

Compliance & Ethics Professional

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I want you to read this article because I want to impact your influencing skills

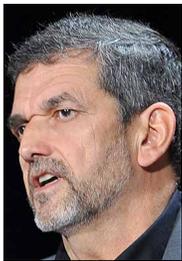
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I want you to read this article because I want to impact your influencing skills. According to some research, more people will read this article simply because I explained why I wanted you to read it. In a recent study, people tried to cut in a copier



Snell

line by just asking if they could cut in line. Adam Dachis wrote a post about the study on Lifehacker.com entitled, *How to Convince People to Let You Cut in Line*. Here is an excerpt:

First, she asked "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine?" 60% allowed her to go ahead of them. When Langer was more specific and asked, "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I'm in a rush?" the rate of compliance shot up to 94%. This shouldn't come as a surprise. What may be the third request: "Excuse me, I have five pages. May I use the Xerox machine because I have to make some copies?" The rate of compliance stayed about the same at 93% when the excuse was completely ridiculous. (Underlining added for emphasis)

Some exit doors just say, "Don't open exit door" or "Don't open this exit door, an alarm will sound." Just before I started writing this article, I noticed this sign on our exit door:

"Don't open this door, an alarm will sound, the police will be alerted and expenses will be incurred." In life the spoils go to those with the best "because."

We need to formulate our "because" more thoughtfully before we ask people to do things. The most influential people I know spend more time than others formulating their "because." Be concise and to the point. Be honest. Some people I know try to think of the best because that people will accept. I prefer the truth. People can see through and are not motivated by the "manufactured because." Some craft their "because" to avoid conflict and really don't get to the truth. They will avoid short term pain, but they will in the long run... have more pain.

Put more time into formulating your "because." Don't just say, "Don't do it." Don't just say "If you do it, an alarm will sound." Tell people exactly why it is that you are asking them to change their approach. Don't manufacture a "because" you think they will find acceptable; tell the truth civilly. Don't value your "because" because you value the "because"; value the "because" because the person you are trying to influence values the "because." *