

The 6 Principles of Influence by Robert Cialdini

Influence by Robert Cialdini (1984) has been one of the best books in sales for the past 30 years. His principles of influence continue to this day. The examples from the book date back to the 1980's (for example, door to door sales) which has become less relevant to today's sales person. This document summarises Cialdini's principles, but with modern examples. Enjoy!

- 1) Reciprocation:** is where you first provide somebody with a gift which causes the recipient to respond in kind. Gifts do not need to be expensive. Examples:
 - Book a table at a major event, for a special guest speaker. Invite your customers or prospects.
 - Meet with senior management from your customer's business on a regular basis. Provide them with value through insightful information which can assist their organisation.

- 2) Social Proof:** People look around them to guide their decisions and actions. Examples:
 - If you are considering attending a Meetup, you first want to see how many people are going. You are more likely to register if you see the event is already well booked out.
 - The best time to progress a sales opportunity is to call that customer when you have just made a sale to a similar customer. Managed in the right way will give them confidence in proceeding with your proposal.

- 3) Commitment and Consistency:** People don't like to go back on their word. They will often keep their word, even if they feel they would prefer to reconsider. Example:
 - At the end of a meeting, review all the actions and discussion points. Tell the customer you will email a summary in the next 2 hours. Ask directly if they will please read the email and reply confirming if all the points are correct.

- 4) Liking:** You will have greater influence with customers who like you or are attracted to you. Examples:
 - Build your own personal brand will give you greater influence in your sales environment.
 - Always be fair and do the right thing by your customers. Over the long term your proven reputation as a trusted supplier will provide greater success.

- 5) Authority:** People want to follow the lead of experts. Examples:
 - Uniform/dress/appearance suitable for your industry
 - Become a subject matter expert – no matter how narrow the field.

- 6) Scarcity:** The less there is of something, the more people value it!
 - Time based deadline: Publishing/press deadline, Second offer, End of Quarter, Selling to budget cycles
 - Limited release of products
 - Startups can offer a limited non-monetary value to their first 10 or 20 customers. This gives an incentive for customers to make a decision sooner.