

Pre-Suasion Quick Reference

Persuasion doesn't start when you open your mouth. It starts before that.

What Is Pre-Suasion?

The practice of arranging for recipients to be receptive to a message **before they encounter it**. Based on Robert Cialdini's research.

The Three Core Principles

1. Channeling Attention

What people pay attention to shapes what they think is important. Direct attention before your message to change how it lands.

Example: Before talking about factory farming, ask someone about a childhood pet. You've just channeled their attention toward animals as individuals.

2. Priming

Exposure to one idea influences how we process the next. Words, images, and environments all prime us.

Example: Meeting at a sanctuary instead of a conference room primes the conversation entirely differently. The environment does half the work.

3. The Unity Principle

People are most persuadable by those they perceive as "one of us." Not just similar — same.

Example: "As a fellow rancher..." works infinitely better than "As an animal rights activist, let me tell you why..."

Pre-Suasion vs. Manipulation

	Pre-Suasion	Manipulation
Intent	Help listener be more receptive to a genuine message	Trick listener into a decision they wouldn't otherwise make
Transparency	You'd be comfortable if they knew	You'd be embarrassed if they found out
Benefit	The listener benefits from being more open	Only you benefit from their compliance
Reversibility	Listener can still freely disagree	Listener feels trapped or deceived

The test: If you'd be ashamed to explain your strategy to the listener afterward, it's manipulation. Stop.