

*“Granger gives the complex  
art of persuasion... clarity and  
a process for success.”*

—Leslie Schweitzer Miller, M.D.  
New York University Psychoanalytic Institute

*The*  
7  
TRIGGERS TO  
*yes* S

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The New Science  
Behind Influencing  
People's Decisions

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**RUSSELL H. GRANGER**

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*Chapter 1*

# The Awesome Power of Persuasion

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ho wields the world's greatest power? Who accomplishes their dreams?

The most successful people are those who can effectively get things done. They influence others to agree or comply, to effectively execute goals, objectives, and wishes. Success, perhaps survival, for you and for your organization hinges primarily on one skill: the power of persuasion—the ability to persuade people to say “yes,” to willingly concur or follow your directions or act on your behalf. Power may be granted from bosses above you, yet execution and results are accomplished through your success in influencing others.

Persuaders rule. They always have and always will. Great persuaders have enormous power. They motivate change. Build successful teams. Revitalize entire organizations. They create growth and profit. They lead others to new heights. And they achieve personal goals for wealth, power, and influence. Every human interaction requires persuasion: the ability to influence cooperation, collaboration, and results. Great leaders motivate us. They ignite passion. They persuade us to act. The world's greatest achievements have been accomplished through persuasion.

OK. So persuasion is critical to success. We all know that. The question is, what do we know today about the process of persuasion that we didn't know before? What's different? What can we learn to become better persuaders? The difference is simple, dramatic, and, indeed, exciting. With the recent advent of live, real-

time brain imaging technology, and with the resulting disciplines emerging in neuroscience, we have actually learned, for the first time, how the human brain processes information. Finally we know how we make, and how we influence, decisions that determine behaviors and actions. And what we've learned will forever change the way we interact with others.

In his book and five-part PBS TV series, *The Secret Life of the Brain*, Dr. Richard Restak, M.D., neurologist, neuropsychologist, researcher, and clinical professor of neurology at George Washington University Medical Center in Washington, D.C., offers us a real eye-opener. Restak, one of the world's top neurological scientists, recipient of the Linacre Medal for Humanity and Medicine and of the Decade of the Brain Award, uses his chapter, "The Adult Brain," to distill our current brain research into the following blockbuster shown in the book's opening: "We are not thinking machines, we are feeling machines that think."

In another of his books, *Mozart's Brain and the Fighter Pilot*, Restak puts the new knowledge in overall context, summing up the best information we have to date about brain function and how we actually process sensory input to the brain:

Despite popular notions to the contrary, the brain does not operate like a computer or any other machine. That's why we have to stop forcing it to act in ways that are unnatural and unproductive. Your brain is not a logic machine. As it turns out, emotions and feelings about something or someone occur *before* you've made any attempt at conscious evaluation.

This is strong stuff! For several thousand years we've primarily been taught, at least in educated society, to use logic and reason to influence decisions and actions. Yet all this time even the most

sophisticated among us have typically been forcing the brain to act in unnatural, unproductive ways. Not smart! The good news is there's a better way to persuade, to influence, to gain compliance, to obtain commitment on decisions and actions that are in the best interests for all concerned.

### HIT OR MISS, TRIAL AND ERROR

Sure, salespeople, advertisers, and others have been using emotional appeals for years. But it's been hit and miss. We've been working on instinct or hard-fought trial-and-error efforts. Now we have solid facts to help us become consciously competent in the science of persuasion. The better we understand how our brains process information, the better we'll be able to communicate with others—doing so not in a manner that works *against* the brain but in a way that employs our natural brain process.

As science evolves we're coming to realize that our standard approaches to persuasion have been completely wrong. Most of us have learned to persuade by using the best arguments, the best data, and the best information available; all presented in a logical and rational manner to generate the thinking, decisions, and actions we seek. Business leaders—actually most of us—believe that our peers rely heavily on logic and reason to make their decisions and inform their actions. Suddenly, to everyone's amazement, we're learning that the brain just doesn't work this way.

In *Business to Business* magazine, Emory University business school professor Joseph Reiman writes:

Neuroimaging technology allows us to measure brain activity and it does so more accurately because neurons don't lie. These little guys, neurons, all ten billion of them, prove there is a chemical and biological basis for

## THE AWESOME POWER OF PERSUASION

how we behave, and their message is: *business behaves wrongly.*

Wow! That's quite a statement—that we now know the chemical and biological basis for how we behave.

And with that knowledge, we know what we've been doing wrong—and more important, we know what we can do better to influence others. So if we are not thinking machines, if we are not primarily influenced by logic and cognitive reasoning, how do we make decisions? And more important, how do we influence the decisions of others? The answers are fully developed in this book. However, put simply, we each have internal databases that provide us with the ability to immediately feel the right response to outside stimuli.

From birth, we build our own internal databases that form our personal self-guidance system. This system automatically triggers our best responses to external stimuli. Our triggers are embedded in our brains; they belong specifically to each of us. Triggering “yes” is a process in which we help others—our persuasion partners—activate their own decision-making navigation systems.

### WHO NEEDS PERSUASION SKILLS?

Dr. Condoleezza Rice graduated college cum laude and Phi Beta Kappa at age 19 from the University of Denver. Her experience in positions of power led her to claim: “Power is nothing unless you can turn it into influence.” Her thoughts are echoed by Harvard Business School Professor Michael D. Watkins: “Formal authority and other resources of leadership are never sufficient to get things done. Leaders need the power to persuade.”

Leaders, executives, managers, line and staff personnel each succeed or fail in proportion to the individual's skill of persuasion.



Each must influence and gain compliance from those up, down, and across every strata of the organization. And yes, let's include suppliers and clients among those we need to persuade.

We often think we can get results by *telling* people what to do. Can't CEOs, executives, and managers do that? Don't we tell our kids, our spouses what we want done? Can't the president of the United States just tell people what to do and get it done? Not according to President Harry S. Truman who said, "I sit here all day trying to persuade people—that's all the powers of the president amount to."

Richard Neustadt, in his book *Presidential Power and the Modern Presidents*, writes, "In these words of a president, spoken on the job, one finds the problem now before us: 'powers' are no guaranty of power."

Neustadt adds, "There is a widely held belief in the United States that a reasonable president would need no power other than the logic of his argument." But logic just doesn't cut it—even for the president. And when Neustadt wrote: "Presidential power is the power to persuade," he forced us to reconceptualize the presidency.

## HARD SCIENCE

Dr. Robert Cialdini, a well-known psychologist studying persuasion, writes in *Harvard Business Review*: "No leader can succeed without mastering the art of persuasion. But there's a hard science in that skill, and a large body of psychological research suggests that there are basic laws of winning friends and influencing people."

That "hard science" and "psychological research" form the breakthrough knowledge for this book. We have documented scientific knowledge about the way to persuade, to influence, to get the results we seek. Neuroscience recently discovered stunning

information about how the human brain functions for decision making, persuasion, behaviors, and actions. We really do understand, finally, why we act as we do in response to stimuli.

By opening these pages, you've taken the first step to persuasion success. Now you can use your own genius to learn and apply the shared information. You can become an excellent persuader, a leader who makes great things happen. You can be one of an elite group staying well ahead of the success curve. This new science and psychological research will change forever the ways we interact with other people, how we manage them, and how we influence their decisions, behaviors, and actions.

The business community has long been well aware that persuasion is a skill critical to personal and business success. "The seemingly magical power to persuade has always been important," we read in a piece by George W. Pratt in the *Harvard Business Review*, "but it's critical now with flatter management structures, cross functional teams and intercompany partnerships. Everyone, whether a leader or individual contributor must be able to influence."

### **BETTER WAYS TO SUCCEED THROUGH PERSUASION**

How will you personally benefit from acquiring brand-new, scientifically based persuasion skills? You'll be better equipped to accomplish your goals. These accomplishments will likely come more easily and quickly as you use more effective ways to obtain full agreement, commitment, and willing execution from others. You will favorably influence the actions of those up, down, and across every level of your organization. And, of course, great persuasion skills will positively impact every level of your social and personal life as well. You will be better positioned to achieve the things you want with and through others.

## ORGANIZATIONAL GAINS

How will your organization benefit from applying this new science toward persuasion? Professor Jay Conger, former director of the Leadership Institute at the University of Southern California, lends context: “Like power, persuasion can be a force for enormous good in an organization. It can pull people together, move ideas forward, galvanize change and forge constructive relationships.”

As Conger astutely adds, “The necessary art of persuasion, the language of leadership, is misunderstood, underutilized, and more essential than ever.”

Asserting that the language of leadership—persuasion—is “misunderstood” and “underutilized” says a great deal about our current limited state of persuasion knowledge. Yet it’s not our fault. Until now we just didn’t have the scientific knowledge of brain function.

Better persuasion skills—convincing people to do what must be done—will help organizations save time and energy through greater efficiency. With fewer ruffled feathers, companies, organizations, and departments can operate more smoothly and get more done in less time.

The application of documented, scientifically based persuasion skills will enable better results by elevating every individual to a higher level of execution. The company will reach higher levels of morale, performance, cooperation, and goal achievement.

We know managers spend some 80 percent of their time communicating with others, trying to persuade them to do what needs to be done. Yet how well do they accomplish that persuasion requirement? Not very well, it turns out; mainly because we “misunderstood.” We didn’t know how our brains reacted to requests or to stimuli that required decisions. As indicated, one of the most interesting elements of the breakthrough information that follows

is that it directly contradicts what most of us believe about the persuasion and decision-making process. While we are called upon daily to make things happen through others, most of us still don't have the foggiest idea how to effectively persuade people.

"Persuasion," Professor Watkins says, "is a core leadership skill." The author of *The Leadership Triad*, Dale Zand, puts a sharper edge on the leadership requirement, noting, "You can't be a leader if you can't influence others to act." And, as Cialdini adds, "Persuasion skills exert a far greater influence over others' behavior than formal power structures do."

OK. So persuasion is a critical, requisite core leadership skill and we understand that the current persuasion methods are antiquated, misunderstood, and inadequate. Can we teach people the new, more informed approach, and, if so, will those involved learn how to persuade more effectively, more efficiently? The scientific and academic communities have answered with a resounding "Yes!"

"Good news from behavioral science," *Harvard Business Review* writes. "Persuasion works by appealing to deeply rooted human needs. We can learn to secure consensus, cut deals, win concessions by artfully employing scientific principles of influencing people. By understanding how to predictably meet deep seated human needs, anyone can strengthen [his or her] persuasive powers."

And here's even better news from Cialdini's article in *HBR*: "Persuasion is grounded in basic scientific, practical and learnable principles."

The "deeply rooted human needs," the "practical and learnable principles" are now understood by the new science of "real-time" brain function—in vivo neurophysiology. We know scientifically how the human brain processes decision-making information. And by learning and applying this knowledge we can enhance our results, our lives, our very being.

## EQ AND IQ

The new knowledge for successfully dealing with people is gaining traction in the business community and has spawned a bevy of books and courses about an all-inclusive term with growing business awareness—Emotional Quotient, or EQ, also referred to as Emotional Intelligence. This differentiates high IQ from high EQ. And guess what—studies show that leaders, executives, and managers with high EQ produce better business results than those with high IQ.

A recent survey of business leaders conducted by the American Management Association asked what skills were most needed to effectively lead others. The top two skills were: (1) communication skills and (2) the ability to motivate and inspire others.

Isn't that how we get things done? Isn't it how we persuade? Interestingly, documentation reveals that even among those with high IQ, the absence of EQ contributes to poor performance. One international study by the worldwide executive search firm Egon Zehnder International found that although most people are hired because of high IQ, most are terminated because of low EQ.

EQ is a broad term, yet the critical element of EQ is understanding how other people process and react to emotional input. With that knowledge we can focus our leadership in the right direction and enhance our own EQ. Why is this knowledge so critical to our personal and business success? The answer is readily apparent—we can effectively influence others' decisions only when we understand how others process information to make decisions.

## THE THREE OPTIONS TO "YES"

Let's take a step back. How can we get things done with and through others? What means do we each have to produce the

actions and results we seek? Our choices are fairly limited. We have basically three options:

- Use force.
- Negotiate for the results we seek.
- Persuade to gain compliance and action.

In today's business world, force is outmoded and ineffectual. We can demand that people do our bidding, and perhaps even force them to act. This may produce action, but certainly not willing compliance. And without positive, willing compliance we likely won't get the results we expect.

Negotiation is a give-and-take, time-consuming process. It takes a great deal of skill and requires each party to bargain, to give something up to get something in return. It's a process where two people often get what neither wants. Negotiation authors and gurus tell us to negotiate *only* when all other means for accomplishment are exhausted. By contrast, persuasion is the only way to get full agreement, compliance, willing attitudes, decisions, behaviors, actions, and desired results.

### SHARED SOLUTIONS

What, then, is the magic of "persuasion"? How can we best define this term we often use almost interchangeably with such words as "influence" and "convincing"? At USC, Dr. Conger provides perhaps the simplest, most straightforward definition in his article from the *Harvard Business Review* called "The Necessary Art of Persuasion": "Effective persuasion becomes a process by which the persuader leads colleagues to a problem's shared solution."

The key words are "shared solution," and "process." "Shared solution" refers to results in everyone's best interest. "Process" indicates that persuasion is not an off-the-cuff bag of psychological

tricks you can immediately apply to any situation. Thus persuasion is not an event; instead, it's a full-fledged process that will unfold as we go forward. Persuasion is understanding human nature and the human brain, then working in concert with natural processes.

Historically, the term “rhetoric” has been used to define methods for gaining commitment and desired action. Aristotle (384–322 BCE) in his *Rhetoric, Book One* (of three) defines rhetoric as “discovering the best available means of persuasion.” Science has finally provided us with the breakthrough, a documented approach to providing “the best available means of persuasion.”

### PERSUASION—MYTH AND REALITY

Some uninformed people might view persuasion in a pejorative context. Some see persuasion as an element in the “hard sell” category. Others equate persuasion with manipulation and deception. “Persuasion supersedes sales and is quite the opposite of deception,” Conger writes. Like money, power, or position, persuasion can be employed for good or evil. Yet when we strive for a “shared solution,” persuasion is the opposite of manipulation. As we learn more about the ways the brain processes information, we will see that the new art and science of persuasion works with the brain's internal guidance systems rather than against them. Working in concert with the other person's natural brain processes is the opposite of manipulation.

Persuasion is motivating someone to do something they might not do if you didn't ask. Persuasion aims to win both the heart and the mind, and must therefore induce attitude, emotion-based change. It's the skill of changing attitudes, motivating behaviors, and generating decisions for a shared solution. When one has influenced another's attitudes, feelings, decisions, behaviors, and actions, persuasion has occurred.

*Harvard Business Review* provides its own definition: “Persuasion doesn’t mean begging, cajoling or manipulating. Quite the contrary, it’s how we get things done through others—no matter who we are.”

Persuasion has nothing to do with arm-twisting, nor does it depend on charisma or personality. Rather, persuasion is the application of the right information, the stimuli that will be accepted and acted upon by the other person’s own internal self-guidance systems.

Persuasion is partnering with people to achieve mutual goals and benefits. Persuasion is a process that will turn your own thoughts, goals, and dreams into tangible reality. And the good news: persuasion is a skill anyone can master quickly.

What’s the difference between the way we try to persuade today and the new science that will forever change our approach to influencing others and gaining their compliance? Has anything really changed?

Ever had a great idea? One that might produce excellent results for you and your organization? Ever had a need to get things done through others? Ever wanted something that someone could do for you? Have you always been successful in getting the best results from these ideas and needs? If not, I’m going to help you accomplish such ends. This book—combining a distillation of 2,500 years of persuasion research (since our earliest studies of rhetoric) along with today’s remarkable scientific findings about the human brain’s decision-making process—will make you a successful persuader, one who can get others to willingly execute your wants and needs.

### **A TESTED, DOCUMENTED PROCESS**

Here’s where this book differs from the spate of other excellent books on the science of persuasion and the brain. I will share the informa-



tion with you relating to the new science; but, more important, I provide you with a fully tested, proven process to implement this knowledge. This is a complete “How To” book to make you consciously competent as a formidable persuader. You will be a better leader because you’ll know how to get others to follow. You’ll get things done with and through others. You will have a full understanding of how decisions are made, and you will learn how to trigger the other person’s internal guidance system to produce shared results.

I’ll then show you:

- How to effectively organize and frame your presentation.
- How to deliver a successful persuasive presentation.
- How to turn resistance into opportunity.
- How to facilitate the ultimate decision to comply, to say “yes,” to act.

This is the first book to provide the knowledge, the skills, and the process for the “hard science” approach to achieving successful leadership persuasion results. As noted, this approach begins with a new understanding:

- The brain is not a computer; it doesn’t operate as one.
- Your brain is not a logic machine.
- We have to stop forcing the brain to act in ways that are unnatural and unproductive.
- Emotions and feelings occur before you’ve made any attempt at conscious evaluation.

### **PARTNERS IN PERSUASION**

Persuasion is a shared process and the goals should become the same for you and the other person. In reality, you and the person you are persuading become partners in generating shared decisions and actions to reach a meaningful goal. Thus we refer to the person

you are persuading as your “partner.” You are partners in pursuing the same goal—the shared resolution of an idea.

I’ll do my best to be your partner in acquiring better persuasion skills. My personal background includes a degree in psychology, a track record of successful management consulting and training, and a lifelong study into how we get results with and through others.

Several of the examples we share in the book come from my personal experience as an executive of a multi-billion-dollar financial services corporation, as president of my own training company, and from my experience as a management consultant to Fortune 500 corporations. The examples are real. They happened. I hope you can interpolate from these examples ways in which you can produce the same results.

Why will this book be invaluable to you? As noted well by Dr. Jay Conger, we have a clear, succinct answer: “The necessary art of persuasion, the language of leadership, is misunderstood and underutilized. If there ever was a time for business people to learn the fine art of persuasion, it is now.”

I’ll take you on the persuasion quest from ancient Greece on to the Roman Empire, through thousands of years of psychology and persuasion guesswork, then into today’s breakthrough neurological scientific discoveries. From there we’ll share an easy-to-learn process for successful persuasion execution. Let’s begin the journey!

## REVIEW AND REFERENCE

- Success for you and your organization hinges primarily on the skill of persuasion—the ability to get others to say yes, to willingly follow your directions and act on your behalf.
- Power may be granted from bosses above you, but execution and results are accomplished by persuading others. Power is nothing without persuasion.

## THE 7 TRIGGERS TO YES

- Leaders, even the president of the United States, cannot succeed without the core leadership skill of persuasion.
- We can effectively influence others' decisions only when we understand how others process decision-making information.
- Emotional Quotient (EQ) is understanding how people process and react to emotional input. Those with high EQ produce better results than those with high IQ.
- We've been primarily taught to persuade using data, logic, and rational arguments. This approach doesn't work well because the brain doesn't make decisions this way.
- Persuasion is not an event, it's a process. Persuasion is understanding human nature and the human brain, then working with the brain's natural processes.
- We have three options to get things done with and through others: force, negotiation, and persuasion.
  - Force may produce action but not willing compliance.
  - Negotiation is a process where two people often get what neither wants.
  - Persuasion is the best way to get full agreement, compliance, decisions, actions, and results.
- The new art and science of persuasion works with the brain's internal guidance systems rather than against them. We strive for a shared solution—the opposite of manipulation or deception. Persuasion is partnering with people to achieve mutual goals and benefits.
- For your CPO, current persuasion opportunity, we have an interactive form to help determine the most persuasive elements that you could tap into. Go to [www.seventrigger.com](http://www.seventrigger.com) where you can select the applicable elements, make notes, print them out.

*Chapter 20*

# Wrap

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e've come a long way together on the road to helping you achieve success through persuasion. We've shared background and breakthrough documentation about the development of persuasion and the new process of more successfully influencing others. We've gone from ancient Greece to the Roman Empire, through the church-controlled dark era, on to Europe, through our early psychology-based faulty guesswork. We've shared today's scientific breakthroughs in brain neurology and their effect on how we help others activate their internal triggers.

We've learned that for some 2,500 years we've been doing it wrong. We've learned that persuasion, the language of leadership, the process of activating internal triggers has been misunderstood and underutilized. We've been privy to expert opinion regarding something we always knew—that persuasion is the core leadership skill and that you can't lead without this skill. And we've learned the good news that now, finally, we have hard science to help us persuade effectively, to get things done with and through others.

We've learned what persuasion really is: a process to reach a shared conclusion. Persuasion is a process, not an event; a process that includes good questioning and listening skills; a process that requires careful framing and delivery of our presentation, with smart handling of resistance, and an absolute requirement to get final commitment.

We've noted that the Chester Carlsons of the world don't get the results the Bill Gateses, Lee Iacoccas, and Jack Welches achieve and now we know why.

It's important to note that the skill of persuasion, the ability to influence others to produce the results you seek, is a critical element in your Emotional Quotient. And that when it comes to getting the desired results, the EQ has been determined to be even more important than the IQ. The concept of EQ in producing management results is a burgeoning concept you'll see more and more about.

Jack Welch weighs in on this issue: "No doubt emotional intelligence is more rare than book smarts, but my experience says it is actually more important in the making of a leader." This is one of the lessons emerging from our new studies of the brain.

As mentioned earlier, Dr. Richard Restak refers to the most important of the suggestions outlined in his book: "Learn as much as possible about how your brain works. This is the most important factor in getting smart and staying smart." Only by understanding how the brain really functions can we know how to influence others' brains and their decision-making process.

Author Tony Jeary adds, "When we understand what makes people receptive to influence, we are in a position to be a motivating force in their lives." Isn't this what you want to become? A motivating force in others' lives?

By recognizing that each and every one of us depends on our own internal self-guidance system to trigger the decisions we need to make every minute of every day, we now understand how to effectively influence others. With intelligent application of the seven triggers, we can help our partner quickly and automatically reach that shared conclusion—the decision to say, "Yes!"

## THE 7 TRIGGERS TO YES

We all crave the power to get things done—to achieve our goals and our dreams. And we know that power comes from getting others to help us achieve results. But as we now know, power is nothing without influence.

You now possess the hard science and the execution skills to persuade—to effectively influence others. The power to influence is in your hands. Wisely apply that power and you will achieve your destiny—wealth, power, and influence.

Persuaders rule—they wield enormous power. They always have. Always will. I wish you every success in achieving a more powerful, influential, and successful life.

## *Contact Us—There's More!*

Congratulations! You've completed your personal persuasion journey, and now there are more benefits to explore. It's time to apply the advantage of this breakthrough knowledge to quickly enhance personal and company results.

The critical points of this book—and much more—have been adapted into easily presented one-day seminars and Web-based skills programs that anyone can easily grasp, then apply to specific persuasion opportunities. The programs produce documented results.

These exciting skills programs are designed for individuals and companies who want higher levels of success getting “Yes!” decisions, then desired actions from others.

*The 7 Triggers to YES* training programs are customized for leaders, managers, and a wide variety of specific sales applications. They are excellent additions to prior training and experience.

To learn more, go to our Web site, [www.SevenTriggers.com](http://www.SevenTriggers.com), where you can find more information about our training, plus you'll find a FREE interactive form to help organize your own Triggers Presentations.

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We have strategic partnership alliances throughout the United States, Australia, India, etc., and we continue to seek additional sales partners for *The 7 Triggers to YES* training products as well as partners to help develop *The 7 Triggers to YES* products and training programs for specific industries. Contact me for partner information.

Again, I wish you every success achieving your persuasion goals. Since 1981 we have helped hundreds of companies of every size—from AT&T, Citigroup, Bayer Pharmaceuticals, Sony, Prudential, General Motors and other international giants to mom-and-pop shops—achieve sales, management, and persuasion success. We have helped tens of thousands of sales reps achieve sales peak performance. We can do the same for you. Contact me today!

Cheers,  
Russ Granger  
President & CEO, ProEd Corp.





# Master the Art—and Science— of Persuasion.

**“Using the latest technological data, Granger gives the complex art of persuasion the ease of paint-by-numbers clarity and a process for success.”**

—Leslie Schweitzer Miller, M.D., New York University School of Medicine,  
New York University Psychoanalytic Institute

**“The seven triggers will help people get things done more quickly, more easily, and with better results.”**

—Michael J. Iandolo, president and general manager, Lucent Technologies Mobility Solutions

**“Granger has transformed [brain imaging] research into a readily understandable and workable program . . . When you need to persuade, *The 7 Triggers to Yes* shows you how in a new and highly effective way.”**

—Robert H. Miller, former president and CEO, Charles of the Ritz Group. Ltd.

**“Bravo! I couldn’t put it down . . . I now see there is a much more efficient way to persuade and influence others.”**

—Josiah Stevenson, former director of development, Dartmouth College

**“Russ has assembled an impressive army of thought leaders on the subject of persuasion. A great read.”**

—Gerhard Gschwandtner, founder and publisher, *Selling Power*

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