

# Some General Methods for Changing Society

Method	Description	Assumption	Appeals to *	Primary Users	Main Strengths	Main Dangers
<b>Physical Force</b>	Coerce people with threats of physical harm	People are best swayed by physical threats	Control; security; status; confrontation; hierarchy	Military; police; armed rebels; thugs; gangs; intelligence agencies; militant unionists	Usually quite effective for those with the most strength	Coercive; violent; elitist; anti-democratic; often gives control to militaristic or bloodthirsty leaders
<b>Political Force</b>	Use political authority to implement policies	Change authorities and the people will follow along	Status; attention; hierarchy	Political authorities	Lawful; seemingly democratic and moral; relatively good at implementing decisions	Elitist; anti-democratic (involves only political leaders); usually gives control to those with charisma or great wealth
<b>Economic Force</b>	Hire people to implement policies or hire agents to use physical or political force	People are best swayed by economic threats or offers	Control; material possessions; hierarchy	Corporations; the very wealthy; organized crime syndicates	Usually quite effective; seemingly democratic and moral; good at implementing decisions	Elitist; anti-democratic; gives control to the rich
<b>Advertising, Propaganda</b>	Persuade people by bombarding them repeatedly with the same message	Say the same things enough times in enough ways and people will be swayed	Control	Corporations; politicians	Often quite effective	Manipulative; anti-rational and anti-democratic
<b>Engineering</b>	Change people's physical or social environment to affect their views	People will adapt their perspective to their environment	Rationality; control	Urban planners; corporate managers; management consultants	Good at rectifying destructive or inefficient environments	Relies on those with specialized knowledge and expertise; can be manipulative
<b>Rational Persuasion</b>	Persuade people with arguments based on facts and research	People are rational and will change their minds when presented with reliable evidence	Rationality; autonomy	Scholars; lawyers; lobbyists; activists	Good at finding root causes, illuminating relevant information	Relies on those with specialized knowledge; time consuming; analytical and detached
<b>Emotional Appeals to Ideals</b>	Appeal to people's ideals or consciences	People are best swayed by emotional appeals to their ideals	High ideals	Religious/spiritual people; nonviolent activists	Uplifting, focuses on the positive	May be anti-rational; may give control to charismatic leaders
<b>Emotional Appeals to Anger, Hatred, or Fear</b>	Appeal to people's anger, fears, or prejudices	People are best swayed by invoking their fears or prejudices	Directness; anger	Lobbyists; lawyers; militant activists	Taps into gut emotions; good at mobilizing people	Often anti-rational and manipulative; may give control to charismatic leaders; often unstable
<b>Fellowship and Personal Support</b>	Bring people into a warm community	Kindness and community can persuade people to resolve their differences	Warmth, love, joy	Religious/spiritual people; therapists; activists	Uplifting; makes people feel good; effective in bringing new people in	Often ignores or suppresses differences and conflicts
<b>Nonviolent Confrontation</b>	Force people to deal with problems by directly confronting them	Confrontation can cut through emotional blocks and sway people in remarkable ways	Directness; confrontation	Nonviolent activists	Effective, uplifting, empowering	Can be manipulative

\* Appeals to = This method typically appeals to those who value...

**Source:** This is Figure 7.4, p. 136 of *Inciting Democracy: A Practical Proposal for Creating a Good Society* (SpringForward Press, 2001, HN65 .S38 2001, <<http://www.springforwardpress.com>>) by Randy Schutt, P.O. Box 608867, Cleveland, OH 44108 <<http://www.vernalproject.org>>. This figure was inspired by and partially based on Kurt E. Olmosk, "Seven Pure Strategies of Change," *The 1972 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators* (La Jolla, CA: University Associates, 1972, HM134.A55), pages 163 - 172.