

Chapter 13: Motivational Appeals

Key Terms and Concepts

motivational appeal	humor and liking
intrinsic versus extrinsic motivation	humor and primary credibility dimensions;
emotional marketing	competence, trustworthiness, goodwill
attachment theory	self-disparaging humor
utilitarian vs. hedonic products	related versus unrelated humor
logos/pathos distinction as an artificial dichotomy	humor's relationship to persuasion
fear appeal	potential sleeper effect
fear level or intensity	related vs. unrelated humor
Extended Parallel Process Model (EPPM)	patriotic appeals
perceived vulnerability	sex appeals
danger control	sex appeals as peripheral cues
fear control	objectification theory
perceived efficacy	self-objectification
response-efficacy	warmth appeals
self-efficacy	increasing warmth via associations
appeals to pity	perceived genuineness of warmth appeals
guilt appeals	ingratiation
controllability (of stigmas)	effectiveness of ingratiation and perceived genuineness
humorous appeals	ingratiation and liking
types of humor; pun, satire, etc.	ingratiation and similarity
indirect function of humor in persuasion	ingratiation and social labeling
humor as a peripheral cue	types of ingratiation; other enhancement, opinion conformity, self-presentation, favors
humor as an attention getter	combining motivational appeals
humor as a distraction	funeral home persuasion (Box 13.1)
humor and counter-arguing	
humor as social proof	

Chapter Summary

I. Motivational appeals are external inducements, often of an emotional nature, that are designed to increase an individual's drive to undertake some course of action.

A. Intrinsic motivation, or self-motivation, is an internal drive to do something.

B. Extrinsic motivation is prompted by some outside stimulus, such as a promise of reward or a threat of punishment.

II. Emotional marketing is based on the idea that consumers develop emotional attachments with brands.

A. Attachment theory suggests people may imbue brands with human qualities; tough, cool, sexy, etc.

B. Consumers may view some brands as an extension of the self.

C. Hedonic purchases involve more emotion than utilitarian purchases.

III. While laypersons often think of logical versus emotional appeals as opposites, the logic-emotion distinction represents a false dichotomy.

- A. People tend to perceive messages they agree with as being more logical or rational in nature.
- B. People tend to perceive messages they disagree with as being more emotional in nature.

IV. Fear appeals are one of the most extensively studied types of motivational appeals.

- A. Janis & Feshbach (1953) finding of a negative relationship (inverted U) between fear intensity and attitude change was flawed on a number of grounds.
- B. The prevailing view is that the relationship between fear intensity and persuasion is positive and linear, as long as certain conditions are satisfied.
- C. Fear appeals are most effective when the following conditions are met:
 - 1) The appeal triggers danger control, rather than fear control, according to Witte's (1992;1994) Extended Parallel Process Model.
 - 2) The recommendations accompanying the appeal are perceived as highly efficacious by receivers.
 - a. An individual must perceive that an effective response is available (response efficacy).
 - b. An individual must perceive that she/he is capable of undertaking that response (self-efficacy).
 - 3) Receivers perceive they are highly vulnerable to the negative consequences.
 - 4) The level of threat or fear does not exceed the level of perceived efficacy.
- D. While fear appeals are effective, there are social and ethical implications related to their use.

V. Appeals to pity and guilt are commonly employed as motivational appeals.

- A. Some charities and philanthropic organizations rely on appeals to pity, but have been criticized for doing so.
- B. Some evidence suggests the use of pity is effective, and perhaps even essential, for securing monetary donations, but not donations of time.
- C. Guilt appeals can be effective, even if the person making the request, or the beneficiary of the request, is not the source of guilt.
- D. Yet, guilt can induce individuals to avoid the person they have wronged, so it is best to frame guilt appeals by emphasizing positive self-feelings that come from doing the right thing.
- E. How receivers react to appeals to help others hinges on the perceived controllability of the others' problem or circumstance.

VI. The use of humor as a motivational appeal is pervasive. Humor is used in almost every persuasive context.

- A. The variety of types of humor (pun, satire, anecdotes, innuendo, irony, metaphor, etc.) complicates efforts to study the effectiveness of humor as a tool of influence.
- B. Humor tends to function as an indirect means of influence.
 - 1) Humor can facilitate persuasion by capturing receivers' attention.
 - 2) Humor can assist persuasion by serving as a distraction that inhibits counter-arguing
 - 3) Humor can facilitate persuasion by increasing liking for the source.
 - 4) humor can function as social proof; everyone's laughing, so it must be okay.

- C. Related humor tends to be more effective than unrelated humor at securing compliance.
- D. The use of humor tends to enhance perceived credibility, with the possible exception of source expertise or competence.
- E. Self-disparaging humor is effective, but should be avoided if a source is already low in credibility, or if there are concerns about the expertise or competence dimension.
- F. Literature reviews suggest that humor can directly persuade, but that humor is most effective as a means of indirectly facilitating persuasion via liking.

VII. Patriotism works as an effective appeal when used appropriately.

- A. The type of appeal used determines its effectiveness.
- B. American branding can backfire if consumers find the appeals exploitive and egocentric.

VIII. The advertising adage “sex sells” explains why sex appeals are so common in media.

- A. Sex appeals are fixtures in advertising, with more contemporary ads using more explicit images and references than ads from previous eras.
- B. Historically, females have been featured in sex appeals
 - 1) objectification theory states that women are more frequently depicted as objects or things.
 - 2) women are portrayed as something men possess or own.
- C. Sex appeals function as peripheral cues to persuasion, and operate through the process of association.
- D. The implicit associations advertisers want receivers to make are:
 - 1) If I use product X, I will look or feel more sexy to others.
 - 2) If I use product X, other sexy people will be attracted to me.
- E. Strong sex appeals can backfire or be ineffective in one of several ways:
 - 1) They may not be effective at all if context is ignored.
 - 2) They may offend receivers and trigger a consumer backlash.
 - 3) They may distract receivers from attending to or processing message content.
 - 4) They may produce undesirable social consequences (e.g., reinforce gender stereotypes, lead to self-objectification)

IX. Warmth appeals are designed to elicit nostalgic sentiments, and a sense of belonging or familiarity.

- A. Warmth appeals are common in advertising, especially for products and services related to the home and family.
- B. Warmth appeals function as peripheral cues to persuasion, and operate by conjuring up favorable associations.
- C. To be effective, warmth appeals must be perceived as genuine or sincere.

X. Ingratiation may be the most common type of motivational inducement used in face-to-face encounters.

- A. Empirical research demonstrates that ingratiation is an effective compliance-gaining strategy.
- B. Transparent attempts at ingratiation are less effective than well-disguised or genuine efforts at ingratiation.
- C. Ingratiation operates in three different ways:

- 1) Ingratiation behavior tends to increase liking.
 - 2) Ingratiation behavior tends to promote perceived similarity
 - 3) Ingratiation behavior can work through social labeling, e.g., bestowing positive labels on others so that they live up to the labels.
- D. Jones (1963) suggests there are three types of ingratiation:
- 1) other enhancement—paying compliments, engaging in flattery.
 - 2) opinion conformity—being agreeable, accepting.
 - 3) self-presentation—bragging, self-promotion.
- E. On its face, ingratiation might seem manipulative and unethical, but in many instances the praise or compliments offered are sincere. If the ingratiation believes in the compliments, flattery, or positive social labels she/he uses, Seiter and Gass see no problem with the strategy.

XI. Motivational appeals can also be used in combination.

- A. Threats of punishment are often coupled with promises of reward.
- B. Guilt is commonly combined with pity.
- C. The danger of using combinations is that they may appear contradictory or may cancel one another out.

XII. (Box 13.1) A person who is grieving the loss of a loved one is much more vulnerable to pity appeals from funeral home directors. A list of “Do’s” and “Don’ts” when making funeral home arrangements are provided.