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The mind is like an iceberg, it floats with only one-seventh of its bulk above water.

SIGMUND FREUD
founding father of psychoanalysis

A. Icons
Shows you which of the three needs (self, social, or system) the technique employs.

B. Name and number
of technique

D. The one-liner
A first glance at what the technique is all about.

E. Ads and illustrations
The techniques are demonstrated using advertisements from around the world, putting the more abstract and theoretical ideas presented in text into concrete visual examples. Note, however, that a persuasive technique itself can be part of an overall campaign strategy and is not limited to individual visual advertisements. Of course, how easily a technique can be recognised and how effectively it can be implemented varies widely. We do not know the degree to which these ads were actually constructed around the underlying influence technique; we only show that they contain them. The images are supported by descriptions interpreting the use of the technique. In some cases, techniques are supported by our own illustrations instead of existing ads. Image credits can be found in the back of the book.

How to use

Read from beginning to end, jump from technique to technique, or just explore the ads and their explanatory captions. There is no right or wrong way to do it; just dive in and get surprised! To get you started, here's an overview of what information you can expect to find.

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| EFFECTIVENESS | X-FACTOR | IMPLEMENTATION |
| ★★★★★ | ★★★★ | ★★★ |

GUARANTEES

If you are not satisfied with this book, we offer a money-back guarantee!

This one-liner would be a great sales pitch for the book you have in your hands and would make you confident that you have made the right choice. Unfortunately, it is also a lie. We still hope you enjoy the book though!
　Guarantees are one of the most straightforward, easy to understand, and strong resistance removing techniques available. They necessarily imply that no matter what the customer does, in the end they cannot lose. Let the importance of this "insurance policy" sink in. At any moment you (the customer) could decide you're not happy with a product, and then you could return it and get your money back. Similarly, you could come back after receiving bad service or poor advice and return things to the status quo. All skepticism in consumers' purchases is based on whether or not it is the right thing to do or to buy. Guarantees remove any doubt or reluctance to make this decision to purchase. Second, they imply that the product or service is of high quality; if it wasn't, the advertiser would not dare to guarantee it! All one needs to do is to identify the problem or the resistance-inducing factor that inhibits a choice, and then guarantee that this will not be a problem. And that's really how simple it is!
　The biggest problem about this technique is that companies have to be able to put their money where their mouth is. If a guarantee is promised, but cannot be delivered, the guarantee is a lie and customers will be enraged.

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This ad visually insinuates a guarantee of everlastingness. On the plus side, there is no direct claim, and thus no need to follow it up on it. On the other hand, the more explicit, clear, and strong a guarantee is, the better it works.

FINAL REMARKS
→ A guarantee needs to be demonstrably credible; make sure that it can be delivered.
→ Consumers should be aware of complicated return policies. A guarantee policy alone is not always a reflection of the producer's trust in the quality of the product, but this combined with a simple return policy is a good sign.

🔍 Anticipatory regret, "It's free!" bias, Post-purchase rationalisation

G. Final remarks
Points out important conclusions and advice on the technique.

C. Persuasion factor
In this expert judgment rating, the techniques are scored on the dimensions of: **'Effectiveness', 'X-Factor'** and **'Ease of implementation'**. The **Effectiveness factor** indicates the extent to which the technique will affect the viewer/reader. It represents the potency of the technique and the likelihood of it having the desired effect. The **X-Factor** describes the "WOW" element of the technique. How sexy the technique is, including: how innovative it is, how interesting it is from a scientific perspective, and how intriguing its workings are. The **Ease of Implementation factor** indicates how easy or hard it is to apply that scientific technique to advertising in practice. Some very interesting techniques are rarely ever applied or require very specific conditions, whereas others can easily be applied to almost any ad in any setting. Of course the judgment is informed but subjective by nature. Scores range from 1 (low) to 5 (high) stars.

F. Main text
Explains the technique, the circumstances under which it works and why, as well as the dos and don'ts and how-to tips for applying the technique. Scientific sources can be found in the back of the book. We have also included a list of other interesting and inspiring books related to the fields of psychology, social influence, communication, design, visual rhetoric, and advertising.

H. Related concepts 🔍
Lists a selection of concepts related to the technique, useful for further online exploration.

by highlighting the target's autonomy to say "No" and they have the added benefit of making the requester appear respectful of the target's choice. Both work best for face-to-face requests or in situations where the target is not anonymous – anonymity removes the need for self-presentation (and therefore resistance) because the request can be dismissed easily. Thus, the requester should be able to see whether the target follows up on the request. The two main benefits of these techniques are their non-reliance on the content of the proposal and their ease of use. By adding a few simple words to the beginning or the end of a request compliance can be significantly increased.

FINAL REMARKS

→ Especially effective when the target feels he or she ought to comply with the proposal morally, but does not really want to or is avoiding it (e.g., campaigns promoting safe sex or donations).
→ BYAF is suitable for almost any request, and both AR and BYAF can be used easily in combination with other influence techniques.
→ The effect is strongest when the target is not anonymous.

🔍 **Reverse psychology, Transparency**

Importantly, the acknowledgement must be at the beginning of the sentence or proposal. In a few cases, the technique can be used as an attempt at reverse psychology: Telling the target what they do not want, paradoxically, makes them want exactly this.

The but you are free (BYAF) technique is hot off the press! It was first reported by Guegguen and Pascal in 2000, and a large review of 42 studies on its effectiveness appeared in 2013. This review showed that emphasising that people are free to choose at the end of a proposal doubled the overall compliance with a direct request. While AR works because the initial answer would be "No," BYAF makes no assumption about the original attitude. Instead, it generates and enhances a sense of freedom by allowing a "No" response. This makes the BYAF technique slightly more versatile and less prone to reactance.

The specific wording of the AR and BYAF techniques is not that important, as long as there is an acknowledgement of resistance or an emphasis on freedom, respectively. Again, both techniques work, paradoxically,

In this campaign, Delas activates the role of "businesswoman" and "leader" in women. Women are known to have to struggle with a multitude of roles (good businesswoman, good mother, sexy lover, interested friend, etc.). Delas tries to make women see that they, too, can achieve whatever they want in life. Women, it's not just for men... activate the businesstiger within you!
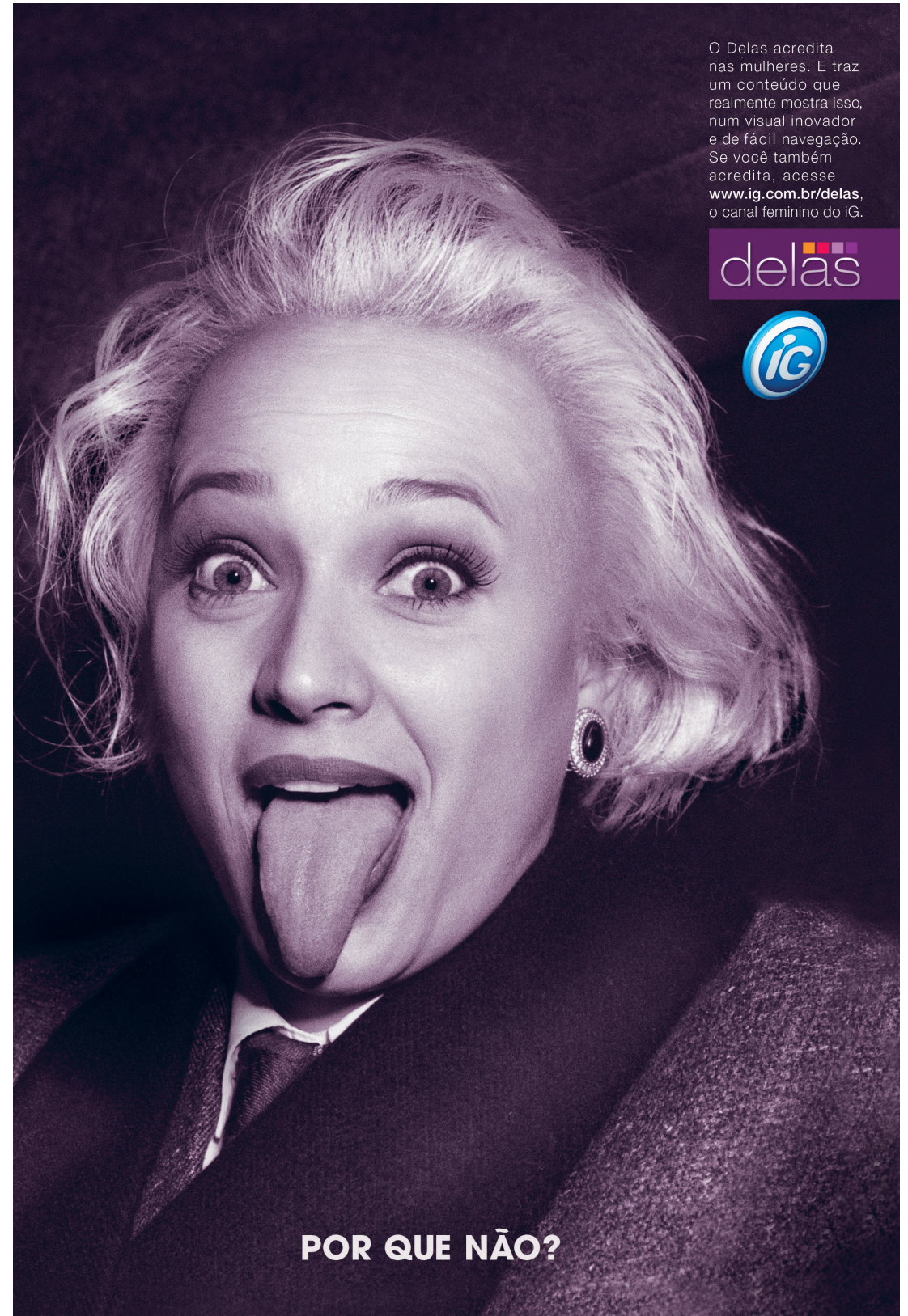
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EFFECTIVENESS | X-FACTOR | IMPLEMENTATION
★★★★☆ | ★★★★☆ | ★★★★★

ATTRACTIVENESS

"It is amazing how complete is the delusion
that beauty is goodness."
Leo Tolstoy, The Kreutzer Sonata

In our culture, striving for equality, we have decided that children should be brought up with maxims illustrating the shallowness of beauty, such as: "Beauty is only skin-deep" and "Beauty is in the eye of the beholder." Given this, it seems paradoxical that societies – Western societies in particular – abound in the use of attractiveness in ad placements, magazines, films, and all other visual media. A natural consequence of this bombardment is that people are continuously surrounded by the attractiveness ideal while simultaneously being expected not to judge a book by its cover.

And people really do believe that they are not seduced more by beautiful men and women in ads toting a company's product. However, research has shown that we not only consciously prefer attractive people and that we associate their appearance with an inherent 'goodness' which then reflects directly on the product (also called the Halo effect), but that attractive faces instantly produce a positive feeling in the viewer. This instantaneous and unconscious (and therefore uncontrollable) 'goodness' association is produced irrespective of the gender of the viewer or the model. Interestingly, looking at attractive individuals produces similar physiological responses in viewers to those observed when people are presented with money. Thus, attractiveness works, and this signal

Surprisingly, an average face with average proportions is not experienced as average, but as attractive. In fact, averageness is to a large degree what attractiveness is. The man and woman on the bottom are composites (a "mean") of the individual faces seen above.

Facial attractiveness is attributable to three main physical components:

1. **Averageness:** How prototypical or representative a face is.
2. **Symmetry:** The degree to which a face is symmetrical on the vertical axis.
3. **Sexual dimorphism:** The hormonal expression of sex-specific features, such as broad chins for men and high cheekbones for women.

An additional reason to consider incorporating (biologically determined) attractiveness in advertising is its universal application. Several surveys and experiments have shown a high personal consensus on facial attractiveness within and across cultures. Therefore, it has been suggested that facial beauty depends more on the inherent physical characteristics of the owner, rather than in the eyes of the perceiver. Even babies as young as six months show visual preferences for attractive faces. Therefore, when the faces used in advertisements are based on the right set of predictors, an attractive person will be perceived positively by all genders, ages, and cultures.

FINAL REMARKS

→ When one understands what is universally considered attractive, it can be implemented almost faultlessly in any campaign.

○ **Credibility, Face perception, Halo effect, Social modeling**

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EFFECTIVENESS | X-FACTOR | IMPLEMENTATION
★★★★☆ | ★★★★☆ | ★★★★☆

HUMOUR

He who laughs is defenceless...

Humour is one of the most widely used techniques in advertising (about one third of all ads are intended to be humorous). However, until recently, scientists had a hard time understanding why brands and agencies used humour so often and how well it worked.

There are several types of humour, but the form used most often is incongruity-resolution. It involves an unusual, strange, or unexpected element in the ad (e.g., several people with white milk moustaches), which our brains try to make sense of (Got milk? Aha…it's a milk ad!). There are two steps: 1.) Thinking about the strange situation and trying to resolve it. 2.) Once resolved, we experience positive affect (find it funny) and may or may not laugh. Approximately 75% of humour used in ads is of this kind.

The use of humour in advertising is a fiercely debated topic. On the one hand some professionals distrust it and think that it is distracting and lures attention away from the core message the ad wants to convey. "People don't buy from clowns" sums up this camp. On the other hand, some professionals claim that it is always good to make people laugh and that it will make the brand well liked and "friendly."

Actually, both camps are right; humour is attention-grabbing and we will remember the joke well but the brand less well. However, on a more unconscious level, humour leads to positive feelings being associated

The surprising positions of the swimsuits in these ads attract viewers' attention. In combination with the brand (it's a water park!), the solution for the surprising situation is easily made: Splashdown's water slides are sooo fast, your swimsuit will end up in a funny location.

with the brand, even if we don't consciously remember the brand. Thesepositive feelings increase the chance that we will choose the brand associated with humour when shopping impulsively. Thus, it depends on an advertiser's goal as to whether humour is a good strategy to employ or not.

If the goal is to be "top-of-mind" when consumers are deliberately considering different brands for a product they'd like to buy, humour is not a good option. This is because although understanding humour increases remembering the joke, it decreases memory for the brand.

However, when the goal is to get people to buy a particular product while shopping, humour is actually a very good strategy to employ. This is especially true for situations in which customers need to make quick decisions or don't care too much, as their behaviour is mostly guided by

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EFFECTIVENESS | X-FACTOR | IMPLEMENTATION
★★★ ★ ★ | ★★★ ★ ★ | ★★★ ★ ★

LOSS VS GAIN FRAMING

Should the glass be half full or half empty? Fearing loss increases risk-taking; expecting gains increases safety behaviour

Is it best to emphasise the possible gains to be made or what losses can be avoided when advertising a specific product? This question about loss vs. gain framing has been thoroughly investigated by Kahneman and Tversky, two of the most famous researchers in the area of human decision-making. A classic experiment is best able to demonstrate the problem: People were presented with a treatment scenario for a deadly disease affecting 600 people. They were given a scenario that was either positively framed or one with a negative frame. They then had to choose either Treatment option A or B.

FRAMING CONDITIONS	TREATMENT A	TREATMENT B
Positive, emphasising gain	*"Saves 200 lives"*	*"A 33% chance of saving all 600 people, 66% possibility of saving no one"*
Negative, emphasising loss	*"400 people will die"*	*"A 33% chance that no people will die, 66% probability that all 600 will die"*

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YOU DON'T SMOKE THE CIGARETTE.
IT'S THE CIGARETTE THAT SMOKES YOU.

ASSOCIATION FOR SMOKER AWARENESS

ADESF

Campaigns promoting healthier lifestyles are often framed in a negative way. They tell us that by regularly performing problem behaviours we will get ill or even die. This ad is formulated using a loss frame. The text tells us: "You don't smoke the cigarette; the cigarette smokes you."

else I'd like to ask of you, but tell me if even this seems inappropriate between strangers." This makes it harder to dismiss the situation and plays on the guilt and need for reciprocity already activated in the audience.

Of course, most people would not think of using such a ruse, as it does not fall within social etiquette and is ethically sketchy. This is exactly why the technique is most widespread among salespeople, in aggressive advertising, and by girl scouts going door-to-door selling chocolate chip cookies.

FINAL REMARKS

→ A compromise by the seller makes the buyer feel obliged to reciprocate.

→ Although the technique works with strangers, the closer the requester is to the target socially, the higher the need is for the target to reciprocate.

→ The effectiveness of this technique is maximised when used face-to-face, where it is harder to dismiss the request.

→ Timing is of the essence; the smaller the delay between the first and second request, the better.

🔎 **Ambit claim, Bait and switch, Exchange principle, Reverse psychology**

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EFFECTIVENESS | X-FACTOR | IMPLEMENTATION
★ ★ ★ ★ ★ | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ | ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

SUBLIMINALS

Are we mindless machines that are influenced by invisibly flashed images?

Everyone who has seen Fight Club remembers the scene where Tyler Durden (Brad Pitt) splices an image of a large male sexual organ into a children's movie. The result: a theater full of bawling kids. While this was purely for his own mischievous amusement, movies and TV commercials have long been the playground for companies that believe that the subconscious presentation of their products will make people buy them. These subliminal advertisements use super-fast image presentations, hidden shapes, subtle audio suggestions (in radio commercials), or simply use sly word compositions to make certain associations active.

There is a strong belief that these unconscious presentations steer our consuming behaviour without us being able to curb it. Such beliefs cater to our paranoia about capitalist or governmental conspiracies trying to turn us into obedient consumers, and demonstrate our need to perceive ourselves as autonomous, rational agents. In fact, we dislike this idea even more than being bombarded with conscious influence attempts. This is surprising, given that consciously processed ads have been shown to have effects on our behaviour that are ten times stronger than unconsciously processed ones.