo to assemble backers for his famous flight; Nelson Mandela used it to lead a revolution in South Africa. In any context, woo is two parts art and one part science.

Richard Shell and Mario Moussa offer a self-assessment to determine which persuasion role fits you best and how to make the most of your natural strengths. They also share vivid stories from their experiences advising thousands of leaders, and stories about famous people like John D. Rockefeller, Andrew Carnegie, Andy Grove, and Bono.

Whether you’re introverted or extroverted, competitive or collaborative, intellectual or practical, *The Art of Woo* will strengthen your persuasion skills in every aspect of your life.

The Art of Woo: Using Strategic Persuasion to Sell Your Ideas Details

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From Reader Review The Art of Woo: Using Strategic Persuasion to Sell Your Ideas for online ebook

Vaishali says

Ugh. Skip this; just meanders too much. Never read a book by academics studying successful leaders... read the books by those leaders themselves.

Newish revelations :

“Skilled negotiators spent about 40% of their time at the bargaining table asking questions.... while average negotiators devoted only 20% ... The rest of their time was spent proposing, arguing, defending their positions and haggling, activities that discouraged the candid flow of interest-based information.”

“The more problems and needs you address, the wider the base of support you can build within the organization.”

"A problem well-stated is a problem half-solved." - Charles Kettering

“How you state the problem defines what your audience will see in its mind’s eye.

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Carol K says

A good read and guide on "winning over others" that provides both background of public figure examples and how-to points

Isabel Hogue says

I listened to the audio version and then bought the print version.

This book is a good lesson in civility, among other things.

On the audio version, the one thing I found distracting was the reader's attempt to "make character voices." Very difficult to do effectively, and when done poorly, well . . . it distracts from the text. That's all I'll say.

V says

Woo: "It is a relationship-based persuasion, a strategic process for getting people's attention, pitching your ideas, and obtaining approval for your plans and projects."

Who Woo Works:

Step 1 - Survey your situation

Step 2 - Confront the five barriers (negative relationships, poor credibility, communication mismatches, contrary belief systems, conflicting interests)

Step 3 - Make your pitch

Step 4 - Secure your commitments.

"Everyone's Favorite Topic: Their Own Needs"

Sergei_kalinin says

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????? ?????????? ?????????? ? ??????????-????? ?? ????? - ? ??? ??????: <http://s-kalinin.blogspot.ru/2013/07/...>

Matthew S. says

Great read on internal selling. Shell and Moussa take a very dense subject and boil down actionable principles to take into your career. The self inventories are helpful and the illustrations are memorable.

E says

A smart guide to the art and science of persuasion

Salespeople market products and services. Successful people within organizations market ideas. Can you market yours? In this smart, well-sourced book, G. Richard Shell and Mario Moussa show you how to sell your concepts to your colleagues and clients. They detail six primary "influence channels" and five "persuasion roles." They also outline the four components of an effective persuasion. If you want to promote your ideas, getAbstract suggests following their savvy, sensible, step-by-step approach, laced with expertise, erudition, knowledge and wisdom. This book features an added bonus: scores of colorful real-life anecdotes that support the authors' primary points. These include a vignette about how lawyers in ancient Rome hired professional "wailers" to weep in court about their clients' injuries, and a story about the way Nelson Mandela used his wits to win concessions for himself and his fellow prisoners. Shell and Moussa teach you how to use a potent mixture of art and science to become a master persuader.

Todd Benschneider says

A valuable must read on the topic of selling and the psychology of the decision making process. Too bad that the title doesn't convey that the contents are scholarly research. Many conclusions drawn from a wide range of other scholar's research, comes across as very credible and most importantly the conclusions intuitively make sense.

Sylv C says

OK read. The topical bibliography at the end lists some pretty interesting biographies. The authors concisely summarize some of the mental frameworks for negotiating, pitching, building political alliances, and overcoming some of the common pitfalls to getting buy-in for an idea. They also do a good job of providing ample real-life examples. Probably best audience are recent graduates or anyone who needs a framework for navigating the political realities of selling and then implementing an idea within large organizations where many factors from stepping on people's toes to not having a sufficiently inclusive coalition can torpedo the best of ideas. 3.5 to 4 stars.

Sam says

First understand myself of my style and tendency on the channels that I use most.

Then, check through the four steps, see if I have handle the barriers well and work out the whole program carefully and innovative enough.

Persuasion is tough job. Character plays a critical role in this game.

This book is interesting, it apply story telling skills, interact to theories and psychology and careful selected examples to "persuade" readers that this Art of Woo workbook is excellent and the framework it introduce to us works well.

I like this book, its fun to read those story with its easy plan English. Also, it covered the political aspect on any persuasion and mark the difference between negotiation and persuasion too. And the three appendix are simple tools for immediate application.

It is a book for those who need to do a sales function. No matter you are a salesman or a doctor, or a senior management, you got to sell your ideas. People used to think that if you got relationship, you got your selling half done. Now, the book put it in more details: check your relationship see if it is rapport, reciprocal or trustworth. Yes, level of relationship.

A book that is well written, thanks

Steele Dimmock says

This book opens strong. I was blown away by the persuasion channels that you can use to get someone to do something; Authority, Rationality, Vision, Relationships, Interests and Politics. To me this was really ground breaking stuff and probably my most valuable take-away.

But everything started to go down hill around the time they ask you to fill out the questionnaire to find out what type of persuader you are; Commander, Chess Player, Promoter, Advocate and Driver. To me, this was a fruitless exercise and because my scores across all 5 were almost identical, the case studies explaining each persuader in detail, left me unsure whether they were I should find them relevant or not.

3 Stars - Great work on persuasion channels, but the rest of the book is forgettable and, I felt, explained the obvious.

Robert says

In their book, Shell and Moussa develop in a modern context many of Aristotle's ideas about principled as well as effective persuasion. The objective of Woo is to win others over to mutual advantage. That is, Woo "is relationship-based persuasion, a strategic process for getting people's attention, pitching your ideas, and obtaining approval for your plans and projects. It is, in short, one of the most important skills in the repertoire of any entrepreneur, employee, or professional manager whose work requires them to rely on influence and persuasion rather than coercion and force." Shell and Moussa recommend a four-step process to achieve influence goals and then thoroughly explain how to complete each. More specifically,

First, survey the given situation by forging and polishing the idea, map the decision process by understanding the social networks within the organization, determining which persuasion style will be most effective, and summoning whatever passion and conviction may be necessary to achieve the desired objective. Next, confront the given barriers that may include negative relationships, poor credibility, communication mismatches, contrary belief systems, and conflicting interests. Shell and Moussa offer eminently practical advice on how to transform barriers into assets that can be leveraged. Then make the pitch by presenting solid evidence and arguments as well as using various devices to give the proposed ideas and/or course of action a personal touch. Finally, secure the commitments by dealing effectively with politics at both the individual level and throughout the organization. (Chapter 9)

Where to start? Shell and Moussa identify "the six main channels of persuasion that provide the conduits for most idea-selling messages" (each explained in detail, Pages 32-40) and suggest that their reader complete a self-diagnostic (provided in Appendix A) to determine which of the channels would be most appropriate. In Figure 2.1, Shell and Moussa provide a grid within which they suggest that there are five primary persuasion styles and a range of Volume" at which the message is delivered as well as orientation that is either focused on self or on others: the Driver (e.g. Andy Grove), the Commander (e.g. J.P. Morgan), the Promoter (Andrew Carnegie), the Chess Player (e.g. John D. Rockefeller), and the Advocate (e.g. Sam Walton). The challenge when preparing to persuade others is to formulate a presentation that is most appropriate to one's personal style (i.e. authentic because character and purpose "matter most") but also, and just as important, one that is appropriate to both the given objectives (e.g. explain and/or convince) and the given audience. Only then can the appropriate channel be selected.

Gaetan Giannini says

Applied Woo

In their book, *Art of Woo* (Penguin 2007), authors Richard Shell and Mario Moussa present “the selling of ideas” from a sales/negotiation perspective. Despite their rather broad framing of the subject, their discourse is highly instructive for Marketing Public Relations professionals. One of several points that are worth noting is their discussion of barriers to woo. Shell and Moussa consider relationships, credibility, communications mismatches, belief systems, and interest and needs to be the major obstructions to successful persuasion, and, I will argue, they are the same hurdles faced by marketers when pitching journalists and other connectors. Clearly, relationships are critical to PR. The better we know our connectors and the better they know us, the more likely our chances of getting media mentions from connectors picking up our stories, or by their coming to us for assistance on something they are already working on.

Credibility is obvious, but the key to being a trusted source and strengthening the newsworthiness of a pitch. Communications mismatches manifest themselves in the mundane and operational side of PR when marketers forget to pitch connectors in the format and in the timeframe that suits the connector best. Is a journalist more receptive to a phone call, email, or a letter in the mail? Is there a certain time of day week, or month that is typically best? Communications mismatches also occur when styles clash. For some editors and journalists bold, over-the-top pitches work really well, for others, they do not.

A match also needs to exist between the story you are pitching and the belief system of the connector. In the case of pitching in PR it is more about knowing the mission and audience of the connector’s medium than understanding the socio-cultural profile of the connector himself, although both are important.

The last barrier is one that MPR pros are keenly aware of-interests and needs. Connectors are charged with producing content that is interesting to their audience, is in line with the mission of their medium, and supports their editorial calendar. If you can show how it will also please their advertisers or help their medium’s sales people sell into a specific issue or episode, you’ve struck gold.

Check out *Art of Woo*.

Camille Fabre says

I had the chance to attend a training by Richard Shell on *The art of woo*. For those who wonder what is the woo:

woo definition: winning others over. Or if you prefer, the art to persuade people. As the authors write it, "simple to say, hard to do".

They decompose the persuasion process into four steps:

- Survey the situation
- Confront the five barriers - consider all the barriers people have to overcome to be convinced; some of these barriers relate to your personality and credibility; others are dependent on your idea.
- Make your pitch
- Secure your commitments

The book is full of examples and anecdotes that make the theory far more digestible. The authors' favorite story is the story of Charles Lindbergh. He got the idea to try the nonstop flight across the Atlantic Ocean in

a single engine plane, alone, whereas all the other competitors in 1927 focused on planes with two or three engines and a crew of three pilots. Lindbergh was a shy and introvert man and he had to work a lot on himself before being able to pitch and secure funding for his project as people viewed his strategy as pure madness. An another interesting one is the story of Brad Garlinghouse, the author of the Peanut Butter Manifesto, which was published on the first page of the Wall Street Journal a few years back to convince Yahoo CEO to rethink his strategy.

And once you finish to go through everything, or you get bored by the theory, take a pen and fill the quizz in the Appendix A to discover your leadership style.

<http://365books.weebly.com>

Chris says

It's been way too long since I have finished a book, and I didn't think it would be this one. But a friend of mine gave it to me, and I thought it might help with my persuasive abilities...or at least to understand them. I'm not usually one for self-help-style books, and less so for business books. Now I know why.

In fairness, the book did give name to certain methods of persuasion that we all see but fail to recognize. And it did help me discover how to get people to sign onto longer-term projects (like, I don't know, publishing a book?). But in the end, however helpful, it's not a book that's a real page-turner. It's incredibly dry in parts. It succeeds best when it tells the stories of real people doing well or doing poorly.

I must say, though, the last chapter on character was a good note in which to finish...and a little surprising too.
