

Activity 2a) Liking

Weapon 3: Liking

"People prefer to say 'yes' to those they know and like" (Cialdini, 1984).

Do you always buy the same cereal? Or do you like to try new things every time you go to the supermarket? Most people prefer to stick to the things they already know, and they also seem to like these things more too! How can this be used as a tool for persuasion?

Those who want to persuade you might try to get you to like them, to make you more likely to agree to their request. A compliment might work well – have you ever heard a positive word from someone, before they asked you to do something for them?

Adverts which use this technique might include beautiful models to advertise their products (because we like pretty things). However, mere exposure is the most effective way of using 'liking' for persuasion. Mere exposure means that simply being familiar with something increases our liking of it. Apparently, the more times you see an advert, the more you start to like the brand or the product. Of course, this has limits (showing you the same ad a hundred times just *might* make you dislike it), but it's the main reason why ads are shown so often – the more times you see them, the more you'll like them (and the more likely you are to buy the products).



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Task

1. **Conduct your own experiment! Pick 5 brands of the same product (e.g. 5 different brands of cereals). Ask your friends and family how much they like each product (e.g. let them rate products on a scale from 1-10). Then ask them to recall as many adverts as they can for each product (e.g. how many adverts for Kellogg's do you remember?). What pattern of data did you observe? Did people recall more adverts for products they liked more? Can you explain your results using the liking principle?**

Activity 1b) Scarcity

Weapon 4: Scarcity

Things which are rare, limited or low in stock seem more desirable to people. When people hear that something is about to run out, they suddenly feel an urge to buy that thing – they just can't face the idea of missing out on a good deal... Which is why sometimes businesses lie about their supply! By putting up signs such as 'last items remaining' or 'everything must go – liquidation' they are trying to make their products seem scarcer and therefore more valuable. How many times have you received an e-mail which said (in bold letters) that this fantastic deal is only valid until the end of the day? This is how businesses use the scarcity principle of persuasion.

One example of this is when Coca-Cola changed its original recipe in 1985. Before the change was introduced, Coca-Cola sales were falling as their rival Pepsi was becoming a leader in the market. However, when the original Coca-Cola was no longer available in the shops (and the original-taste bottles suddenly became very valuable) people started demanding the old recipe back. The thought of being unable to purchase the original flavour made people desire it more, which led to an increase in sales. The original flavour was brought back after 3 months and Coca-Cola got back on their feet. They assured the public this was not a marketing stunt and that they genuinely wanted to change the recipe to offer their customers something new. Regardless of whether or not it was planned, it definitely worked.



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Task

1. Imagine a coffee shop would like to start selling artisanal doughnuts. They hire someone who makes doughnuts with interesting flavours to get more customers. They estimated that they will need to make 300 doughnuts, but these were sold in the first hour of opening. The next day they made 2000 doughnuts, the maximum number of the sweet treats they could make with the resources they had. These too were sold out within a few hours of opening (all gone by 10am!). The owners started to realise that their reviews are going down, lots of people are leaving them 1* ratings! People said that they were angry because they couldn't buy the doughnuts, as they were all gone early in the morning. Those who tried the doughnuts said they weren't even *that* good. Using the principle of scarcity explain why people began buying so many doughnuts, even though the reviews suggested they were not the best.
2. This is a real story! Find out if your reasoning was right by [reading this article](#)