

Application Paper 1

Anna Guettler

Texas A & M University- Corpus Christi

Author Note

Anna Guettler, is an undergraduate student, Department of Communication & Media, Texas A & M University- Corpus Christi.

Correspondence concerning this paper should be addressed to Anna Guettler, Department of Communication & Media, 330 Bay Hall, Texas A & M University- Corpus Christi, Corpus Christi, TX 78412. Email: aguettler@islander.tamucc.edu

Application Paper

Nature of Persuasion

Persuasion can be defined in quite a few different ways, some definitions more elaborate than others. Essentially, persuasion is when there is a message being relayed from one person to another that is intended to change the way the receiver is going to respond to or think about a particular topic. Persuasive messages might be designed to shape someone's response to something, reinforce an idea that someone already has, or change a preexisting belief that someone holds. There are certain characteristics that a persuasive message might have which would qualify it to be pure persuasion. The person receiving the message should be aware of the message's intent, they should have an alternative choice, the language being used in the conversation should be understood by both parties, and there should be a change that takes place after the message is conveyed. Borderline persuasion is not intentional, doesn't result in changes, can be considered as manipulative, the language being used can be vague, and doesn't have to involve two people directly. The latter form of persuasion can be interpreted as manipulation. Studying and understanding the ins and outs of persuasion can help you become a better communicator, make you better aware of when you are being persuaded, and allow you to persuade others more efficiently. Contrary to those pros, persuasion has the potential to result in manipulation and the study of persuasion does not have reliable results.

Persuasive Message

Recently, my mom booked a house on Canyon Lake for the weekend to celebrate her birthday. I anticipated her approaching me in order to persuade me to join her and the rest of my family at the house. She started out by talking to me about how fun it would be and that she would really appreciate me going. I was aware that she was trying to persuade me to go, despite

the fact that I had a lot of homework to do over the weekend. She told me that if I needed to, I could leave early instead of staying the entirety of the weekend. After she spoke with me, I told her I would have to check my planner to make sure that I did not have any conflicting obligations that would hinder my ability to attend. I ended up not having anything that would prevent me from going to the vacation, so her persuasion attempt was successful.

My mother is obviously very important to me and is very trustworthy, so I could confidently assume that her intentions were pure. I interpreted her message as being one of honesty because she truly wanted me to attend our little weekend family getaway. At no point did I not want to attend, I just had to ensure that attending would not affect my ability to perform in school.

Analysis

This persuasive message was one that was entirely intentional. There was a clear goal that was clarified at the beginning of the message that was communicated between my mother and me. The persuasive message that was being communicated did have desired effects and it succeeded in achieving those effects. For the most part, I had complete free will during my entire decision making process. If I were to have said no and not attended though, I would have made my mom feel bad, so I was pressured by my own morals into caving to her persuasion techniques.

This particular message did contain some aspects of symbolic action. My mom described the things we would do at the lake house, elaborating on how fun it would be if I went. Activities such as canoeing and jet skiing were used as a way to interest me and convince me to go, because my mom knows how much I enjoy doing activities on the water. This persuasive encounter did occur interpersonally, because it occurred face-to-face. My mother and I spoke

about the message in the kitchen of my house. Upon analysis of this particular persuasive message, I can conclude that my mother was using pure persuasion, rather than borderline persuasion.

Conclusion

Persuasion is something that everyone has encountered at some point in his or her life. The majority of persuasive messages are pure, but there are some that are more manipulative in nature. Pure persuasion is obviously the better route to take when trying to persuade someone to do something, but miscommunication and lack of other options are things that might cause a persuasive message to fall more into borderline persuasion. In a persuasive conversation that I was involved in recently, my mom exhibited pure persuasive techniques in order to convince me to attend a weekend family vacation. Her well-rounded persuasion techniques are part of what led me to happily make the decision she wanted me to make. Persuasion is encountered constantly in our lives, and not all of the encounters are necessarily as important as the example I provided. Understanding how persuasion works is very important in order to more effectively communicate with others in the fast-paced decision-making world we live in.