



THE PERSUASION MISTAKE

EVEN SMART EXECUTIVES MAKE (TED SPEAKER EXPLAINS)

WITH JOSHUA BANDOCH

CHEAT SHEET

042

THE BIG IDEA

Most of us think persuasion means winning the argument, wearing the other person down until they think like we do. **Joshua Bandoch**, TED speaker and author of ***How to Get What You Want***, says that's exactly backwards: real persuasion is shared action, something two people build together, not a contest with a winner and a loser. The shift starts the moment you stop making the conversation about you and **put them first**.

THE GOLDEN RULE

You can't persuade anyone by making it about you.

Every human being is wired to think about themselves first, and talking about ourselves lights up the same reward pathways as sex and money. That's precisely why leading with your own agenda falls flat. The moment you flip the script and get genuinely curious about the other person, you stop competing for airtime and start building something together.

THE FRAMEWORK AT A GLANCE

LEVEL ONE · THE SETUP	LEVEL TWO · THE DEEPER PLAY
SHARED ACTION Josh's real definition of persuasion. Not winning, not convincing. Something two people voluntarily build together, and actually get done.	ASK, DON'T TELL Swap "what do you think?" for "how do you feel?" It lowers the guard and hands you an honest, reasoned answer in return.
ME-FIRST WIRING We're hardwired to talk about ourselves first. Left unchecked, that wiring is the single biggest thing killing your persuasiveness.	NEGATIVITY FLIP Our brains grab bad news faster than good. Persuasive leaders override it on purpose by naming what they're for.
FEEL FIRST Every brain feels before it reasons. Lead with logic before feelings and you're fighting the way people are actually built.	PERSUASION GENIUS Someone who maximizes their odds in every situation, including knowing when to walk away instead of forcing a deal.



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CONCEPT DEEP DIVES

01 ASK, DON'T TELL: THE QUESTION THAT DISARMS

It's not "what do you think about this?" That's a logic-first question, and it puts people on guard. It's "how do you feel about this?" Bandoch found that asking about feelings lowers people's defenses because it feels low-stakes, yet the answer still comes grounded in reason, and tells you instantly whether someone is leaning positive or negative.

ELITE MOVE:

Before you pitch anything, run one feelings check. Swap your default "what do you think?" for "how do you feel about this so far?" and actually pause for the answer before you move forward.

"Before I go any further, how are you feeling about where this is headed?"

02 NEGATIVITY FLIP: WHY PERSUASIVE LEADERS STAY POSITIVE

It's not staying quiet about hard truths or pretending everything's fine. It's refusing to let a conversation live in what's wrong. Bandoch points to JFK, Martin Luther King Jr., and Reagan: every one of them was for something, not just against something, because negativity might grab attention, but a positive vision is what makes people want to follow.

ELITE MOVE:

Before your next team update, write your North Star sentence first: one line naming what you're FOR. Open with that line before you get into the problems.

"Here's what we're building toward, and here's how today's problem fits into that."

03 PERSUASION GENIUS: KNOWING WHEN NOT TO CLOSE

It's not closing every conversation or forcing every yes. A persuasion genius is someone who maximizes their odds of getting what they want, which sometimes means recognizing this isn't the right person or the right time, and moving on. Most of the time, though, it's approaching every exchange with maximum emotional intelligence and framing things in terms that resonate with the other person.

ELITE MOVE:

In your next negotiation, ask for the other side's priorities first, in full, before you state a single one of yours. Write down their list before you share your own.

"Before I share what I'm looking for, would you mind telling me your priorities first?"

CARRY FORWARD QUESTIONS

1. Am I about to make this about me, or about them?
2. Have I asked how they feel about this yet, or am I just telling them what I think?



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3 ACTION ITEMS

1 Ask the Feelings Question

In your next conversation that matters, swap "what do you think?" for "how do you feel about this?" Watch how much faster the guard comes down.

2 Name What You're For

Before you raise a problem with your team, state the positive vision it serves first. Lead with the North Star, not the complaint.

3 Let Them List Priorities First

In your next negotiation or pitch, ask the other person to lay out their priorities before you share yours. Let them talk first, then respond.



— JOSHUA BANDOCH

Insightful Thoughts



“EVERY SINGLE DAY,
WE'RE FACED WITH
A CHOICE:
DO I WANT TO BE
RIGHT, OR DO I
WANT TO MAKE A
DIFFERENCE?”

Elite Business Connector, Episode 042:
THE PERSUASION MISTAKE EVEN SMART
EXECUTIVES MAKE

Josh Bandoch's closing thought for the episode: every conversation is a choice between winning the moment and building the relationship and only one of those pays off long-term.



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FEATURED GUEST

JOSHUA BANDOCH

TED SPEAKER · AUTHOR · PERSUASION EXPERT

Joshua Bandoch has spent over a decade uncovering the secrets of persuasion, mining psychology, neuroscience, economics, public policy, and history for techniques that actually work. He delivered the TEDx talk “How to Be More Persuasive” and is the author of *How to Get What You Want: Mastering the Art and Science of Persuasion*. His path ran through academia, fundraising, public policy advocacy, and speechwriting for senior government officials before he turned his research into a framework anyone can use. He is based in Arlington, Virginia.

CONNECT WITH J.R. BRIGGS

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- Connect: [LinkedIn](#) — search Joshua Bandoch



FEATURED RESOURCE

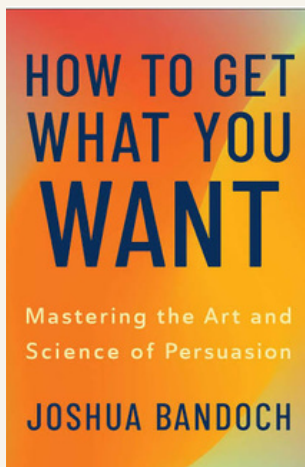
HOW TO GET WHAT YOU WANT

Mastering the Art and Science of Persuasion — by Joshua Bandoch

Everything in this cheat sheet is a preview. The book goes deep on all five aspects of how we're wired for persuasion, with the neuroscience, the negotiation stories, and the exact language to use in sales, leadership, and everyday conversations. If *Look at You, Not Look at Me* changed how you think about your next conversation, this is where the full framework lives.

GET YOUR COPY

- Amazon: [How to Get What You Want: Mastering the Art and Science of Persuasion](#)





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BONUS DEEP DIVE

Joshua Bandoch mentioned negativity bias almost in passing, as the reason bad news travels faster than good and why leaders default to naming problems before naming what's possible. Here's what the research actually says about what Josh taught.

[1] Negative Grabs Attention, Positive Keeps It

Rozin and Royzman's foundational review found negative information is more attention-grabbing and psychologically "louder" than positive information, meaning that leading with problems earns the room's attention but not necessarily its trust.

[2] Bad Outweighs Good Unless You Counter It On Purpose

Baumeister and colleagues' review of dozens of studies on relationships, feedback, and first impressions found that bad consistently carries more psychological weight than good, exactly why the leaders Bandoch cites had to work to cast a positive vision rather than let it happen naturally.

[3] Curiosity lights up the brain like a reward. Kang and colleagues (2009) scanned people with fMRI while they read trivia questions and found curiosity activated the same caudate regions involved in anticipating a reward, a neurological explanation for why a good question makes someone's brain, as J.R. put it, "light up like fireworks."

[4] The Bias Starts in Infancy, and Newsrooms Run On It

Vaish, Grossmann, and Woodward traced the negativity bias back to infant social development, and Soroka and McAdams later showed the same asymmetry drives what makes it onto the news, both underscoring how much deliberate effort it takes for a positive message to cut through.

REFERENCES

Sources cited in this cheat sheet, verified live at time of publication.

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Baumeister, R. F., Bratslavsky, E., Finkenauer, C., & Vohs, K. D. (2001). Bad Is Stronger Than Good. *Review of General Psychology*, 5(4), 323-370.

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Soroka, S., & McAdams, S. (2015). News, Politics, and Negativity. *Political Communication*, 32(1), 1-22.

[View Source →](#)

BY BRYAN BUCKLEY

THE 1ST 5 MINUTES

Josh Bandoch's research says it plainly: the person who talks first isn't the one in control, the one who listens first is. That's the exact philosophy behind The 1st 5 Minutes. Every conversation is won or lost in its opening moments, not by what you say about yourself, but by how quickly you make it about the other person. If this episode's Look at You, Not Look at Me mindset resonated, The 1st 5 Minutes gives you the step-by-step for putting it into practice from the very first hello.

[Get the Book → bryanbuckleyspeaks.com](https://bryanbuckleyspeaks.com)



TURN YOUR 1ST 5 MINUTES INTO YOUR COMPETITIVE ADVANTAGE — LEVERAGE OR LOSE IT.

Bryan Buckley is the leading authority on the 1st 5 Minutes of a business conversation — 5X author, speaker, corporate trainer, and podcast host. He helps sales professionals and leaders develop, deepen, and master their business communication skills so every conversation counts.

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