

LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP - Module 4

How to Be a More Influential and Persuasive Leader

 THE BUSINESS SOURCE

Marty M. Fahncke: Hello everybody, and welcome to today's recording for The Business Source. My name is Marty M. Fahncke, and today's topic is Influence and Persuasion.

We are going to be talking to Kevin Hogan. Kevin is one of the world's top experts in the field of influence and persuasion. He is not at the top of his field because of his doctorate in psychology, and he is not at the top of his field because of his degree in speech communication.

He is at the top of his field because he collects the most profound elements of persuasion and shares them in a way that anyone can understand and utilize.

He is the best-selling author of many books including The Science of Influence and The Psychology of Persuasion. He has worked with corporations such as Microsoft and Starbucks, and he has even counseled government leaders.

The bottom line: Kevin doesn't share just theories. He gives us practical and tested tools to make us more influential at work.

Right now I would like to welcome on behalf of The Business Source, Kevin Hogan. Thanks for joining us.

Kevin

Hogan: Hey, Marty! How are you doing?

Marty: I am doing fantastic today. I appreciate you joining us, and I really am honored to have you sharing with our audience today.

Kevin: It is very nice to be here. That is for sure.

Marty: Thanks for giving us some time. I am going to jump right into asking you some questions so we can get to the meat of influence and persuasion for our audience today. Is that alright?

Kevin: Sounds perfect! Absolutely.

Marty: Fantastic. Kevin, you say that credibility is the pivot point of persuasion and it is the key to influencing others. What are the keys to credibility, and what are the most powerful things we can do to become more credible?

Kevin: Credibility comes from a combination of a couple of core traits, the first being trust. If people trust you, if they trust your word, your credibility

level goes gradually higher the more times people see that you have met with their trust level.

The other area about credibility is dependability. In fact, it is kind of interesting. Dependability actually comes up as more significant than honesty when it comes to credibility.

Dependability is huge; trust is huge. Dependability is one of those things that doesn't take a lot of time to establish. If you are on time for your event, your meeting, or your e-mail comes when it is supposed to come, you've accomplished that goal.

Credibility is huge. People need to see you as credible, so you need to be dependable, which means on time, there on the moment, at the minute.

Marty, I was talking to some of the people I coach over in Europe the other day, and in Europe, Europeans are notoriously – and I say notorious only because it is notorious – notoriously late. They actually consider it a good thing to be five or ten minutes late. It is sort of to be expected. If you show up on time for something in France, London, or Spain, something is wrong probably.

In America, being on time or even a minute or two early especially in business is everything. Dependability and your trustworthiness are going to be huge in building credibility. There are other factors, but those are huge.

Marty: It sounds like credibility can be built with even the smallest things. It is not just a big thing.

Kevin: People want to perceive you as credible, they want to believe you, and they want to know that you know what you are talking about. A lot of people become perceived as credible through other ways than being on time.

A lot of people are credible because they don't always have the answer. One of the things my grandfather was so good at when he was around was –he was a colonel in the army and he was also a dean of students at a college. That sort of required an amazing listening set. He had the ability to listen to people talk for 30, 40, and 50 minutes before he even asked a question or even offered a piece of thinking.

People perceived him as being a genius. I never found out if he was because I was always talking and he was always listening. They



perceive him to be a genius because he was such a good listener.

In business for people who are in accounting and leadership positions, management, the ability to listen to people talk, the one thing we want more than anything is that ability to connect with other people and for them to hear us out.

If we do that, our credibility is built right there. We don't know anything about the subject yet, we haven't got the product knowledge, we don't know anything about the business yet, but because we have listened and have had a good question or a second question or a follow up, credibility can build pretty quickly.

Marty: I would love it if you could share a story or an example of a business person that you know of that became more credible, and how he managed to do that as well as the effect that the credibility had on his or her career. Can you share a story?

Kevin: Oh, man! A few come to mind. Sure! One of the people I coached was Tanya Ryman. Tanya was a mother, and she still is a mother. This doesn't change. She was a mother, housewife, mother of three, and she was going into public speaking. She was taking a course I was teaching on how to develop a professional speaking career.

She was nervous, and she didn't know if she could do it. Women typically don't go into the professional speaking field because it is such a tough, competitive field. Women just typically don't make it. I told her that because she had the drive and she had the desire that she could actually do it.

Her big core issue was she didn't have a book; she didn't have CDs, no DVDs. She was a housewife and a mother, and she wasn't employed. The last time she was employed was working with Goldman Sachs maybe six or seven years ago.

That was her thing. Her biggest problem was to build credibility. I taught her everything we could possibly do from the coaching aspect: how to be a professional speaker, how to communicate well, how to read body language, and how to teach body language skills.

She put herself out there on the Web, designed her Web site exactly as we noted. She still hasn't done an event yet. She still hasn't been on television once. She got an offer from I believe it was the country of Guam, a very small country, but they had her come down and do a half-day event.



She has a real nice, cool Web site, and she spoke about body language and a lot of the things I taught her. She did a great job apparently, and she got a testimonial. Somebody put a testimonial on her Web site; I think it was a leader of the event, the revenue department or whatever it was.

Within about two weeks after that she had an offer from the Marriott Corporation. Some sliver part of the organization, some minorities and women section where they wanted her to come and talk about empowerment and body language and how women could be better at communicating. She took that. So, two events.

Now *The O'Reilly Factor* is a television show here in the United States where a gentleman named Bill O'Reilly is on TV every Tuesday night. He has been on for five or ten years. He is on TV, he sees her Web site, and he asks her to come down to the studio. This is about 20 months ago as we are recording this today.

She went down there, and she analyzed the body language of some celebrity that was on the television that evening. She did a real nice job. She appeared good, she had poise, she had presence, she made O'Reilly laugh, and he invited her back the next week and the next week, and the next week.

She has been invited back every single Tuesday for a year and a half on one of the world's largest talk shows. Her book on body language is now a best-seller, outselling my book on body language.

There are a few things here. You can start with zero, but if you have a coach, someone who can help you along, a mentor, and everybody should have a mentor no matter what your job is, what your career is, what your business is, whether you are a manager or accountant. It doesn't matter.

You still should always have a mentor, somebody who you can rely on. If you have that person in your life, they can help you. When you need that reassurance that you can do it and the person is like "But I don't have the experience, I don't have this or that," the mentor can be reassuring.

You know what? A lot of times experience is not the only factor people are looking for. Sometimes people are looking for somebody who is strong, like Hilary Clinton just ran a huge campaign. She got the same popular vote, give or take a few votes, of what Barak Obama did.



It was absolutely superb to see this woman run against another minority, a man, and duke it out all the way to the end. It was pretty cool. Who would have thought 25 to 30 years ago that there would be a woman that close to a nomination for the presidency? That is a pretty neat thing.

Yet the credibility for women is very, very low sometimes. How people build credibility is to actually do it. Here is an interesting thing, a quick note about that campaign. I have commented a little bit about this in the media, but the core thing for her and for women in general is – and I don't know if you have a lot of women listeners or not – the very fact that she stuck it out when everybody was saying “Oh, you should stop” and all of that.

I kept thinking, “You know what? I really hope she doesn't.” If she goes to the end, then she fought it out exactly how she should. That is a perfect example for every single person. Had she not stuck it out, her credibility would have been completely blown for the future.

In other words, this is a quitter; this is somebody who did not make president. Now today she didn't quit, she stuck it out, and she actually has a chance in the future to become the first female president, which is a pretty cool thing.

Marty: Very interesting. That is a great example, both examples that you brought up. So this person went from complete obscurity to a highly credible expert in a very short period of time. What do you think is the main thing you can sort of point to, attribute to and say “This is the critical thing she did to establish her credibility”?

Kevin: Two things: her confidence and her knowledge because that is all she had. The third piece which became a supporting piece was the testimonial, the approval of that government leader. I can't remember the gentleman's name, but the revenue department leader who had put the testimonial up on the Web site.

I think she had one testimonial from the Marriott Corporation. Those things do matter, those testimonials. People saying something about you as a reference to somebody else is a super important thing, too.

Really what people are looking for is they are looking at your body language, they are looking at your poise. How good are you under fire?

Most people aren't very good under fire. They freeze up and don't do



such a great job. The people who do well under fire tend to be the people we follow whether or not they are good or whether or not they are educated.

Probably the credibility broke down to confidence, nice body language, poise, and that ability to stand in front of a television the first time and do an amazing job just following what your mentor said. The little, teeny things make such a big difference.

Marty: That is a great example. Thank you for that. In your book The Science of Influence, you say that you need to give specific instructions or steps when attempting to influence behavior. “There are decades of research that prove that specific instructions are necessary to influence and induce compliance.”

Can you talk a little bit about what that means and how we can best use this philosophy at work?

Kevin: Sure. Let’s take the work analogy and bring it home for a minute. Then we’ll go back to work. Most people have children or know of children somewhere. Imagine that your child is misbehaving one day. This is a stretch for some of us. Your child is doing behavior X, and you are like “Oh, my goodness! What is my kid doing behavior X for again?”

Parents have this amazing tendency to say “Stop it!” That is great; that is okay. Maybe the child will stop at that moment. Because there is no instruction, the child doesn’t know what to do next. There is no direction, there is no instruction, there is no map, and there is no plan.

Tomorrow the mom comes home; the dad comes home and sees the child performing behavior X again. Stop, spankings, and all of this stuff goes on. It can go on for days; it can go on for years. If you have people who don’t figure it out, it can go on throughout the person’s adult life.

Pretty soon these people get hired at jobs, and they are used to someone saying “Stop” or “Don’t do that.” Then they are like “Okay, I won’t,” and then they go back to doing it the next day because nobody has ever given them an instruction or told them what to do specifically.

In management especially it is so crucial to give people a very specific set of things. “I don’t like this; you can’t do that.” Boom! Just exactly like the parent, they did that part good. They’ve got that part. They got the behavior to stop.



Then you have got to move to the instruction part. This is where a lot of people fail; this is where I fail. I am a terrible manager. Management is not my forte, but I can consult there because I can go, "Gee, you screwed that up real bad there. You really have to give the instruction."

So you really need to say, "Hey, I need you to do your spreadsheet this way, I need you to get the report filled out this way, and I need you to do this this way, and e-mail it over to me. Let me approve it, and I'll send it back to you and post it."

That is really what is effective. When you give specific instructions and influence, you win. When you don't, especially at the corporate level, you fail. It is pretty much as simple as that.

Marty: Your example of the kids is really fascinating to me. I have a three-year-old. In all of the child training manuals and what not they say to redirect attention of bad behavior.

If they are coloring on the walls, you don't just yell at them to stop coloring on the walls. You tell them it is not appropriate to color on the walls; it is appropriate to color in your coloring book. Then you get the coloring book out and you redirect them to the proper behavior. Is that kind of what you are talking about?

Kevin: That is a big piece of it. If it is that simple that the person actually has the tool in their hand, and they are close to accomplishing the task except the task is in the wrong location, then yes, that absolutely could be the case.

The core thing for everybody to remember, especially people in management, is people who need other people to perform a result that they are going to get. If you really want to get that person to change the behavior, to stop the behavior, you have got to make it clear that this behavior is not a good behavior.

Don't scold the person themselves. People tend to resent that when you say "You are a moron, you are an idiot, or you are a fool." That stuff doesn't work very well.

It is best to say "You know what?" and nail the behavior. Say "That is not what is necessary here. What we need you to do instead is this." It is sort of like the crayon scenario but you have got to give people a little bit more explicit instructions than that.

If I were to take your metaphor a little further it would be along the lines



of saying “And when you open your book, open it up to page 34, go in there, stay within the lines,” if necessary. If it is a creative class go outside of the lines, and whatever else those instructions are.

Be more detailed. When people have more detail, they tend to comply more because there is a very fine-tuned map. Their brain then sees this very fine-tuned map, this set of directions that is so clear cut that they would actually have to construct something else in their brain randomly to do something different.

You’ll see that once people are given laser beam instructions, just like on MapQuest, when you type in the directions, you might know a different way to go than the MapQuest points out, but you will actually follow MapQuest instead of doing alternative directions just because it is so explicitly laid out on MapQuest.

That is a pretty good example. It wouldn’t surprise me if MapQuest, now that I think about it, if they send you past companies that pay for advertising.

But anyway, that is the deal. You want people to follow a very specific set of instructions. The more specific, the better, and the more likely the person will comply.

Marty: As a manager, how do I keep my employees from feeling that I am micromanaging if I am that explicit and specific?

Kevin: Well, that is not really an influence issue, but micromanagement is one of those areas that is not a really great thing to do. You are usually better off with letting your employees go with the laser beam instructions, perform, and let them do it on their own.

In order to feel competent, people need to feel that they have the self-efficacy, the ability to do stuff on their own. When people are left to do things on their own and they make this beautiful piece of artwork for you, then all of a sudden you weren’t there micromanaging, they did it.

As soon as people feel competent and they have been recognized for that piece of competency that they have, you win big time.

There are huge benefits to not micromanaging. Micromanaging is kind of a disaster waiting to happen. If you get on top of a person and you just literally tell them what to do all day long instead of say this one area that we want to influence them away from and to.



You are going to lose and develop a great deal of hostility and resentment and it could be a lot worse: resistance to projects in the future, inertia, all kinds of stuff. Nothing works well at that level of micromanagement.

You really want to let people go, take their skills. You hired them because they are good. You tell them specifically what you need to have done, and then you let them go do that. That is the ideal situation for compliance.

Marty: I don't mean to keep beating this to death, but I want to make sure our audience completely understands this. What is the line between giving step-by-step specific instructions and kind of over-stepping and micromanaging?

What is the difference there, and how do we make sure we don't cross the line into the negative side of the equation?

Kevin: That is a great question, and it is going to vary from company to company and what the person's specific job is. If they are an accountant, you don't have any alternative but to do things in a preset way.

The data has to be presented in a very specific format. You teach people the process, and then they have to do that process probably daily or maybe several times a day.

You do need to teach people processes, and it needs to be done in a very clear-cut fashion. Then when it comes to things that are outside of the processes that have been assigned, in other words this is not necessarily exactly what you get paid for so you are doing it incorrectly, and then you sort of lay things out for people.

That is more where I was going, but you should always lay things out early in the beginning, when a person is first hired, or when they first move to a different department or a different supervisor. They are your best at getting instructions out early so they are followed later. Generally that is pretty effective.

I don't know if that has totally answered your question, but I might have got it there.

Marty: It sounds almost as though it is a timing issue and giving the instructions and the step-by-step as an up front thing and possibly taking it to the dark side, as it were, would be to continually hound that

person as they are doing it rather than giving the instructions and then stepping back and letting them do it.

Kevin: Once people have a methodology for something and a process, and generally it is a process. Once people have a process, they stick to it, and it becomes rote in a short amount of time. Then people tend to not break away from that.

Whatever you teach early, and this is the same for children and relationships in every aspect of life and business, if you teach them early something very specific, that becomes part of what we call implicit memory in the mind, and we automatically default to there.

It is just like when you turn your computer on. If I am on the road and traveling, when I turn my computer on I almost have no choice but if I want to use my computer with wireless, I turn on Internet Explorer. I just open that browser.

I could open Firefox, but it probably doesn't match the hotel's browsing system, so I will open up with Internet Explorer, and it happens every single time. Then if something doesn't go right, then I will call down for instructions, as an example.

That is kind of the deal there. You want to get it right the first time; teach people right out of the chute. That is where a lot of flaws in our management come out of: not doing it right the first time.

Marty: That makes sense. Thanks for that clarification. There is a really cool word and principle called primacy that you talk about in your book. Can you tell us a little bit about primacy? What is it, and how can we use it to increase our influence?

Kevin: Sure. I will call it primacy, because it comes from priming. It is a pretty cool concept. Primacy: the very first thing that you see. Imagine that you are selling a house. I have been house-hunting lately. I have been looking at houses. When you drive up to houses you want to get an "Oh, that's cool," kind of feeling. That is the very first thing that you see.

When you go and look at the house, you are already sort of primed. You have been preset for finding things that are cool and neat and exciting about this house.

We go in the house, and your brain literally follows the "I'm going to look for cool stuff," okay?



Conversely let's say you went up to that house and you were house hunting, and you got this sort of "Hmmm, that is sort of a blasé house. It even has some stuff wrong. The gutters don't look very nice."

Then your brain literally is preset, and this is called priming. As you go through the house it is going to find things that are wrong. It is going to find things that are dull and drab. The person will not make a sale with the house that day.

The same thing is true with business. The very first thing people see of you when you walk into a room for the very first time, there is sort of the four second rule. You have about four seconds from the very first moment a person sees you until that four seconds has past.

They will have determined whether or not they like you, whether or not you are competent, whether or not you are intelligent, whether or not you are nice, kind, caring, or a good employee. You haven't even said a word yet.

There is a really interesting study that was done, and it is actually replicated quite often at colleges. Basically it goes like this. You show on day one of social psychology. You show the students several of the professors in the college, and you show them pictures or video for four seconds of these professors.

They look at a four-second clip or a photo, not so important which it is. The students say, "Oh, I like that guy! He's going to be a great teacher," or "I don't like that guy. He is not going to be a good teacher. She doesn't seem good; she seems great." This is all the students who didn't take their classes.

The students who are assigned to take their classes fill out a form at the end of the year. How much did you like the professor? They ask all of the same questions that they asked the students who didn't take the class at the beginning of the year.

It turns out that the numbers match. In other words, if a professor came across as being a really cool guy, nice, smart, and intelligent, however that picture is perceived in your mind. That is how he was perceived by the students who took him for the whole semester at the end of the semester.

The huge thing here for people to know at the office is the very first time someone is going to see you, it doesn't matter what the setting is, what the context is, but you need to look appropriate to the setting. You



need to look as ideal to that appropriateness as you can.

If you are working in an office and a dress code is required, you really want to meet that dress code, and you want to do it really, really well. Those first four seconds that somebody sees you are huge. People determine everything about you in those first four seconds, people's hair, their height, and things that you can't control like how tall you are, things that are tough to fix today but can be repaired like your weight.

People who are heavy, particularly women who are heavy run an enormous risk of getting paid much less income just because the very first time somebody saw them they said, "Oh, this person is overweight."

The person ends up making less money. As odd as it sounds, they get promoted less often. The world is totally not fair in this respect, but those first few seconds, those first few primacy moments are crucial.

That is one of the important things for you to take out of this interview today. Realize that if you are going to meet somebody, if you have a project coming up, the first four seconds are going to determine how you will be perceived.

Say you have been at the office for ten years and you are working with the same team that you always work with. Great. Now you have a new set of first four seconds, and those are the first four seconds when you walk into the room to make your presentation to meet with the manager or whatever.

In those first four seconds you need to be acting as precisely as what you think they want to see a competent, intelligent person behaving as because they will judge you, again, by those first four seconds.

They will probably not listen that carefully to what you have to say if they did not find you matching that picture in their head in those first few seconds. It is pretty cool stuff. It is a great question to ask, too.

Marty: The old cliché "You never get a second chance to make a first impression:" is that true?

Kevin: Yeah! I don't like it, but it is true. It is 100% true. For people who try to make up for something that they did it's almost impossible. The data and the research behind it in just about every setting shows that you can't afford that error at the office.

Marty: So what do you do if you made a bad first impression?

Kevin: You have to over perform. If you made a bad first impression, you really do need to over perform. That is where you have the opposite side of the spectrum which is recency.

We know from huge tons of psychological studies, blind behavior studies, and all kinds of stuff that the very last thing a person sees – Have you ever heard of a television show called *American Idol*?

Marty: Yes, I think I have heard of it. It is a little show nobody watches.

Kevin: No, nobody watches.

I have to tell you, I haven't watched this show all the way through ever. Not that it is a bad show; I'm busy. It's a show where people compete as to how talented they are and are they going to become the American Idol, the winner?

They have two, three, six, seven, eight, nine, ten, apparently up to twelve people competing in any week on television. It turns out that if they average ten people on the show tonight if they are competing, the person who goes last wins a third of the time.

If they have ten people, that person should have won ten percent of the time, but they don't. They win about a third of the time, so it is about three and a half times.

The recency effect allows you to make up for a terrible start with primacy by being amazing. So if the last thing your boss sees at night when she goes home because you stayed the extra hour and you didn't get paid for it, and technically, essentially you are not on the clock, but there you are at six o'clock when she goes home.

She sees that, and she goes, "Hmmm. That is interesting. Jane over there is a little more aggressive and impressive than I thought she was." The recency effect can make up for the original screw up.

Everything else in the course of the day, the month, none of that stuff is going to cut it. The very last thing, whether it is the last thing in the day, the last few sentences of a presentation, the last few pages of a report, the last page of a report, that effect, that powerful effect can offset the primacy effect if you blow primacy.

Marty: That is really profound. So you can repair a bad impression, but it

sounds like it is important how and when you try and do that.

Kevin: You got it, and it takes a lot of work at it. You actually have to think a lot about what you are specifically going to do. “I have made a bad first impression. I blew that. What am I going to do now to amaze this person?”

You want to do a great job all day long, but you want the finality, the climax of the story, the play, or the television show to be the amazing part. That is what people will remember is that last couple of minutes, that last couple of hours, that last couple of pages. That is what is going to blow people away.

Marty: We talked about primacy, and we talked about recency. Those two are very much kissing cousins, it sounds like, as far as how they are related and how they affect influence. Thank you for bringing that into the equation as well.

You have many Laws of Influence that you talk about in your books. One of the most interesting ones is the Law of Reciprocity. Tell me about how leaders at all levels can apply the Law of Reciprocity at work with their teams and with their managers.

Kevin: Sure. The Law of Reciprocity: how about I tell a story? About nine years ago I was at the University of St. Thomas teaching an event, a two-day event with one day in November and one day in December.

It was pretty cool. It was all about influence. Part of the instructions were for all of the participants which were managers from everywhere from the post office to the IRS to the corporations. It was quite the mix.

All of these people were told to bring to this one-day event in November, the first of two days, 20 postage stamps, 20 envelopes, 20 Christmas cards, 20 letters that they would be sending out to their friends at Christmas time, and 20 photographs, family photographs. That is what they have to bring. They don't have to bring anything else.

They come and they bring all of this. We had maybe two dozen people in the class that day. So we have two dozen people, and what we do is I have a phone book, a St. Paul phone book. I hand a page out of the phone. We are blessed here in Minnesota. Our phone books have zip codes by people's addresses in the phone book.

So 24 people, and each participant gets a page out of the telephone book. The instruction was to send all of the Christmas cards that you



have, all 20 Christmas cards, to the first 20 people on the page that are on your phone book page.

They were to write anything they wanted on the Christmas card, as much or as little, and they had to sign their letter and include the photo, put a stamp on it, hand address it, and send it out.

Four hundred and eighty Christmas cards I take to the post office, give them to Dave at the post office, and he is like “Hey, these aren’t even your cards.” I said, “Yeah, I know. Don’t even ask.” He takes them, and off they go.

Actually, it is a little before Thanksgiving. The first week of December we met again, and I had given instructions for people to bring if they got anything back. Did anybody else get a Christmas card back?

It turns out that 172 people out of the 480 had sent Christmas cards back to these individuals whom they had never met who were randomly selected from a telephone book.

Now 172 is not 480.

Marty: It is a good chunk though.

Kevin: So you see it, right? It is pretty cool, and people were pretty flabbergasted that they would get four, five, six, seven, eight Christmas cards back.

The reason is that on our Christmas list a lot of times we get Christmas cards from, and you are like “Hmmm, who is that person again? Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah, of course. That is who it is.”

It turns out that the compulsion, the need for reciprocating, to send something back to people is so huge. We don’t want to make a mistake and screw anything up.

I remember about that same time period about ten years ago it was Christmas Eve, and I had gotten a Christmas card from someone I had taken off my Christmas list because they hadn’t sent a card in several years, and I didn’t find it necessary to send that person a Christmas card.

So December 24th, I received a Christmas card, and here it is. It is a very nice Christmas card. It is not just something that somebody signed. It was actually lots of words that they wrote, and they sent a



photo and all of this stuff. I was like “Oh no!” because they weren’t on our list.

I said, “Katie, where the heck are our Christmas cards?” She said, “Well, they are all gone.” “No! They can’t be gone! We’ve got to get one out today!”

She said, “Well, there might be one in the drawer,” and there was. It was huge. It was a monster-sized Christmas card and there were teeny little baby envelopes next to it. I actually folded the Christmas card a little bit, and I stuck it into the envelope. I wrote all of this stuff, “Love, The Hogans,” and all of this stuff.

I brought it to the post office and gave it to Dave or whoever was working that day. It definitely was not your normal looking Christmas card! I remember saying, “Now this is going to get stamped today, right?”

You know why this is important, right? If it is stamped “December 24,” it is forethought, but if it is stamped on the 26th of December I am really out of luck, and they will think I am a big jerk and not a nice person. Davey hit the thing right there and it was ready to go out. I felt relief.

Reciprocity is we feel compelled as humans to help other people to the extent and perhaps a tiny bit more than what they have done for us.

When you invite your friends over to visit and have dinner at your house, the chances are really, really good that they are going to need and feel compelled to ask the same thing for you. They will invite you to go over to their place.

Christmas, I mean all of those great stories! I was told what someone was going to get Katie one year for Christmas, and I knew that Katie hadn’t spent quite that much money on this other gal, so I informed her that the Christmas present she was going to be receiving from these people was a \$120 Christmas gift.

She was like “Oh my goodness!” and off to Target she goes to go and purchase enough money to balance off the \$120. She is going to kill me for telling that.

That is reciprocity. So now let’s bring this to the office, okay? Here we have this concept. Everybody knows that people like to reciprocate if they can. Very few people know how incredibly powerful this compulsion is, and it is a compulsion.



If you are there until six o'clock at night instead of five o'clock when you are supposed to check out, and the boss sees you, the very fact is that your boss is going to feel compelled to reciprocate to you in some like kind, to do something for you that has as much value for you as what that extra hour of work did for them.

We call this inducing reciprocity. Inducing reciprocity simply means that with intention what dastardly good things can I do for my boss, my company, or my co-workers that they are going to feel so compelled that they have to make my life a little easier, quit teasing me about my haircut and be nice to me tomorrow?

The way you do it is by inducing reciprocity, doing something simple, bringing a box of cookies for after lunch, or doing simple things for people around the office like bringing people a glass of water when it wouldn't even be thought of that a person would ever do. Grab a cup of coffee for someone.

Little things like that are huge in building compulsions in other people to do good things for you. That is inducing reciprocity.

Marty: That is a great example of inducing reciprocity for people who are your managers. What is a way of inducing this principle with people you manage, with your team, and your staff?

Kevin: Almost exactly the same. The fact is that reciprocity doesn't know that a biological being, the human being doesn't really know whether somebody works for somebody or not, or if it is flipped around.

Literally, if I was trying to motivate my staff, and I want them to work hard for me, and I want to do good things, I will do things for them that they don't anticipate.

You want to do those things. You want to bring your employee a cup of coffee. Don't ask them. Just bring it to them. Bring them a cup of coffee. Bring them a gift once every few months. They may or may not "deserve it," but this is not about deserving. This is about inducing reciprocity, doing something nice for people.

People used to call it random acts of kindness. People do something randomly every now and then. This is an intentional act of kindness, when you are actually going to do something on purpose today to make somebody else's day go well.



The ancillary benefit for you is that these people do want to perform better for you, work better for you to make you happier, that they will have more concern about you.

Then they go home and spread rumors about you that you are a nice person, and they gossip about how good you are, how kind you are, and what a good person you are to work for, and all of that kind of stuff.

Gossip spreads fast, and once people say something out loud, they tend to stick with those beliefs. The induction of reciprocity, doing cool things for people, little tiny things; it doesn't have to be huge. Maybe something that would be considered a little significant at the time, or a little better than that.

It doesn't have to be anything amazing. Little things go a long way.

Marty: If we have some listeners right now who may be a tiny bit cynical, and they may listen to what you are saying but thinking, "Well that seems a little bit manipulative." What would you say to them?

Kevin: I would say that you think about your children, and we train people from the very moment that they are born to behave in ways that will keep them alive.

You want the ability and the power as a human being so when your child at age two is in the street, and the car is coming towards your child, and you are about 150 feet away from your child, but the person in the car is about 50 feet away from your little girl, and the car is coming and she is on her little tricycle, you need them to get out of the road quickly.

You don't have time for an argument, a discussion, debate, whining, or crying. You simply have to have it so "Jessica, get out of the road. Go onto the grass now," and it has to be that quick.

People have to be primed to comply with those kinds of requests and necessary things. If you don't do it early, try reprogramming someone later on.

It is okay to be concerned about the manipulateness of any influence tool. The fact is that every single conversation that you and I have, Marty, is going to be a conversation where I am trying to influence you to do something, and you are trying to influence me to do something.

In fact, if you just sit back for just a second, you can't think of any



examples of a time when you sat down with anybody: your wife, your child, your boss, your employees, the client, the janitor, the president. At all times we are trying to influence people.

What it comes down to is are you doing a good job getting your child out of the way before the car hits them, or are you doing a bad job and the child gets hit? It is really that simple. You really want people to comply.

If people are bad people, and there are plenty of bad people on this planet, if they utilize tools for bad, that doesn't change the fact that you can do good with yours. You can also choose to be a bad person, too.

I am hoping that everybody listening to the audio file today is an awesome person. Utilizing tools of influence is one of the most cool things you can do. It gets people to do amazing things that they may not have done on their own.

You might be able to actually nudge them a little bit to over perform, to over shoot what they thought they could do and to actually reach goals, make themselves better.

It is really cool to actually have a little nudge in people's lives and get people to do cool stuff and to just make people feel good.

Marty: Well, The Business Source tends to have the top leaders and business people in the world, so I am going to trust that they are going to use these powerful tools that you are talking about today, Kevin, for good instead of evil.

Kevin: I think most will. There is no logic in using things for bad. There are always people who make viruses on the computer and spyware and all of that junk. There is nothing I can really do about that, but I still use a computer, and I still want my programmers to make things that are very effective every time I turn on my computer.

I don't want it to be less effective because somebody is going to use it and do stupid things with it and try to hurt other people.

Marty: Good point, good point. Let's talk about the Law of Contrasts. In talking about the Law of Contrasts in your book, you have a story about the Girl Scout that Johnny Carson interviewed on the *Tonight Show* that really hit home. Could you tell us that story and how we might apply the lessons from that story at work?

Kevin: You guys that are listening to this should know that I wrote this book in 1996. It has been awhile. Johnny Carson, for those of you who are not 111 years old like I am, was a late night television show host for NBC before Jay Leno was.

Johnny was on usually three or four days a week. When he was younger he worked five days a week like most people. When he got older he didn't work hard at all. He always interviewed kids. About once a week he would interview a kid who had done something cool in their life, and they would interview this child.

This one time the girl was a Girl Scout, and she was great! She came on with this big bag in her hand, and she sat down next to Johnny, and I don't remember all of the exact numbers, so don't hold me to any numbers.

Basically the evening went kind of like this. Ed McMahon is sitting over to the girl's right, and Johnny was looking down at her with a big smile on his face. All of a sudden the little girl said something to the effect of, "Mr. Carson, would you be willing to donate \$100,000 to the Girl Scouts?"

Johnny's face hit the desk, because this is a significant amount of money he is being asked for. I remember him pulling out his neck. He had a certain way he would manipulate his neck where he would go, "Ahhh!"

He was moving left to right, he was sweating, and he is very nervous. Ed McMahon is just dying laughing sitting over on the other side because Johnny is being asked for 100 grand by this little girl.

Marty: On national television.

Kevin: Yes, exactly!

On probably, I would think, one of the biggest shows in history for television. Millions of viewers every night.

So he is really sweating. Thirty seconds later the little girl says, "Well, Mr. Carson, if \$100,000 is too much, you could just buy the cookies that are in my bag. I have 20 boxes, and it would only be \$65 or \$100 or something like that."

He pulls out his wallet, and he gives her the money, and says, "Keep the change," and he grabbed the bag of cookies. It was just so cool.



That is the contrast principle: the difference between asking somebody for \$100,000 and asking them for \$65. The contrast, and it makes one choice so compellingly attractive, and the other choice so compellingly, obviously not attractive.

Marty: How do we apply that in the business world?

Kevin: Let's go back to houses again. You've got to forgive me, but that is what I have been doing lately. Everything is focusing on houses now as it is being filtered through my mind.

I go and see a house. I look at house number one, and it is nice, but it is not amazing. Gary, our real estate guy, always shows us the coolest possible house last.

He shows us house A, house B, house C, and house D, four houses that are nice; they are fine. Then he shows us house E which is like "Wow! That is too cool, and it is the same price as the ones that he showed earlier in the day."

That is exactly how he should because all of these prices are approximately the same: price X, price X, price X, and price X, and the last one is price X, too, but the house is like freaking amazing! You are like "Wow! How can you possibly get this house at that price?" He goes, "That's right!"

So that's the deal. Now let's bring that information into the office. What is it that is different between you and the people that you work with in the other offices, the other cubicles, the other desks in the area? What is different about you that is going to stand out to your boss but not necessarily offend the other people at the company?

There has to be something that distinguishes you, that creates an obvious contrast. What is it that is amazing about Jane that is not amazing about anybody else?

We'll go back to that example to someone staying one night a week until six instead of five because that is a pretty good example. This person is there once a week say on Friday, the toughest night of the week to stay late. Everybody else takes off at four o'clock because it is Friday. You leave early!

Jane, she is a pretty sharp girl, and she is going to stay until six. Again, it is a contrast of seeing everybody else take off at four and her staying



and working and getting stuff done and performing really, really well at her job, and getting stuff to the boss's desk at six o'clock so that it is there when she gets in on Monday morning.

The boss goes "Gosh, she is good at this." Nobody else has that. They are all going to finish their projects on Monday morning.

Anything you can do to create contrast, to create a significant difference between you and someone else at the office, you are going to open up the eyes of your supervisor, or of your employees if you are a manager. You are going to see that they see different things.

The manager is going to look down on the employees, and the manager can distinguish herself from the other managers this person has had before by creating one slight change in the environment where they can go "Gosh! I used to work for that guy up in accounting over there, and now I am working for Bill over here. Bill, he's a good guy. He lets us take a 45 minute lunch instead of a 30 minute lunch."

People love that contrast and they will spread gossip and wicked rumors about how nice you are, and again, the contrast principle is very powerful. The bigger the contrast, the better, but it doesn't take a lot to separate out your actions, your behaviors, and who you are from other people.

Most people are remarkably average. As management, this is true, too. Most managers are remarkably average, but those managers who do just a little teeny extra thing are recognized by their employees as being amazing and phenomenal, and incredible. Little things are perceived as big things in the minds of their employees.

Marty: Great examples! Thanks for that. Another law that you talk about in your books is the Law of Consistency. It seems like a really critical piece of the persuasion puzzle.

Why are we so driven to stick to our initial position as far as the Law of Consistency goes, and how can we use this to help us in our quest for greater influence at work?

Kevin: The Law of Consistency, especially in the United States, is a huge, well it almost should be a law. For 300 years people would go, back in the 1600s, 1700s, 1800s, people would go to the store and buy your butter and your wheat and whatever else you bought.

You would give them your \$0.35 for your food for the week. Maybe you

didn't have it this week, though. The guy would write it down: "Kevin owes \$0.35 for food."

I would bring that money in next week, and I would put it on my account. I didn't sign anything. I didn't say anything crucial. We weren't signing anything like "If I don't pay this, penalties and interest will accrue, and jail will be the following thing," and all of this kind of stuff.

Instead it was just the old adage that a man's word is his bond. That was the way things were in this country for most of the time that this country has existed.

Consistency became crucial. People were consistently honest, consistently fruitful, and consistently certain in their behavior. If you knew when somebody said something they were indeed going to do that - that became predictable.

There is nothing that humans like more, not just Americans, but humans in general, than predictability.

Basically, people are going to be predictable based upon their behavior from the past six months or the past year. People don't change very often.

You bring consistency into the office, and there's nothing that management likes more than consistent employees. There's nothing employees like more than consistent managers.

People will say, "You know, that's a tough manager you've got over there."

The gal will say, "Yeah, but you know what? I always know what's coming. I know what to expect. He doesn't have any secrets. At least you always know where he's at, or what he's thinking, because he tells you."

People like that show of consistency. They want to know that you're the same today as you are tomorrow, and as you were the day before. Whether you're the manager, the owner of the business, the accountant – no matter who it is – if you can look at yourself as a brand, like Starbucks, or McDonalds, or Coca-Cola, like you're the Coca-Cola of *you*.

Whoever *you* are, you're Coca-Cola. One thing you know for sure is that if you go into McDonald's today and have lunch, it smells the



same, looks the same, and the food tastes the same as it does at a McDonald's that's a thousand miles from you, or two thousand miles.

The soap in the restroom smells the same in Prague as it does in New York, and I know because I've been both places.

That consistency makes predictability. It causes us to want to be with that which is familiar, which is exactly what we always want. We always want to be around that which is familiar to us.

People are like, "Oh, no, no, I'd rather be with that guy over there," or, "I'd rather work for that company." The fact is that we don't.

No matter how frustrating something can be at this company or with your spouse, the fact is that we are compelled by the Law of Consistency to stay together because we always want that which is familiar to us.

It's only when people start acting differently than they did last year that we want a new manager or we want a new employee, when people start acting differently, and it's negative.

Even if it's an even switch, a lateral change of behavior. This person used to clean up after lunch, and now they're cleaning up before lunch. I find that very weird. What's wrong? Maybe she's drinking. Maybe he's drinking.

People create all kinds of interesting things because consistency isn't being meshed. Your goal as a manager is to be consistent with your employees. Predictable. Always predictable, with the only exception being random intentional acts of kindness where you do something really cool that's good which may not have been anticipated today.

Everything that you can do at the office you want to be seen as consistent. People who are consistent are probably the best candidates for being influential at the office. The most consistent people are the people that you can trust, rely upon, and depend on. They have the highest credibility.

You always know what McDonald's is going to be like, and just like Starbucks. You always know what you're going to get at Starbucks. There are no questions. It's going to be expensive, but there's no question that you're going to like it.

Marty: It's interesting you mentioned McDonald's because you're right. People

go there because they know what they're going to get. Even if it's not very good, they still go because of the consistency.

Kevin: That's exactly what I've said about a hundred times. Quality does not have to be part of the equation. It just has to be familiar.

Marty: Wow, that's really great. Now, out of all the Laws of Influence that you've talked about in your books and that we've talked about today, what is the easiest one for our listeners to take to work tomorrow morning and immediately use to make an impact, to grow their career?

Kevin: Well, you've talked about the two that I would've answered with, which are the Laws of Reciprocity and Contrast, so I'll talk about the third, which is probably the most important overall anyway. That would be the Law of Expectancy.

The Law of Expectancy is best summed up in a cool story. About 25 years ago, Dr. David McClellan with Harvard went into a New York school district and met with a principal of the school. They had a number of fourth-grade classrooms in the school.

They selected two classrooms. They had classroom A and classroom B. This is Dr. McClellan and the principal.

They brought in the teacher of classroom A. They said, "You know what? We've got good news for you. We are going to reassign children out of these two classes, and we're going to give you all of the kids that are the high-IQ kids in the class." He got all of the high-IQ kids.

Then they brought in the other teacher and said, "We have bad news for you. We know you can handle it, but you should know that we're going to reassign all the kids with low IQ into your class." The teacher went out and did his job as he was supposed to.

That year, the high-IQ kids and the low-IQ kids were in these two classes, and the results were relatively predictable. April comes around eight months later, and the kids in the high-IQ class were averaging a 92% across the board: spelling, math, social studies, English, science. Which we'd expect, because they were the highest-IQ kids. Of course they would.

The other class, the low-IQ kids, were averaging about a 64% across the board: spelling, math, English. About a "D" or "D+" in that school, as I recall. We had 92% and 64%, and at that point, when McClellan came back, he was pretty terrified. They stopped the study immediately.



The fact is that the students weren't high-IQ and low-IQ kids. They were just randomly assigned. Heads, you go in that room; tails, that kid's going to go over there.

The teachers' anticipation of the kids that were in the room, how they expected the children to behave, the non-verbal communication that comes off of a teacher's body, and the tonality of the voice fed through.

They weren't allowed to tell the parents, they weren't allowed to tell other students, and they weren't allowed to talk about it with the teachers. That was all part of the original deal. The kids performed consistently with the teacher's expectation level.

If you're a manager, and you've got a group of employees that's under-performing, before you freak out and start firing, you might want to just think, "Hmm, this is interesting. What would happen if I was the fourth-grade teacher that had the low-IQ kids, except that they were all randomly assigned. Instead of firing, this week we just anticipate that the person is going to do better."

How do you do that kind of thing? Well, first of all, it's not necessary that you BS employees. After all, the teachers had no idea, right? They didn't know that they had the high-IQ and low-IQ kids.

However, you know that you have the high-IQ kids. Chances are very, very good that you're a good manager, but you're not omniscient. You really didn't know if your employee would be amazing when you hired that person, and that person, and that person.

Let's just assume that you have average people working for you. The difference between having an employee who produces two and three and four times the production of an average employee, if you have expectancy, is significantly likely to happen.

You want to sit there and just, with absolute confidence and certainty, you say, "Okay, I need you to do me something this week that's big. I need you to work on this project, and I need you to do this project, and she's out of town, so I need you to pull through on that one for me too."

She looks at you, and she's like, "Boy, I don't know if I can get all that done in the course of the week."

He says, "You know what? I'm not worried about it." There's no debate, there's no discussion about how smart the person is, and there's no



BSing or anything like that.

It's just all a sense of certainty that comes off of you. Your body language, your tonality, how you carry yourself, the absolute confidence that you have that that high-IQ employee is going to be a high-IQ employee, and that you could just leave them with the keys to the whole building, and they wouldn't take anything.

That's what happens when you put the keys to the building in somebody's hands. Usually, you have no problems. It's when you tell them to return the keys at the end of the night, and that those keys are really super-important, and all of the sudden you start putting evil ideas into an employee's mind, that you end up with troubles.

When you anticipate that everything will go well, even if you really don't and you just go, "Oh, I'm not worried about it. It'll be fine. You can do it. This is not something that you can't handle. Carry on."

The Law of Expectancy is probably the most powerful of the laws, outside of Contrast and Reciprocity, which are easier to integrate. Expectancy takes a little bit of a leap of faith. From the scientific standpoint, expectancy is incredibly powerful.

When you anticipate, when somebody can see in your face the expectation and the certainty that "You are a good employee," and "My manager thinks that I can do anything, and I don't know why he thinks that. He must be an idiot, but that's what he thinks. He thinks I can do anything."

Then the woman continues on and does everything. She becomes amazing. It's because the manager had the foresight to expect that, to anticipate that, without preaching it.

Marty: That's a great example of exactly what I asked, which is what can we start today, or first thing in the morning, to increase our influence. Walking in the office with a fresh new vision and level of expectancy that things are going to be better, it sounds like you can make them better just by expecting them to be better.

Kevin: There's a Carol Dweck, Dr. Carol Dweck, who's one of the smartest people out there in psychology today. She has written a book called Mindset which I really like.

She's written some textbooks too, for students in college. This one book summarized, if I could say it in five sentences, give or take, it

would be this. When students believe that they can do better on tests, even IQ tests, they tend to actually perform better on tests.

When students believe that their intelligence is fixed, and that their ability to perform is limited, that “I can’t do better. This is who I am. I’m just this person. I’m this kid from Nebraska, and I could never do that,” then that pretty much is where that person’s going to be.

It’s not a metaphysical concept. It’s just that the human animal is an extremely capable mechanism. We’re good at what we do. We could be a whole bunch better, but it takes expectancy to do so.

When people have that anticipation, that mindset, when you can just adjust that mindset a little bit – say you’ve been a jerk for a year, working as a manager, and you’ve been stressed out and everything. We all do that once in a while.

When you walk in tomorrow morning, you don’t have to say that anything has changed necessarily, you just say, “Okay guys. You know what? I was reading this week that Mercury is not in retrograde anymore. Thank goodness. Let’s have a really good week this week, and we should be safe to go.”

Or whatever is within that person’s personality to say that’ll make sense, and that doesn’t sound like you just got back from a motivational seminar. People respond. They respond well.

When you start to give people the responsibility of doing something big, they typically follow through, as long as they have the mindset that they can do it too. It’s not metaphysical. It’s just science. It’s how we’re built as people.

Marty: Well Kevin, that’s been some wonderful information. I’ve really learned a lot, and I know our audience has as well.

In the time we have left, I’d like to touch on one other topic. That is your Nine Golden Keys of Influence. I was wondering if you could briefly go through maybe your top-three list out of your nine golden keys of influence and touch on those a little bit, and how they might influence things for you.

Kevin: Sure, absolutely. First of all, let’s look at it this way. People will do far more to avoid losing something than they will to gain anything.

In other words, say that you have \$50,000 in your retirement fund.

You've got your \$50,000 there, and somebody says, "You know what? You really should put some money into precious metals and natural resources stocks, because it'll help your retirement fund go up."

The very first thing that person will say is "But isn't that risky?" People have this natural aversion to loss. People have a natural aversion to risk.

If you want to influence people, you want to realize that that can work to your benefit in this way. If you say something like this: "You know, if you don't do this way of working at the office, or if you don't accomplish something, what happens is you can't justify getting a raise next year."

All of a sudden, by framing it that way, the person can convince a manager that they can get a raise. You can convince them, as a manager, and say, "You know what? If you don't increase productivity, I can't give you a raise. If you do, I can."

People will do a lot to avoid losing, but less to gain. It's not that people want something so much as it's that we don't want to lose what we already have. We buy insurance, which is extremely expensive, to insure things that are very unlikely to happen.

Eventually you're going to die, but probably not this week. You have insurance on you this week. That's the concept.

You always want to talk about losing. If you frame something in terms of what a person has today that they could lose, that will cause compliance quicker than if you talk about something they can gain.

Does that make sense?

Marty: Yeah, absolutely.

Kevin: Okay. Reducing Choices. Reducing Choices is pretty cool. There's a neat study that was done at Stanford two years ago, I think. It went like this.



A bunch of the students' social psych class went to a grocery store. There were two tables set up back in the produce area. One was on the other side of the store.

On one of the tables they put six jellies, like strawberry preserves and blueberry. There were six different kinds of jelly. On the other table on the other side of the store, they had 30 jellies.

On these tables, they had coupons for some amount off. We'll pretend it was fifty cents. That sounds about right.

People could take a coupon and test a jelly, try a jelly, see how it tasted, and if they liked it, bring it up to the counter checkout. We have a table with six jams and jellies on it, and we have a table with 30 jams and jellies.

It turned out that just shy of 90% of all of the jellies and jams tasted by customers that day were on the table with 30. That kind of makes sense, because there were 30 jellies on the table. There were only six on the other one.

Let's just pretend it was 90%. It was about 88.5%, but we'll say it was 90% for simple math. 90% of all the jellies tasted were on the table that had the 30.

However, that table only amounted for 11% of the sales. The table that had the six jams on it amounted for almost 90% of the sales, even though only a tenth of the people actually tasted jelly at that table.

Once people tasted something from a table with very few choices, things were scarcer, they were more hard to come by, more rare, more antiquity, more special, and more unique, as opposed to this table full of tons of jellies, which means they're not very important, and people don't value them as important.

When we reduce people's choices, we increase the probability that the person is going to say yes.

If you look this Sunday in the newspaper, any of the ads that come with your newspaper where there's multiple products on the page – say that Best Buy has televisions on the page, or printers, or a hardware store has lawn mowers or snow blowers, or something along those lines, it really doesn't matter what it is – the fewer the choices, the more the sales that are going to be made.

The ideal number is three. If you can give someone three choices for something, that's your optimal number of decisions that'll be made. The choice will be made.

You show product A, which is a good choice for the person. It's a moderate price. Then you show product B, which is super-expensive and wildly way out there; "No way should I do that."



Then you show product C, which is just a tiny bit less expensive than the higher-priced item, maybe 20% less. It's quite good. Because it's the last one, we've reduced the choices from all these different millions of printers or digital cameras or whatever, and people will buy that last one.

When people have 25 printers on the page, or 25 TVs on the page, because companies always think they want to get all their products out there so their customers can see all their products, sales go down. Nobody says yes.

By reducing choices, you have more people participating. How do you use that at work?

It's really important that your employees participate in your pension plans and your 401K plans. One of the things that makes people feel good at your company is that they're building up retirement.

We know that when people have 300 choices of mutual funds or 500 choices of mutual funds, even though that's better for them realistically – they should have choice, if they understood how to pick the right and better choice, that would be great.

The fact is that we know that far more employees – I don't have all the data with me on this, but it's about three times as many people – will participate in the 401K plans and the profit-sharing and pension plans if there are very few choices available: 10, 12, 13 mutual funds to choose from, as opposed to the complete broad selection of, say, Van Garter and entire companies and groups of funds.

Reduce the choices. People are more likely to participate, and because people are more likely to participate, they will then go and tell people, "Hey, you know what? I work over at 3M, and I've got great benefits."

"We've got this 401K program. They match up to 3% of what I put in. It's so cool. It's a great thing. You know how important that 401K plan is."

Whereas the company that tries really hard to give you tons and tons and tons of choices and says, "Boy, we really want to be the best. We want to give our people all the choices, so they can choose whether they want natural resources, or international funds, or emerging markets, or all that," people don't make choices.



They simply become overwhelmed, and they don't participate. By being "nice," and by trying to manipulate for the best outcome of the person, people don't participate. They end up saving nothing.

Reduce the choices. Reduce the number of jams on the table. More sales happen. More people participate in the profit-sharing plans, and more people say good things about the company when they go out and talk about where they work. Cool?

Marty: Absolutely. I am 100% in agreement on that rule. In my consulting business I always tell people, "If you give people too many choices, they'll usually choose to do nothing."

Kevin: That's the deal. I love choice, but I'm weird too. All choices do for most people is cause inertia. Just give people a left and a right, and maybe a center, and that's enough.

You asked for three, so we'll go with one more. Most people get nervous in front of a group because they think everybody's looking at them. Well, yes they are. Get over it. Everybody's looking at you.

If you have to convince three people of something, you don't want to do it one at a time. Even though you might think, "If I can just talk to them all one at a time, maybe I'll get my raise," or "I'll get my extra time off."

The fact is, the more people that are in a room or an audience, the more likely you are to get approval on whatever you're presenting to them, whatever you're showing them. For each additional person, you have that extra percentage chance of getting a yes response.

Here's what happens. One on one, when you're with somebody – whether you're negotiating, talking about going out on a date, it doesn't matter – one on one, the person has their nuclear defense system up.

They're ready to blast your thoughts out of the air. They're ready to go to war. They don't like what you're saying. They think you're going to be manipulative and all that kind of stuff.

You put five people in that room and stand up in front of five people, and all of a sudden people see you differently. They see you as the one person who's talking to all five.

If you can be like Tanya, the person I told you earlier about, who went on television and just was poised and had that confidence, the same as you would if you were one on one, the chances of those people saying



yes is huge compared to getting each of them to say yes individually, which would be almost impossible.

Always present to a group of people, given the chance. If only ten people are coming to your presentation, invite your friends to come for free. Have everybody come to support you. The more people are in the room, the less people are going to critique, criticize, and think of reasons not to do what you're saying to do.

It's an amazing phenomenon. The more people, the more likely you are to get a yes. The fewer, the more likely you are to hear a no.

Marty: Very interesting. Very interesting indeed.

Well that has been some great information that you've given to us today, Kevin. I really do appreciate it, and I know our audience appreciates it as well.

Any closing thoughts on the topic of influence and persuasion that you want to make sure our audience knows before we wrap things up?

Kevin: Yeah. Become good at influence. When you come home tonight and your kids are out there, you do have the ability with your words and your belief structure that comes through your tonality, your non-verbals, to determine what they're going to do with their life – whether they're going to make good choices or bad choices, or do smart things or stupid things.

You're going to be communicating with the intention to persuade and influence, no matter what. That's what every single conversation is.

Great, great little homework assignment: go home and try to think of one conversation you've had where you weren't trying to influence somebody. It's a pretty cool little exercise.

Back to this. When you go home, you want to be able to get the people that you love and care about to do good things for themselves, for other people, and for their future.

Similarly, when you come to the office, you want the effect of the persuasion. If you have the ability to persuade people to a unified thinking process, where people are going to think in a more coherent, cohesive way at work, you're going to get more done.

People are going to be feeling like they're all part of the same team,



instead of part of competing factions in some kind of a war game. It's so much easier to get people on the same page if you become good at persuasion and become good at influencing people. Your world can change.

The thing is, it's not that hard. It really is just doing one or two of the laws every day or even one or two laws once a week. You can get good at this, you can be effective, you can change your life, you can change your kids' lives, and you can change life at work. It's all pretty cool.

Marty: If the audience would like to learn more about the things you've talked about today, what's the best way to access additional information?

Kevin: Stop off at my Web site, which is me, www.KEVINHOGAN.COM. First of all, there are hundreds of articles about influence. You could kind of get lost. There's so much there.

If you type in your e-mail address and your name, when you get to the page, you'll have a chance to get what's called "Coffee with Kevin Hogan" every week. That means you'll sit down with me every week on Monday morning, have a cup of coffee with me, and learn some cool ideas about influence and persuasion.

It's a pretty easy newsletter around the world. People in management seem to find it one of the better ones that they read. I hear that with some regularity. I urge you to try it once or twice or three times, and if it's not consistent with what you think the best would be, then don't ever open it again. It's pretty cool.

Marty: What's the cost for that?

Kevin: It doesn't. It's free.

Marty: Great. The price is right.

Kevin: Yeah, it's a good price.



Marty: Well Kevin, thank you very, very much for joining us. I know I've learned a lot, and we've had a ton of information. I'm sure there's much more that people can learn.

I encourage you in the audience to check out www.KEVINHOGAN.COM and see what other resource are available there that Kevin has generously offered to give to us.

Thank you so much for your time and your generosity in sharing today, Kevin.

Kevin: You bet. You guys all take care.

Marty: Thank you very much. Ladies and gentlemen, that was Kevin Hogan. He's been talking today about the principles of influence and persuasion.

My name is Marty M. Fahncke, and on behalf of The Business Source I'd like to thank you for joining us for this session. Have a wonderful day.

