

Some General Methods for Changing Society

Method	Description	Assumption	Appeals to *	Primary Users	Main Strengths	Main Dangers
Physical Force	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
Political Force	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
Economic Force	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
Advertising, Propaganda	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
Engineering	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
Rational Persuasion	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
Emotional Appeals to Ideals	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
Emotional Appeals to Anger, Hatred, or Fear	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
Fellowship and Personal Support	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
Nonviolent Confrontation	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.