Rule of Reciprocity

The rule of reciprocity (or reciprocity norm) is the expectation that when others treat us well, we should respond in kind (not the definition in your book).

It is important to recognize the rule of reciprocity because if someone is nice to you, you will “unconsciously return the favor” in social relations. It builds trust and good social relations.

However, not all relationships are social, and probably should not expect the rule of reciprocity to be invoked in political and economic relationships.
- If the President is nice to reporters, reporters are more likely to be less critical of the President (although reporters will deny this). If you aren’t nice to the President, you won’t get access to him, and perhaps fly with him on Air Force One.
- Some businesses ban gifts to managers and employees or gifts from outside contractors. If you received a gift, you feel obligated to reciprocate with favors or contracts.
  The way to minimize the rule of reciprocity is to reframe the transaction from a social exchange to an economic exchange.
- Political influence and money: Politicians are more likely to give contributors the benefit of the doubt or give favors for people who helped their political campaign.
Drug companies and physicians prescriptions. Drug companies spend $13,000/doctor in “gifts” such as dinners, books, computers, trinkets with the drug companies logo on it, etc. (go to Listen to me! on my web site). Are they more likely to prescribe drugs from that company?
• In the 2002-2003, there were many investment firms that did business with companies and provided stock information for those companies.

• Recently, your younger brother takes you out to an expensive dinner. After dinner, he asks you to buy him some vodka (he’s underage, you are not).

State Attorney Generals and the SEC find that this is an inherent conflict of interest. The investment firm that want to do business with the company feel obligated to give good ratings to those companies.

To hide this apparent conflict of information, one can conceal this information…especially to reduce the number of people who will file for a class action lawsuit because the people who got bad information will only think it is their problem, and not systemic (what is this second psychological principle).
Door in the face

A strategy for gaining concessions after someone is first given the opportunity to turn down a large request (the door in the face). The same requester counter offers with a smaller request that you are more likely to accept than the large request.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requestor</th>
<th>You</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>large request:</td>
<td>Can you donate $200 to our charity?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Smaller request:</td>
<td>how about $20?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(a concession from $200)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The door in the face is a common compliance technique where you make a large request you know is likely going to be turned down. To appear that you are making a concession from this original request, you make a smaller counter offer.

- **Compared to** the original request, the second request **appears** to be moderate (the contrast principle).
- The power of the door-in-the-face technique is due to the **rule of reciprocity** (The requester made a concession and asked for a smaller amount so you feel you need to make a concession, since they did)
**Door in the face**

Knowledge of compliance techniques can use for personal gain or prevention. Good con artists and "negotiators" can use this to their advantage appear to bargain in "good faith".

Those who take advantage of the door in the face for personal gain can manipulate language to make you feel guilty about not accepting the concession.

It is difficult to distinguish between genuine concessions and false concessions (concessions are made to the original target, and an inflated request is made).

In contract negotiations,

- How would management use the door in the face technique to negotiate for
  - a lower wage from $10,
  - fewer benefits,
  - less vacation time (it is currently 2 weeks/year)?

- How would the employees use the door in the face technique to negotiate for
  - a higher wage from $10,
  - more benefits,
  - more vacation time (it is currently 2 weeks/year)?
Door in the face

YOU'RE FIRED!
GAAA!!!

NOT REALLY. BUT NOW THIS 2% RAISE WON'T SEEM SO BAD.

THIS JOB IS ALL ABOUT MANAGING EXPECTATIONS.

(image source: Dilbert)
**Student examples of door in the face**

A salesman comes to your door and offers to sell you a $1000 set of encyclopedias. You decline the encyclopedia but instead you accept the offer to buy a $5 dictionary.

Last week my boyfriend called me into the living room and asked if I could go to the store and get him some beer. I was busy and didn't want to even get up to see what he wanted. I definitely didn't want to go to the store. Then he laughed and said that he had beer in the fridge, and asked if I could get him one. I agreed with no hesitation.

Even after begging and pleading with my parents, they still said that they wouldn't buy me a car because they said they couldn't afford it. When I asked them if they would pay for my insurance instead, if I bought a car myself, they agreed.
Other examples of door in the face:

- Gaining donations for political parties. They first ask if you are willing to donate $100. They follow up by asking if you can’t donate $100, if you can donate $20.

- G. Gordon Liddy (page 53, *Influence* by Robert Cialdini): Most experts believe that the Watergate break-in was a huge blunder with a high risk and low pay-off. However, the proposal G. Gordon Liddy made to Magruder and Mitchell to do this was not the first.
  - Original request =
  - Subsequent request =

- In the 70’s series “Happy Days”, you couldn’t say the word “virgin”. To get it past the censors, Gary Marshall would deliberate include it seven times in their scripts, and make a “concession” to bring it down to one—the real target.

Likewise, it was difficult to say “lose my lust”, so get it in the script, they put a much stronger phrase, knowing it would get censored.
Foot-in-the-door

Foot-in-the-door is tendency for people who have agreed to a small request to later comply with a larger request. These two requests do not have to be related.

Example:
- From the book Can’t Buy my Love by Jean Kilbourne, she argues that it is easier for adolescents to accept a cigarette if they have accepted other tobacco related products (t-shirts, lighters, baseball caps, etc.).
  - Small request = free stuff (baseball caps)
  - Large request = cigarettes

This compliance technique is used to increase the chance that someone to comply with a request after you approach them with another request---regardless if the first request is related to the subsequent request. The original requests are usually relatively small and never coerced by threat or bribe.

The foot-in-the-door is based on the rule of commitment. If you commit to something, you are more likely to follow through with other similar commitments.
Examples of foot-in-the-door technique

- The foot-in-the-door technique can be used to slowly train people to do cruel acts, such as learning to torture people. People are pre-selected on their tendency to be submissive to authority. These people would first start out small and then their assignments would be slowly escalated. They would be
  - guard a prisoner,
  - participate in arrest squads,
  - ordered to occasionally hit the prisoner,
  - observe a torture, and finally
  - practice it.
- The Register Guard asked if I would subscribe to them for 8 weeks. When I said no, they asked if I would accept a free week of service. (it is a combination of two persuasion tactics).
**Student examples of Foot-in-the-Door**

I was getting ready to go and do my laundry when my roommate asked if she could throw in a couple of her things with mine. I told he that that was fine. She brought in at least three loads of laundry and said "It's a little more than 2 things, but you don't mind, do you?" I felt that since I had already told her it was ok, that I couldn't say “no” now.

I went to Albertson's with a friend to buy soda. When we passed by the beer she asked me if I could buy a six-pack of bud. Without too much hesitation I agreed. I gave her a twenty-dollar bill to pay for the beer. When we came to the cashier, I was waiting for my change from the twenty. Right when the cashier was going to ring up the beer, my friend turns around and says "Since you have a twenty, can we get a half-rack," I was so pissed and I was put in the spot in front of the cashier and the customers so I didn't refuse.
**Scarcity principle**

The subjective value of a commodity increases as its availability decreases.
Examples of Scarcity:

- When Dade county banned phosphate based soaps, citizens smuggled phosphate soaps in from neighboring counties. They claimed that the phosphate based soaps cleaned their laundry better, and made their clothes smell fresher.
- Music by Kurt Cobain, Elvis, The Doors is valued more after their deaths.
- Paintings by Van Gogh, Monet, Picasso are valuable because they are scarce.
- Fantastic Four #1, X-men #94 or Spider-Man #1 are more expensive comic books because there are very few copies of them compared to later issues.
- The subjective value of Cabbage Patch dolls, Tickle me Elmo, and Play Station 2, Wii were inflated when the demand was high and the availability is low.
- In the Scientific American Frontiers video Fat and Happy, children are more likely to binge on junk food when they are provided the opportunity if they are restricted at home.
- A person who sells a used car, stereo, refrigerator, etc. can make the item appear “scarce” by scheduling people to view the item at the same time.
- The Bachelor and Bachelorette
• How does understanding the scarcity principle help you understand why it is difficult to save endangered species such as elephants, walruses, leopards, etc.

- More leopards are hunted for their pelts
- Fewer leopards
- Price of their pelts increase

• James Burke, the author of Connections series, says that the production line has had the benefit of making more products available to more people, thus driving down the cost.
  • According to the scarcity principle, what are the psychological consequences of the production line (making more things available)—How does it affect our sense of identity and individuality?
**Student examples of Scarcity**

I have a friend who finds he only wants to date women that are already married or have a serious boyfriend. It is like he becomes obsessed with trying to go out with them. Every once and a while a woman will break up with her boyfriend and start to date him, but then he finds them unappealing; there is no longer a challenge for him. They become too convenient.

My wife and I went to Sears to look at washing machines. There was one on sale for $199.00 (the cheapest in the store). This washer did not have the features we wanted, but it was at a good price. My wife thought we should get it now because it was on special.

There was recently a report about the dangers of porn and sexual issues on the internet. People wanted to limit access and possibly apply indecency laws to some of the groups that deal exclusively with pornography content. As soon as that huge report came out, the groups that have mostly sexual content saw a HUGE increase in use and people became more interested in having what they felt was going to become scarce.

When I lived in Minot, ND, a ban was put on Stephen King books. Soon after, Stephen King books went up in sales and popularity increased.
Conformity and Obedience

- **Conformity** is changing behavior or beliefs to match those of other group members, due to *unspoken* group pressure, real or imagined.
- **Obedience** involves agreeing to an *explicit* demand.

“*All those in favor say ‘Aye.’*”

Both personality and social factors influence behavior. However, many of us underestimate the social and environmental factors on our behavior, and overestimate individual factors—*the fundamental attributional error.*
Conformity

It is understandable that people would conform to a group decision when what is “real” is unclear and difficult to determine.

- Did everyone but me not understand the question?
- Was *The Simpson’s Movie* funny?
- Is Simon mean spirited?
- Should we invade Iraq?

Solomon Asch wanted to illustrate that social pressure to conform to a group of strangers is powerful even in the presence of an objectively incorrect judgment.
Conformity

In the Solomon Asch line experiment, you came into a room of five people. You were the sixth person.

You judged which standard line was the same length as the comparison line. For example,

You performed 18 judgment tasks like this one. On 12 random trials, the first five people provided a clearly incorrect answer, such as line A. How many people went along with the group’s incorrect judgment?
Results of the Asch Line Experiment

Control group subjects:
- A control group with no other members, only subjects had an error rate of 1%.

Test subjects:
- On at least one of the twelve incorrect trials, 76% of the test subjects conformed to the group and gave the wrong answer (24% of the test subjects did not conform).
- On all twelve incorrect trials, people conformed to the group and gave the wrong answer on 37% of all the incorrect trials.
**Conformity**

Most people tend to make a dispositional attribution, rather than a situational attribution. People underestimate the power of the situation. In addition, the following apply to the Asch line experiment:

1. There is no direct pressure to conform.
2. There is no explicit incentive offered to conform.
3. The other people are strangers. Why should you care what they think of you?
4. There is an objectively correct answer.
Social Proof (informational social influence)

Deciding what the appropriate and acceptable behavior is by imitating the behavior of other people (this is not the definition in your textbook).

As an instructor, I am involved in many fire drills. After spending about ten minutes outside people wonder if it is all right to go back in. Usually someone comes out and gives the okay signal. During the time it is unclear whether or not you should go in, people look for is if other people are going back in. The inference is that if others are going in, it must be all right to go in.
Sometimes we do not know what the speed limit is. This is particularly true if we are unfamiliar with the area. If we do not know what it is, often we around and see what other people are doing. By observing the behavior of others, we infer what the speed limit is.

Darek was in a bar that had a no-smoking sign posted on the wall. He likes to smoke but wasn’t sure if he should violate the prohibition in the bar. When he looked around, he noticed quite a few people smoking near the pool tables so he figured it must be OK to light up, at least in that area of the bar.

At the apartment complex I was living at, there is a recycling bin for glass. I wasn’t sure whether or not I was supposed to remove the labels or not. To answer this question, I looked in the bin to see what other people did. The glass jars had labels on it, so it must be all right to leave the labels on. A few weeks later, there was a note on the door of the tenants indicating the rules for recycling...one of them was removing labels from glass jars.

If the rebels troops are suppose to evacuate as the Empire closes in on them, one clue is to see what others are doing.
Manufacturing Informational Social Influence

Groups, organizations, corporations, political parties and individuals can “manufacture” and exaggerate the predominance of a particular belief, thus affecting public opinion and policy. The form of persuasion is by inference and manipulation of the social environment, not a thoughtful dialogue.

Examples:

- **Microsoft:** They tried to put pressure on state attorney generals, by “manufacturing” letters of protest of their lawsuits against Microsoft.
- **Polls and television and radio “call-in polls”**
- **Politics:** Presidential appearances are by invitation only. What you see on television are his supporters, not critics.
- **Bartenders:** They never empty a tip jar completely. They leave money in their tip jar to implicitly tell their customers that they are to leave money in the jar for them.
- **My plan for the Salvation Army at Christmas:** Have confederates with rolls of pennies always drop off pennies in the containers.
Obedience: The Milgram Experiment

- **Obedience** involves agreeing to an *explicit* demand.
- **Conformity** is changing behavior or beliefs to match those of other group members, due to *unspoken* group pressure, real or imagined. (also we learn by observational learning)

In this experiment, two volunteers were recruited from a newspaper ad for research on learning. One volunteer would take the role of teacher and the other would take the role of the learner. The teacher would teach a list of words, and the learner would learn them.

The teacher would help the learner learn by punishments—electric shocks.
Obedience: The Milgram Experiment

The teacher would read a list of words and the learner would repeat them back to the teacher. The teacher would administer electric shocks to the learner when he got an answer wrong. Each subsequent shock would be increased 15 volts. A sample shock was delivered to the teacher just in case there was any doubts about that the generator could produce electric shocks.

If the teacher protested and pleaded with the experimenter to stop the experiment, the experimenter said that you should treat no answer as a wrong answer and deliver an electric shock to the learner. The experimenter would prod the teacher with four verbal prods:

- Please continue (or please go on).
- The experiment requires that you continue.
- It is absolutely essential that you continue.
- You have no other choice, you must go on.

Only when the teachers refused to obey the experiment, or they reached 450 volts, the experimenter would stop the experiment.
Obedience: The Milgram Experiment

Rewind!

There appears to be two volunteers in this research. There is actually only one volunteer. Unknown to the real volunteer, the second “volunteer” was an accomplice of the experimenter. In this experiment, one of them became the teacher and one of them became the learner of a list of words. The two of them drew names to see who would become the teacher and the learner—the accomplice always became the learner.

When the volunteer and experimenter leaves this room, he unstraps himself from the chair and turns his apparent screams are pre-recorded for predetermined electric shocks. No electric shocks are delivered except for the sample shock given to the real test subject.
Predicted outcomes of the Milgram Experiment

Milgram asked psychiatrists, college students and middle-class adults to predict how the subjects would behave.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Slight shock</th>
<th>Moderate shock</th>
<th>Strong shock</th>
<th>Very strong shock</th>
<th>Intense shock</th>
<th>Extreme intensity shock</th>
<th>Danger: severe shock</th>
<th>XXX</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

(a) What percentage of test subjects would deliver electric shocks beyond 300 volts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Expectation</th>
<th>Expectation by Psychologists</th>
<th>Experimental Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>very few</td>
<td>35 of the 40 (87.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(b) What percentage of test subjects would deliver shocks all the way to 450 volts?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class Expectation</th>
<th>Expectation by Psychologists</th>
<th>Experimental Results</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>no one—maybe one in 1000.</td>
<td>26 of 40 (65%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In general, they believed that everyone would refuse to obey at some point, most would stop at 150 volts, a few would go to 300 volts and no one would go all the way to 450 volts.

Much everyone's surprise, 65 percent went all the way to 450 volts. What is the first kind of response by people when they hear this result?

The first thought was that these were sadistic people. After all, who would deliver electric shocks that were painful to a stranger—the fundamental attributional error?
# Results of the Milgram’s Original Study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shock Level</th>
<th>Switch Labels and Voltage Levels</th>
<th>Number of Subjects Who Refused to Administer a Higher Voltage Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Slight Shock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate Shock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>105</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>120</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>135</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>150</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>165</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>180</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Very Strong Shock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>195</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>210</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>225</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>240</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Intense Shock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>255</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>270</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>285</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>300</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Extreme Intensity Shock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>315</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>345</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>360</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Danger: Severe Shock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>390</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>420</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>XXX</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>435</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>450</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Factors that Decrease Obedience in the Milgram Studies

Experimental Variations

- Original study: 65%
- Experiment conducted in office building instead of university setting: 48%
- Teacher and learner in same room: 40%
- Teacher required to force learner’s hand down on a “shock plate”: 30%
- Experimenter leaves laboratory and gives orders over the phone: 23%
- Experimenter leaves and ordinary man gives orders to continue: 20%
- Teacher observes two other teachers rebel and refuse to continue: 10%
- Teacher free to choose shock level: 3%

Percentage of subjects administering the maximum shock (450 volts)
What is the nature of man?

What does the Milgram experiments reflect about the nature of people?

Are there good aspects (like the humanists focus on), or is it more destructive, as Freud believed?

1. When the teachers were allowed to act as their own authority, 95% did not go beyond 150 volts (the first point the learner protested). They were not influenced as much (although some) by the authority figure.

2. When the directions were given over the phone, obedience decreased. People lied about the electric shocks given (they only delivered 15 volts).

3. Milgram saw that people were more likely to muster the courage to defy an authority when they saw someone else do so—see conditions that affect conformity.

4. People truly felt bad about following orders. The teachers of the experiment did not behave in a cold-blooded, unfeeling way.

How does the fundamental attributional error make us make us comfortable in explaining the cruel behavior of others?
**Why did people obey?**

What factors affected the willingness for the teachers to continue to obey the experimenter’s orders?

- A previous well-established mental framework to obey. They volunteered to participate in a psychological study and follow the experimenter’s instructions, and they were paid in advance (rule of commitment).
- The situation or context, in which the obedience occurred. It took place in a scientific lab at Yale University with the context of doing scientific research. Even the experimenter was polite, making it difficult to refuse (rule of reciprocity).
- The gradual, repetitive escalation of the task. The escalation of the voltage was in small steps which made it easier to deliver a much larger electric shock.
- The experimenter’s behavior and reassurances. The experimenter reassured the teacher that the experimenter was responsible for the well-being of the learner, thus reducing their perception of responsibility.
- The physical and psychological separation from the learner. The learner was in a different room and not visible to the teacher.
- No specific personality trait consistently predicts conformity or obedience in experimental situations.
Ways anti-social behavior develop

**Biological**
- Brain damage
- Low levels of serotonin

**Environmental**
- Social forces (Milgram experiment)
  - Foot-in-the-door technique (gradual escalation of the task)
  - Separation of the victim
  - Impersonalization of the victim
  - Presence of authority figure or authority status
- Deindividuation

**Psychological**
- Observational (Ch 5)—observe someone hurting, killing, abusing another.
- Reinforcements (Ch 5)—Being reinforced for hurting, killing, abusing another
- Dehumanize the victim (cognitive dissonance)
- Traits
Why do people hurt one another? What concepts in social psychology (or psychology in general) can help you understand how average people can hurt and murder other innocent people?

When the Greeks trained people to torture prisoners, they did it in small increments (the foot-in-the-door technique).

- guard a prisoner,
- participate in arrest squads,
- ordered to occasionally hit the prisoner,
- observe a torture, and finally
- practice it

When studying the psychology of personality, many students believe that by understanding an individual’s personality, they can see what kind of person they will be (Hitler versus Mother Teresa). Implicitly, they were focusing on the individual, and not the social situation that influences behavior.

Many students say in Chapter 12: Personality that by understanding leaders, we can see what kind of people they will be (eg. Saddam Hussein, Adolf Hitler, etc.). Implicitly, they were focusing on the personality and not the social situation.