Inside Influence 3 -Consistency Commitment & Unity

MichaelAaron Flicker: [00:00:00] Today we're kicking off something that I've been excited about for months over at the Consumer Behavior Lab. Richard and I have been diving deep into Robert Cialdini's Influence, a book that has shaped how a generation of marketers think about persuasion, all in preparation for our conversation with Dr. Cialdini himself. But rather than jumping straight into the interview on the show, we decided to do things a little different. We went back to his book and all his original research, and we've created three full episodes unpacking what we believe still matters most to marketers and business leaders today.

These three episodes will come out every other day this week, and then next Monday, we'll post our conversation with Dr. Cialdini, where we pressure tested our ideas, where we explored what we got right, and where we still had more to learn. I hope you'll join us for this journey. I think it's some of the best work Richard and I have [00:01:00] done together.

The show is now live in the comments below. If you have a chance to listen, I'd love to hear what you found interesting and maybe even what was surprising. Thanks so much for listening. Welcome back to Behavioral Science for Brands, a podcast where we bridge the gap between academics and practical marketing.

Every week, we sit down and go deep behind the science that powers great marketing today. I'm MichaelAaron Flicker.

Richard Shotton: And I'm Richard Shotton.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And today, we're continuing our three-part miniseries entitled Inside Influence. Let's get into it So Richard, we're here at the final episode ahead of sitting down with Dr.

Cialdini himself. We've called the series Inside Influence, named after his pivotal book, Influence. And the one thing that really hit me during this series is that [00:02:00] these principles go much deeper than they originally sound. You hear things like reciprocity and liking, and you say, " yeah, I get it."

But as you dig in, it's really incredible how deep and rich the material that underpins it truly is.

Richard Shotton: And partly that's a factor of Cialdini being a victim of his own success. The book has sold-- My copy's a few years a-old now, and that had five million sold. It's probably more like six or seven now.

So he has done so much to popularize social proof and scarcity and reciprocity. A lot of people will know about these biases. But the book itself is brilliant because you're absolutely right. It doesn't just stay at the surface area of des- of describing what those biases are and their very basic applications.

It goes into amazing levels of nuance. So you're absolutely right. Very well-known principles because of the work of Cialdini, but a [00:03:00] lot of people have not read that pivotal book, and there's so much more in there than maybe gets discussed in social media posts.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And we've talked in the previous two preparatory episodes about how, just how deep it goes, and there's really this kind of interesting overlap of how the principles interact together, too.

That you can go deep in any one of these areas and and the fact that these areas of influence can support one another, that they're related, is an interesting area we haven't talked a ton about, but that they're not individual silos of knowledge. They have connective tissue as well.

Richard Shotton: Yes. It's useful to describe very tightly the definition of an individual bias. Social proof, you make something look appealing, it becomes more popular. Scarcity, things that are in short supply become more, more desired. But actually, the two are very linked. [00:04:00] Cialdini refers to in his work about the idea that scarcity is most powerful if people think that the scarce situation's been brought about because of popularity.

So there's absolutely interlinkage between multiple biases.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And as we'll all remember, Cialdini discovered these biases, e- eventually writes them all down because of his time really studying practitioners of influence, salespeople, folks that are commission-based, those that really have to use the influence to get a job done.

He observes them and writes about these kind of the principles that most bubble up. So of course they're gonna be interlinked because they're all about influencing human behavior, and they're what we're w- they're what folks can ob- that he was able to observe when he went through that process.

So I think [00:05:00] we should ask him about that when we meet with him, because it's really a fairly unique way to to get to a book.

Richard Shotton: I think that'd be a brilliant thing to quiz him about because it can't be a coincidence that a lot of Cialdini's post-grad research was working with marketers, salespeople, small entrepreneurs, learning from them what worked in their very practical situations.

He then takes that and he writes a book that is phenomenally practical. That's why I think it's such a, an amazing compendium of great insights for marketers, because it's based on these practical roots.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And I've heard him say in prev- in previous podcast appearances and other things he's written, that like a lot of behavioral science, these are evolutionarily based.

These are insights about human nature that he's not discovering. He's really compiling what everyone else has already [00:06:00] discovered, and he's just putting it in a single book. So when we get with him, I think talking about that will be really interesting because if we all can learn how he did that, maybe it can make us better at discovering those things ourselves as we're working day in and day out.

Richard Shotton: And it's brilliant to put together a podcast based on the book. I think it'll be even better to hear from the man himself. Absolutely.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yeah. Good. So we're excited about- Yeah ... this episode coming up. We've launched Inside Influence. We've done three episodes in the fastest succession that we've ever done- Yeah episodes, right? All packed into a week, and in just a few days, the Dr. Cialdini episode's coming out. So we're excited to have that all for everyone. But before all of that excitement, we have our third and final installment of Inside Influence, or the third and final episode before Dr. Cialdini comes on.

And we said that we would go through commitment, and consistency, and unity are the, [00:07:00] these next two major areas we felt there was a lot to unpack here. Should we start with the first principle of consistency and commitment? Commitment and consistency?

Richard Shotton: Yeah . Yeah. Okay, so this is quite a straightforward one, and it's essentially the idea that once we've made a public pronouncement about our behavior, we feel a very strong cultural pressure to conform to that statement.

So this one comes from a classic Cialdini study done back in 1978, and he runs this experiment on campus at Arizona State University, and at the beginning of a semester, he goes up to new students and says, "Will you come to my lab tomorrow at 7:00 AM? I'll pay you $2, and it'll just take half an hour of your time to do some psychology questions."

Now, students in 1978 are very similar to students today. They do not want to be getting up at half 6 to go and earn a couple of dollars for a psychology professor. So vast majority [00:08:00] refuse. Only 31% of people say, "Yep, I'll take the offer." Other people, Cialdini makes the same basic offer, but he splits it in two.

He goes up to people and says I'll pay you $2 if you come and do some experiments tomorrow. Does that sound good?" People agree or disagree. And then he says, "Oh, it's at 7:00 AM, mate." Now, some people do drop out, but it's from such a high base and not many drop out that even accounting for a couple of people who change their mind or are prepared to go back on what they'd originally said, you still have 56% of people agreeing to turn up at 7:00 AM tomorrow.

So you give all the main information up front, it's 31%. You drip feed this information, you get a commitment, and then you reveal worse information, now you're up to 56%. And [00:09:00] Cialdini's explanation for this is once people feel they have made a statement, "Yes, I'm gonna come to the lab tomorrow," they feel very strong cultural pressure to con-conform to that.

Even when new information comes out that might have invalidated the decision, they feel they have to stick to what they said originally. So this is what Cialdini means by this principle of get a commitment and then people will feel a strong social pressure to be consistent with that public statement.

MichaelAaron Flicker: So the chapter is Consistency and Commitment, but we were having a chuckle as I introduced it because before the episode started, you and I were saying it's really commitment and then consistency. The

Richard Shotton: chapter is also-- I think I've screwed this one up. The chapter is Commitment and Consistency. I think- there we go.

Okay ... I'm sorry, this is my fault for bad note-taking. No it's all good. So- Bad prep. Yeah ... it's helpful to remember it in that order because commitment is what's gotta happen before you get the power of then needing to feel that I'm gonna be consistent with that [00:10:00] past commitment. So the order does matter because it helps you remember how the principle works.

And you're actually r- absolutely right on that because the other bit that's super important is it has to be an active commitment. Like when Cialdini's talking to that first group of people and he says, "Oh, do you wanna come to my lab?" They probably think, "Oh, this is great, $2." And then when he mentions 7:00 AM, they're like, "Oh, no backtrack.

I'm not doing this." But because they've never vocalized their statement that they're gonna turn up, they don't feel any pressure on reneging. The power of consistency only comes if there is a degree of activeness in the commitment. If someone has said out loud what they're gonna do, if they've written down what they're gonna do.

If people just privately think to themselves they're gonna do something, you have not harnessed the bias. It's got to be active

MichaelAaron Flicker: It's really it's interesting to think about how to apply this practically to commercial communication and to brand marketing and advertising because you're not always [00:11:00] gonna be in a one-to-one sales influenced decision where you can imagine if you're trying to sell a handbag, car, bottle of perfume, if you can get them to commit to something, then they'll feel more consistent in whatever it is that you're asking for next.

But a commercial communication when you're using lo- you know a TV, billboards, i- interesting, it's-- there's gotta be something bes- less than a vocal commitment but more than a passing fleeting thought, and you see some advertisements say, "Imagine yourself doing this thing." and if you draw it in your mind, it strikes me that's in the spirit of this.

If you can get people to even commit to it in their head, maybe that would be e- a little bit more than just a passing fleeting thought.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. And I think there's two elements there. There's [00:12:00] firstly, can this be-- can this principle extend beyond students? That's a, I think a first challenge.

And then secondly, can it extend beyond one-to-one comms? So the first question, can this extend beyond students? Absolutely it can. There's a brilliant study done a couple of years later in 1980 by Steven Sherman, who was at Indiana University, and he works with a, in a charity, the American Cancer Society, and they want to get people to volunteer for a couple of hours to go knocking door to door collecting donations.

Sometimes they randomly ring up people and they say, "Will you volunteer a couple of hours?" Virtually everyone says no. So 4% of people agree to take part Other occasions, they do this kind of two-step process. So first time up, an experimenter rings up and asks people, "Hypothetically, [00:13:00] would you, if a charity rang you up, be prepared to donate a few hours of your time?"

They then get that answer, they put the phone down, and then three days later, a second experimenter rings up and says, "I'm from the American Cancer Society. Will you donate," sorry, "a few hours of your time?" Click there, "So you're gonna come and collect some donations." And there you get an absolutely massive change.

Like I think this is probably the biggest change we've ever seen in a study. You get 31% of people agreeing to take part. So we have gone from one in 25 agreeing to almost one in three. Now that is- It's eight, it's like an eightfold

MichaelAaron Flicker: increase.

Richard Shotton: Eightfold, yeah. Absolutely. Almost an eightfold increase.

Absolutely. That to me shows that the Cialdini study isn't just working on students. This can work when it is in a more kind of commercial, albeit like charity, but there is this active time here. This is a nationally representative group [00:14:00] that's taking part.

MichaelAaron Flicker: It's interesting because I that hypothetical answer does connect to imagine yourself at the- Oh, yeah

at the end of a marathon. Imagine yourself having worked out for 30 days. It, it makes that, it m- it makes you picture it in a way that you could start to imagine using it in commercial communications much more usefully.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. I think what it does by getting people to think about stuff hypothetically is move things to a more kind of abstract realm.

I'm a good person. Going out and volunteering is a good thing to do, therefore, I should do it." But when it's the actual request, suddenly it's, " actually it's Tuesday. I'm knackered. I've been away on business. It's raining at the moment. My feet are tired." it, I think when it's an actual question it drifts far more into the real mundanities of little bits of effort and why it's not right just now.

[00:15:00] There's something quite clever about removing yourself with this hypotheticality, and then most people would probably have those genuine positive desires. It's just in reality so much gets in the way.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yeah. It's really it's really a great example of when you explain the principle, you say, "Yeah, that makes sense.

If I imagine myself rather than these vague platitudes, it's gonna work." But would you expect it to be eight times more effective? Oh no. Which would-- And I think that's where the power of really diving into this makes sense, because I don't think that you would anticipate an eightfold increase.

That, that's- To me feels astronomical.

Richard Shotton: That's absolutely fair. And one of the interviews that's always really stuck with me is when we had Dan Ariely on, and he said that when he first started doing presentations, people would b- would tut at the end of his [00:16:00] results and say, " that was obvious."

So what he then started to do was tell people the methodology, and then just before revealing the r- results, he would stop and ask people to predict what was gonna happen, and people were wildly wrong. Of course. So y- you're absolutely right. I think I fell into that trap, that I would've predicted there'd be a positive increase.

There's no way I'd have said an eightfold increase.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And as we often get to in these studies why not try it for your own business? Why not try it for your own brand? Where is there a chance to take this type of mechanism? Where can we get someone to make a hypothetical and then see how that affects their actual?

Where can we get them to make a commitment and then see how consistent they will be with that commitment in whatever your business challenge is? And to me, it's a ripe area to really get creative and then start to test and learn.

Richard Shotton: And th- that's the key bit, your word [00:17:00] creative. The way I try and always interpret these experiments is not a completely narrow-minded view that you have to do exactly the same as Sherman or Cialdini.

What you should think is that if someone has made any type of public commitment, verbal or written, they are more likely to follow through. So that is something you could apply definitely in commercial situations. Think about maybe getting new staff to sign a commitment to live up to your brand ideals.

Maybe if you're a gym, when people first join, get them to sign a commitment that they're gonna, I don't know, wipe down the machines afterwards, put the weights away. There are lots of ways you can apply this outside of charities and student behavior.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yeah, and it strikes me it's so common when you read self-help books and things of the moment, they say, "Make a commitment in front of someone else."

Yes. [00:18:00] "Make a commitment to a loved one, to a person." A- and I wonder how effective it would still be to say, "Make a commitment to yourself." Yes, the added social pressure of others knowing can have knock-on effects, but even making the commitment in your own mind it to me feels like you would feel- Yeah

consistent- you would wanna feel consistency to that.

Richard Shotton: If you're gonna do it as a personal thing, and maybe for some reason you don't wanna share it with others, I would write it down. I think that th- there's something about that concrete indisputability. Our memory is a very tricky thing.

A- and if you just think to yourself you're gonna do something- Over time, we can probably change the exact wordings, give ourselves a bit of a a get-out clause. Write it down if you wanna keep this very kind of secret and personal.

MichaelAaron Flicker: I think we've seen a number of pharmaceutical examples where they have the [00:19:00] pharmaceutical drug delivered with an intention card, and you write on the intention card.

I'll try in the, I'll try to find an example if we can find a public example of this and put it in the show notes. But where you make a commitment about taking-- about what you wanna get to or what you wanna have in the upcoming year, and it ties to taking the drug more frequently. I'm pretty sure I've read some stud- some case studies like that, and it meets that.

You're gonna make a commitment, even if it's just to yourself on this written-down card, and then you wanna be consistent, so you're gonna take your heart medicine every day. And then you-- and that keeps you going to whatever that goal is. So I think there's some nice examples of that.

We'll see if we can find one in the show notes and drop it in. Great. Perfect. Okay. So some nice insight into commitment and consistency- Yeah. ... as Dr. Cialdini wrote it. Got it. The next principle was [00:20:00] one that was not in the original book, but he adds in the revised edition called unity. Shall we start there?

Richard Shotton: Yeah. This is, as you say, brand-new addition for his latest version of Influence. It's his seventh principle, and it's essentially the idea that we are more persuaded by other people who we feel are part of the same group. So if we are both West Ham United fans that's a football club for you. Thank you

a soccer club, sorry, as you would say. Yeah. W- we are of the same group. That we could refer to ourselves as we, and if a message or argument comes from someone who reminds us that we are linked in some way, then it tends to be more persuasive. So it's a new one that he's added in. The evidence for this, Cialdini has quite a few different studies but the one that I think [00:21:00] is the most straightforward is a 2019 study by Joseph Marks.

So he's at UCL University College London, and he asks people to play an online game. It's quite basic. They have to categorize shapes. Now, before they do the game, they are given some advice by a third party, and sometimes the third party shares their political affiliation. So let's say I was a Liberal Democrat voter, the third party would also be a Liberal Democrat, or if I was a Labor voter, they'd also be a Labor voter.

And other occasions, it comes from someone from a difficult, different political affiliation. Participant then undertakes the game, and what Marks is interested in is did that player follow the advice of the third party? And what he [00:22:00] finds is if the third party came from a completely different part of the political spectrum, only 13% of people follow the advice.

If the third party came from the same political party as the person taking part, 30% of the participants follow the advice. My

MichaelAaron Flicker: goodness.

Richard Shotton: So again, you've got this kind of almo- well, more than doubling, almost tripling of of influence. So the argument here is we are more likely to be influenced and persuaded by people that we see as similar in some degree.

If we can use the word we about the group, then you're tapping to this principle of unity

MichaelAaron Flicker: It's such an interesting study because it doesn't just scratch the surface that I'm going to like people that are more like me. I'm gonna have more positive emotions. This study shows that they're, we're more, more likely to think [00:23:00] they're better at what they're doing than someone else.

So if we have this affiliation they are more likely to take the recommendation of someone else. That's a nuance that matters.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. And interestingly Mark shows that even when the third party performs poorly at the game, people are still more likely to follow the inept, incompetent advisor if they share the same political affiliation.

So the influence is so strong that it overwhelms other more objective evidence why this person is not a good role model, is not a good person to follow.

MichaelAaron Flicker: I think we should spend more time on this with Dr. Cialdini than maybe even the first six. The first six have been in market for decades, and lots has been said about them.

This newest principle is only a few years old, and it [00:24:00] feels so relevant in today's world where there's polarization amongst political parties. There's this sense that there's i- identity-driven politics, identity-driven marketing. Feels really rich to discuss with him when we get him on the show.

Richard Shotton: Yeah it's

MichaelAaron Flicker: a great one Do you think, Richard, that do you think that there is a weighting to these principles?

If we ask Dr. Cialdini that one is stronger than the rest, y- you have any what's your take on that? I just wonder, this one feels so relevant today when you read the news. I don't know if it's more or less than social proof, which is our favorite to return to over and over again. You know what I mean?

Richard Shotton: Cialdini, in his book, refers to the Swarbrick, Jones, and Brown study that we've discussed a few times. So they looked at 2,000-plus online [00:25:00] campaigns for marketers. Oh, yes. And then they categorized what techniques those marketers had used, and they looked at 28 different techniques, many of which weren't behavioral science, many of which had nothing to do with Cialdini.

But the top three were all from Cialdini's book. I think the most powerful was scarcity in terms of volume, then it was social proof, and then it was scarcity in terms of time. So I think there's an argument for scarcity and social proof often coming as some of the most powerful in- influences. But this idea definitely of unity, definitely overlaps with social proof.

We know from multiple experiments that when it comes to social proof, for example, we are most influenced by people like ourselves. Now, it's one thing me knowing a brand is super popular amongst the French, that might influence me a little bit. But if I know it's popular amongst the English, or I know if it's popular amongst Londoners, or even more narrowly, if I know it's popular [00:26:00] amongst people from Herne Hill, where I live, then social proof becomes much more powerful.

So I think you're right. This kind of unity principle seems to supercharge lots of different biases.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yeah. It's interesting because as you say, people from Herndon Hill just like me. Yeah. It is, of course, social proof based on this o- identity, th- this overlap of these are people like me, and so that unity principle is coming through even if it's not i- it by itself, it's that sense that these are people just like me.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. And there are therefore tactics that a salesperson can use to harness this principle. And the most basic thing would be when you are talking to your potential customers, now you want to be finding out as much about them as possible. You want to be getting all of the information you can about these people, and then you can generally, with [00:27:00] anyone, find something that you overlap on.

Maybe it's you came from the same neck of the woods, maybe you've got the same political affiliation, maybe you enjoy the same type of sports or you follow the same team. You're really here trying to find what is it that we can refer to ourselves as a we. And if you can find that, then you, I think, are onto something very powerful.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And Cialdini has talked about this a lot publicly. I'm sure it will come up. And doing this ethically matters a whole heck of a lot. It's not just about finding a false overlap or pretending that you all have the same interests. When you can use this principle ethically and there's truly an overlap for love of cars, for love of a sports team, that's when this principle really gets its supercharged nature.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. And frankly, it's g- you're going to be more effective if you do it honestly. Yes. If you try and fake an interest in [00:28:00] baseball and you've never pl- played the game it's gonna look quite hollow and you'll probably get found out. If you can genuinely find that you both have a passion for, say, table tennis or something that is gonna be far richer, far more enjoyable for both of you, and tap into this principle mu- much more effectively.

So I think you're absolutely right. It's both ethical and effective to look for genuine overlaps, not in some kind of nasty way try and make something up.

MichaelAaron Flicker: And to me, the takeaway from this is once you have that unity, that identity over something together, that enough, that alone is enough. That as long as they remember that, then that's alone enough to get the be- some of the benefit of this principle.

So it's not that you have to use that in every talking point, it's that you identify that the person on the other side of the table is also of the same political party, is also of the same sport fan group, and that alone [00:29:00] is enough to increase their influence.

Richard Shotton: Absolutely. And he does come up with some even more specific tactics for creating this sense of we-ness.

There was an amazing study that he references in the book from 2011 by Liu and Gal. And in this study, they recruit 131 participants. They give them a description for a new fitness business, so it's been recently launched. It's called Eco Gym. And some people are given lots of information about the gym, and then they're asked to rate how good value the membership is.

And on a seven-point scale, average rating is 3.6. Next group of people, they get exactly the same information, but then before they're shown the pricing, they are asked to give their advice [00:30:00] about how Eco Gym can market themselves better. They're then shown the pricing offers, and then what is this 19% shift, this 19% uplift-

in value perceptions. We're now up to 4.29. So we were at 3.6, we're now up to 4.29. So the argument here is that by asking for advice, and Cialdini in the book is very clear that you've gotta use this word advice. It's not about asking for opinions, it's advice. You create this sense that we're all in this together.

That taps into the principle of unity, and then people are far warmer to, to you and your brand. So that's something I think is absolutely wonderful, that you could start thinking about market research, not just as a way of generating insight, but you can also generate warmth if you phrase it in the right way.

MichaelAaron Flicker: It's such a great example of what we call [00:31:00] a, like a field study because you-- this asking for advice so specifically, logically should not matter. Like your evaluation of the Eco Gym and of its reasonably priced membership should not change just because you were asked for advice. But a 19% uplift shows that we're much more susceptible to changing a totally not relevant metric, like reasonable price, when we're asked for advice.

So to me, it's just like this lovely example of discerning something that, that wouldn't obviously have that connection.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. A-a-absolutely. I think from the outside, if you'd never heard of this principle of unity, it would seem a bit strange. But once you've heard this idea around the importance of how we categorize each other, and that if we can create a sense that we're both in the same [00:32:00] category, then warmth and persuasive power follows.

Once you've heard about the principle of unity it's completely consistent with that finding. And you mentioned right at the beginning about the importance of ev-evolutionary explanations. I wonder if there's a very powerful explanation for this, which is if a small hunter-gatherer group was completely unified and acted in concert with each other, even if what they were thinking or doing wasn't perfect, that degree of consistency and harmony would probably make them a far more powerful unit than a group who were bickering around the corner trying to come to the supposedly best ob-ob-objective approach.

So I wonder if these, this principle of unity is what worked very well in small hunter-gatherer groups.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Fascinating. Fascinating. So like we like to do, we'd like to think about how to apply this [00:33:00] in the market. One fairly literal application is to not ask your customers' opinions, but ask their advice on how to improve your product.

If you ask for advice, you create that sense of unity much more endearingly than just a opinion where it's more adversarial. So certainly one literal application is simply asking for that.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. A- absolutely. Another one is phrasing your recommendation as something, again, it's gotta be genuine, that you would do for your family.

So the example Cialdini gives in the book, and he often gives Berkshire Hathaway examples, 'cause I think Cialdini really admires Charlie Munger and Warren Buffett. And one of the examples he gives is Warren Buffett framing advice as, "This is what I would advise my sister to do if she [00:34:00] wanted advice on her retirement fund.

I would say stick it all into a low-cost index tracker that follows the S&P 500." Now, phrasing it like that, "This is what I would tell my sister," that taps into the kind of unity principle. This is something that I would do. This is genuine advice I would do for one of my core group. That makes the advice far more likely to be followed than just saying, "From my professional opinion."

So I think that's a second way of framing statements to harness this principle.

MichaelAaron Flicker: It strikes me that type of advice also is even more impactful when it's very hard for someone to have a sense of where to go. When you are buying a car and the car salesman says, "Look, this is what I bought for my own family," or, "This is what I have my family buy."

But even in a restaurant, you ask the waitress or waiter, "What do you recommend?" " listen, these [00:35:00] are my favorites." it's interesting. It's not, "I recommend you buy-" Yeah ... "this fish," which just so happens to be the most expensive on the menu. If they say, "This is what I buy," or, "This is what I-- This is what- Yeah

we at the bar eat at the end of the night." Yeah. It taps into that- Yeah ... unity principle- Yeah ... much more strongly.

Richard Shotton: When my fam- when my family last came to the restaurant, I advised them to take these three things. Yes. Yeah. That's it. Suddenly it it switches the believ- believability.

'Cause everyone is gonna give the best advice to their brother, sister, or mom and dad.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Yeah. Love it. I love it. Just so many ways to think about how to use that in one-to-one selling and in a person face-to-face selling, and then it gets more creative, as we were saying with the last example. How do you then take that and use it more, in more mass marketing?

What comes to mind for me is when you see these examples of these examples of skincare or [00:36:00] things where they say on the, There was a famous American infomercial. Richard, these would be late night- Yeah ... commercials in the '90s, and it was called HairClub For Men. And- Yeah.

Okay ... the founder of HairClub For Men said, "I'm not just the CEO. I'm our top user." And he would show himself putting on, you know- The HairClub the hair the hair appointments- Serum. Yeah ... that he was selling. But there is something very endearing about that idea that I'm not just a fan, I'm a user.

I'm not just- Yeah ... gonna use it, I'm gonna use it with my family and friends, it does create that sense.

Richard Shotton: Yeah. You've reminded me there was a, an ad, and this was an American company, I'm sure. It was Victor Kiam. I know this. Oh, it was for I think it was for an electric shaver. They were talking about 40 years ago, and he said he's doing his little shave, " I like the product so much, I bought the company."

I always [00:37:00] thought, that al- has stuck in my mind because talk is cheap, and people put great weight on what you do rather than what you say. Now Victor- Yes ... Kiam example is a very extreme. Went out and bought the company, he likes it so much. But I think when you say what you would advise your family- Yes

you're in this middle zone. It is still a claim, but because the family unit's sacrosanct, I think we give it almost as much credence as a, as an action.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Fascinating final principles from Dr. Cialdini that we can think about how to apply. Before we come to an end for today, can you just wrap up the episode for everybody listening at home?

Richard Shotton: So we have talked about two broad ideas today. We've talked about commitment and consistency. So this is the idea that if someone makes an active commitment, and by active I mean they have said it out loud or they've written it down, they then feel a strong cultural [00:38:00] pressure to stick to that statement.

So we talked about lots of different ways you could apply this. Maybe you've got new starters at the company. If you get them to sign a pledge to live up to certain ethics, they're far more likely to do so than if you just give them the ethics and they privately read to themselves and privately think whether they're gonna follow them or not.

So that was the kind of first principle, commitment, then consistency. The final principle t- principle was unity. So this is the seventh principle. Cialdini in 1984, when he first wrote the book, identified six key principles. When he came out with a rev- revised version, he'd added on a seventh, unity.

And it's essentially the argument that when we are weighing up how much to copy or believe or be persuaded by another person, one of the big drivers of influence is whether or not we think of ourselves as being in the same category as that person. [00:39:00] So what a good salesperson or persuader or influencer needs to do is honestly, and I think you're absolutely right to stress the importance of honesty, that's what Cialdini always comes back to, you have got to honestly identify an aspect of the other person's makeup or character or personality that overlaps with yours, and then honestly reference the fact that you share this same geographical background interest in hockey or other such things.

But you want to be looking for these overlapping points of interest and then double down on them

MichaelAaron Flicker: Brilliant. Thank you for the wrap-up here. We've gone deep in three separate episodes that we've pulled together and called Inside Influence. The fourth and final episode of Inside Influence will be with [00:40:00] Dr. C- Cialdini himself. We're super excited about this episode. We am planning to release this in the next few days.

So for everybody listening, please stay tuned, watch the watch the feed, and we should have our fourth of four episodes. We're not just gonna t-rehash these three episodes, Richard. We're really gonna use this as a base, and we're gonna use it as a jumping off point to go much deeper and try to have much more much more interesting conversation now that we've gone through these principles in such detail.

Yeah. Thank you all for listening. If you found today's episode interesting, please share it, or comment on our pages. It helps us reach people more just like you and helps us make sure that our content is helping teach the next generation of marketers. Until next time, I'm MichaelAaron Flicker.

Richard Shotton: And I'm Richard Shotton.

MichaelAaron Flicker: Thank you so much for listening.[00:41:00]