

Four Influence Hacks

1. REFRAME IT AS A COLLABORATION

Instead of thinking about the argument as a battle where you're trying to win, reframe it in your mind so that you think of it as a partnership, a collaboration in which the two of you together or the group of you together are trying to figure out the right answer. In Daniel Dennett's book, *Intuition Pumps and Other Tools for Thinking*, he outlines How to compose a successful critical commentary in four easy steps:

1. Attempt to re-express your target's position so clearly, vividly and fairly that your target says: "Thanks, I wish I'd thought of putting it that way."
2. List any points of agreement (especially if they are not matters of general or widespread agreement).
3. Mention anything you have learned from your target.
4. Only then are you permitted to say so much as a word of rebuttal or criticism.

2. JEDI MIND TRICK

From the world of motivational interviewing comes [this strategy](#) described by Dan Pink. It's not quite a trick, but it sure works: Asking the right questions. Questions can be the difference between stating what you think someone should think or letting them come up their own good reasons for doing so. Imagine this, you want your son to clean up his room. You ask, "on a scale of 1-10, how important do you think it is to clean up your room every once in a while?" He might say, "Uggh, I don't know, a "2"?" Then you say, "Why didn't you choose a lower number?" And he might say, "Well it would be easier for me to find my stuff..." Then he comes up with his own reasons as opposed to yours.

He begins to persuade himself.

3. COUNTER-ATTITUDINAL ADVOCACY

This is a strategy used by psychologists and mediators. The basic premise of this strategy is to get the person you're trying to influence to verbalize the other point of view that differs from theirs. In research on growth mindset interventions, researchers don't try and "convince" students about the benefits of having a growth mindset, they instead describe the science behind the concept and say, "You don't have to believe this, but this is just what the scientists believe." Then they ask the students to write a letter of advice about the growth mindset to next year's students. The act of writing a letter of advice makes students believe the concepts more strongly.

4. CONSIDER THE EMOTIONAL ELEPHANT

In Chip and Dan Heath's excellent book *Switch: How to Change Things When Change is Hard*, the Heath brothers the brain with two key aspects, the emotional part of the brain (which is like an elephant), and the logical part of the brain (which is like the rider on top of the elephant, trying to control it). It turns out that we are emotional beings and we make more decisions by our emotions than we would care to admit. So, when trying to influence people, try to line up both emotions and logic to move people in the right direction.