

On Liking

“The ability to influence people without irritating them is the most profitable skill you can learn.” -[Napoleon Hill](#)

All great human achievements are based on people uniting together, and most instances required that people like each other in the first place. Liking is the means by which alliances and partnerships are formed.¹

In terms of those that are disliked, the natural human tendency is to [dislike and disassociate with someone who brings bad news](#). An innocent association with bad or good news will influence how people feel about us. A good example is when a sports team wins a game: Fans will often say, “we won” even though they are not part of the team. It is the natural inclination of associating with those that succeed. Play this human behavior to your advantage by associating yourself with good news and distancing yourself from the bad. This will have a positive influence on your likability. Be proactive in finding good news and being the first to share it with others while at the same time, avoid being the “bearer of bad news”: Let someone else share ill tidings if at all possible.²

There is pressure to say yes to a person we know and like. This along with another person’s similarity in dress, background, and interest increases liking and, in turn, compliance.³

Human civilizations are a result of people banding together to [solve common issues](#), this is a behavior we inherited from our ancestors that can be manipulated. Compliance professionals often attempt to create a team mentality with the target, that “we” need to work together for mutual benefit in order to gain cooperation from the targeted individual.⁴

[Defense Tactics](#): Keep separate feelings about the requester and the request. In other words, don’t do something because you like the person, but focus on what it is being asked of you. If there is an attempt to manipulate your human tendency of cooperation by someone saying “we” need to do something, don’t focus on the teamwork, focus on the request. If you get a feeling that you are liking the person quicker than expected, know that there is potentially a tactic being used to extract something from you.⁵

Appeal to Emotions

To make other people like you, first appeal to what they are interested in. If you want to make friends, let it be known that you are ready to do things for other people, things that require time, energy, unselfishness and thoughtfulness. People tend to reciprocate interest; [if you are interested in them, they'll naturally be interested in you](#). They will react to you how you act to them, so remember the old saying “do unto others as you would have them do unto you.”⁶

People are fixated on themselves and their own interests. They don't care what you say or think, this will never be admitted, but it's true. All people want is an active listener that will allow them to expand and indulge their ego. Even the most violent critic will frequently soften and be subdued in the presence of a patient, [sympathetic listener](#), a listener who will be silent while the fault finder spews poison out of his system. If you aspire to be a good conversationalist that garners the liking of those whom you come in contact with, keep these points in mind:

- [Be an attentive and interested listener](#).
- Ask open-ended questions the other person will enjoy answering.
- Encourage them to talk about themselves and their accomplishments.
- Keep in perspective that they are a hundred times more interested in themselves and their problems than they are in you and your problems.⁷

Being an interested and attentive listener also means being informed on the subject which is being discussed. As much as people like talking about themselves, they love talking about themselves regarding a subject of their choosing with a person educated on the topic. Therefore, become informed on the matters in which the other party is interested. The road to a person's heart is talking about what they are interested in. It [makes them feel important](#) when what they are interested in is being validated by another person. They feel that what they do is appreciated when others talk to them about it. To encourage them to like you, focus on their interests. Indulge them.⁸

Start by asking/making them a few surface level questions/statements, such as questions about their hobbies or, even more discreetly, casual statements about various topics (i.e. the outcome of a highly anticipated baseball game, a new season for a TV show/upcoming movie, a mention of something you did recently [to see if they'll say they did something similar], etc.) If they give a polite response (i.e. “oh cool”), it's likely they're not interested. If you sense an

eagerness in their demeanor wanting to build on your comment and move the conversation in that direction, bingo, you've found the subject on which to educate yourself on.

Remember that when dealing with people, you are dealing with creatures of emotion, not logic, emotional creatures that are filled with prejudices and motivated by pride and vanity.⁹ People are hardwired to prioritize selfish desires as a means of survival. [Securing food, water, shelter, and other essentials must be done for oneself first before having the capacity to help others.](#) As an extension, we gravitate toward others that feed this need through their interest in us, interests expressed in various forms (i.e. our desires, our hobbies and our names [see section: On Remembering and Knowing: Remembering Names on how to garner liking through usage of other people's names]).

What Not to Do

Avoid boasting about your accomplishments. Realize that even your friends would rather talk to you about their achievements than listen to you boast about yours. When our friends excel us, they feel important. When they don't, resentment and feelings of inadequacy fester. Therefore, only mention your achievements when asked. Otherwise, let them talk.¹⁰

Takeaway: [Appeal to the interests of others.](#) Indulge their wants in conversation and they'll be more likely to like you. Express your knowledge on the subjects that interest them and ask questions you know they'll enjoy answering. Associate yourself with good news and alienate yourself from the bad. And if you suspect a tactic is being used on you to gain compliance, focus on the request, and not the person that you like.

1-5. "*Awaken the Giant Within*" -[Tony Robbins](#)

6-10. "*How to Win Friends and Influence People*" -[Dale Carnegie](#)