

Chapter 11: Compliance Gaining

Key Terms and Concepts

compliance gaining versus persuasion	positive and negative face
types of compliance-gaining strategies	communicator characteristics and compliance gaining
negative altercasting	design logics
dimensions of compliance- gaining situations	expressive design logic
interpersonal versus noninterpersonal compliance gaining	conventional design logic
short-term vs. long-term consequences of compliance gaining	rhetorical design logic
intimate couple types; Traditionals, Separates, and Independents	problems with typology development
reward power	social desirability bias
referent power	primary and secondary goals
coercive power	Goals-Plans-Action Theory
expert power	identity goals
legitimate power	interactional goals
Politeness Theory	resource goals
	arousal goals
	compliance resisting (Box 11.1)

Chapter Summary

I. Compliance gaining refers to attempts to change a person's overt behavior.

A. Studies on this topic have focused on identifying which influence strategies people are most likely to select and use either to influence or to resist the influence of others.

II. Early research by Marwell and Schmitt focused on identifying the various tactics from which persuaders choose when trying to gain compliance. Their typology identified 16 compliance-gaining tactics. They are provided with examples in Table 11.1 (p. 240).

III. Several situational factors influence the type of compliance-gaining strategy that persuaders choose. Examples include:

A. The type of relationship

1) Less socially acceptable tactics tend to be used in noninterpersonal relationships, especially in situations involving short-term consequences; more socially acceptable tactics tend to be used in interpersonal relationships, especially in situations involving long-term consequences.

2) Different couple types (i.e., Traditional, Separate, Independent) tend to use different compliance-gaining strategies.

3) Individuals engage in compliance-seeking strategies (i.e., commitment, alignment, negativity, and harm) in circumstances where a relationship is deteriorating.

B. People can draw upon sources of power to influence others.

1) More powerful people believe they have more legitimacy when seeking compliance so they may not be as polite as less powerful people.

2) In order to maintain "face," less powerful people are more polite when seeking compliance than are more powerful people.

3) Individuals seeking compliance should use direct requests, as they are considered efficient and polite.

4) The nature of refusals also determine whether the sender's "face," the receiver's "face," or both individuals' "faces" are threatened.

C. Communicator Characteristics: Gender, personality, and culture, and other "sender" characteristics, affect the choice of compliance-gaining strategies.

D. O'Keefe (1988, 1990) identified the three different beliefs about communication and termed them design logics.

1) Expressive design logic believers tend to express what they think and feel through primitive means.

2) Conventional design logic believers tend to abide by rules for appropriate social behavior when they express their thoughts and feelings.

3) Rhetorical design logic believers tend to pursue multiple goals, remain proactive, and use rational arguments.

IV. Compliance-gaining research has been plagued by a number of methodological problems:

A. Researchers have been criticized for not creating a comprehensive list of strategies.

Instead, research should be focused on the "features" of compliance-gaining messages.

B. For a number of reasons, choosing from a list of strategies may not represent how persuaders decide what to do in "real life."

1) The social desirability bias may be more likely to occur when people are given a list of strategies to choose from.

2) The construction of strategies offers a more representative approach to uncovering "real-life" compliance-gaining strategies.

V. Recent research has examined the types of goals and rules that communicators try to satisfy when seeking compliance.

A. The Goals-Plans-Action Theory argues that compliance seekers have different types of goals when they attempt to influence others.

B. Compliance seekers try to satisfy the primary goal of compliance and a number of secondary goals (e.g., identity goals, arousal goals), which constrain the types of strategies they can choose.

C. Based on the relationships among all of the goals involved, a person develops plans and then considers possible strategies when attempting to take action.

VI. (Box 11.1) People who use negative altercasting as a compliance-gaining tactic tend to be perceived as less competent and are less persuasive than people who use more prosocial tactics.

VII. (Box 11.2) "No" is not the only response one can use to resist compliance-gaining attempts. Possible strategies in resisting persuasion are offered. In certain situations, it is important to reduce ambiguity in communicating resistance (e.g., resisting sexual advances). When resistance meets resistance, a more negative and intensified resistance strategy is necessary.

VIII. (Box 11.3) The medical context is a unique context in which compliance gaining is essential. Physicians prefer using strategies that appeal to authority, knowledge, and expertise,

and tend to avoid threatening and antisocial strategies. Effective patient compliance-gaining strategies are highlighted.