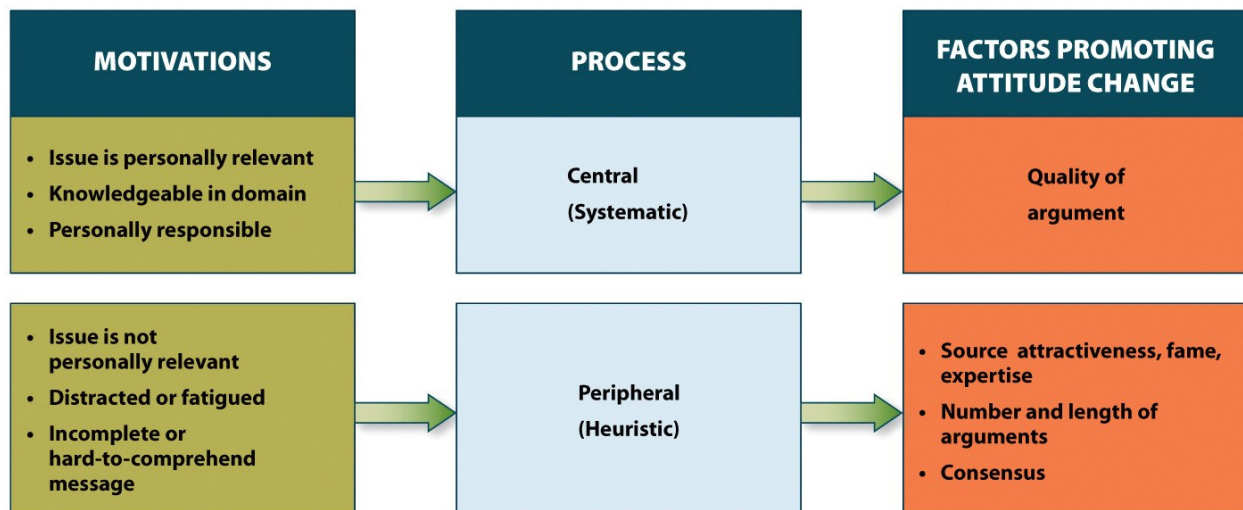


A Two-Process Approach to Persuasion

The Petty and Cacioppo model calls these two routes central and peripheral.

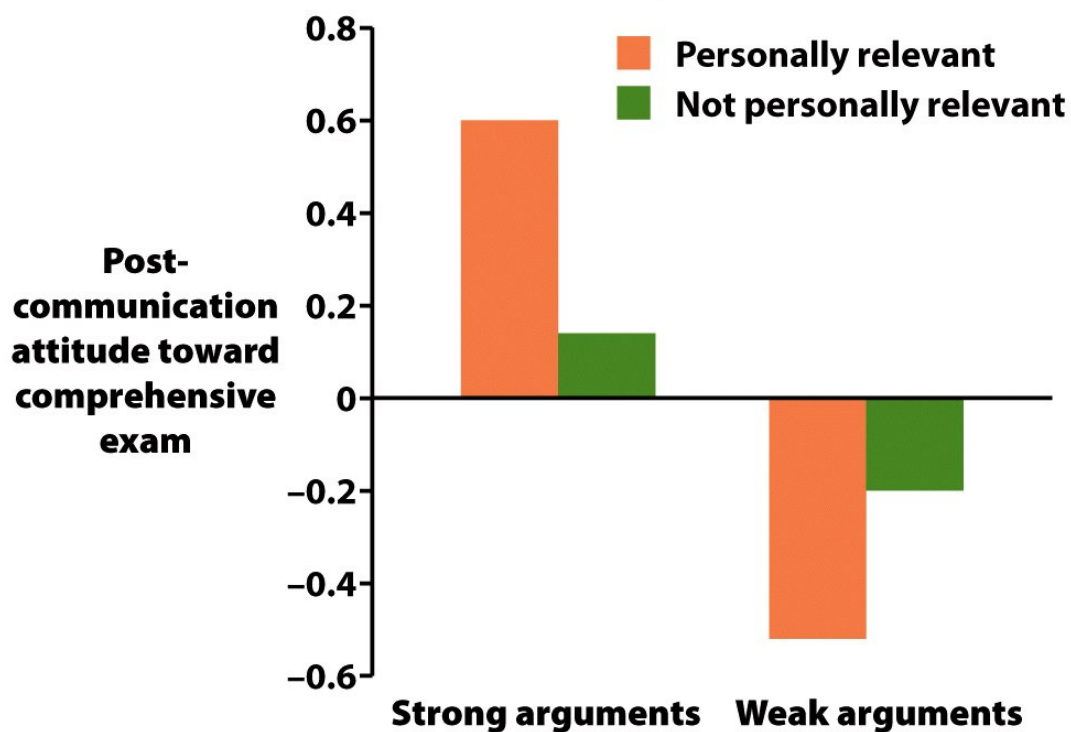
The Chaiken's model calls these two routes systematic and heuristic.



Social Psychology, 2/e Figure 9.3
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Central Route to Persuasion: Weak or Strong Arguments

Strong arguments lead to attitude change for participants for whom the issue is personally relevant more than for those for whom the issue is not relevant.

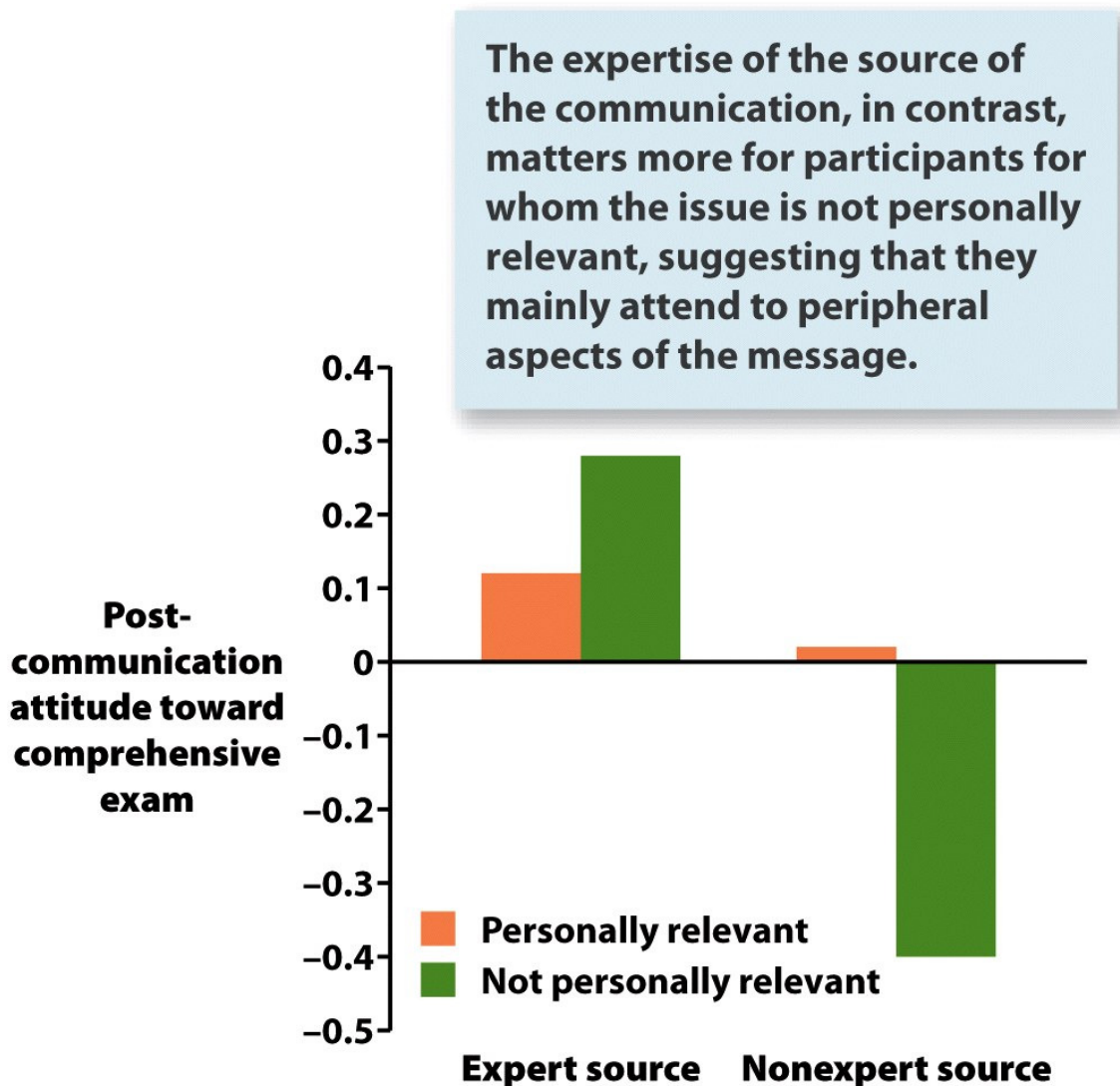


Social Psychology, 2/e Figure 9.5a
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When the comprehensive exam was

- **personally relevant (next year)**, students saw the weak arguments as weak and the strong arguments as strong.
- **not personally relevant (10 years)**, there was a small effect of the strength of the arguments

Peripheral Route of Persuasion: Expertise of the Source



Social Psychology, 2/e Figure 9.5b
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When the comprehensive exam was

- **personally relevant (next year)**, students saw the expertise as not that relevant
- **not personally relevant (10 years)**, students perceived the expertise as being relevant.

The Sleeper Effect

An effect that occurs when messages from unreliable sources initially exert little influence, but later cause individuals' attitudes to shift (page 333).

The sleeper effect occurs because one of the first things we forget about a message is the source of the message. We remember the message, but forget the source.

For example,

- Barack Obama is from Mars, Mitt Romney is from Jupiter (National Inquirer)
- Barack Obama was a senator from Illinois, Mitt Romney was the governor of Massachusetts (CNN)

Over time, we remember

- Barack Obama is from Mars, Mitt Romney is from Jupiter (National Inquirer)
- Barack Obama was a senator from Illinois, Mitt Romney was the governor of Massachusetts (CNN)

Psychologically, bad sources of information become equivalent sources of information--not because they are equivalent, but because we forget the quality of the sources.

In addition, when information (it doesn't matter if it is accurate or false information) is repeated multiple times, it starts to sound familiar, and hence truthful. This is called the validity effect (not in your textbook).

Appeal to Emotions (fear)

The appeal to fear is a persuasion strategy to motivate people to engage from a particular behavior by scaring them, rather than informing them.

Sometimes the appeal to fear is based on legitimate concerns such as:

- smoking causes cancers,
- "unsafe sex" increases one's chance of getting AIDS,
- not wearing your seatbelt increases your chance of get hurt in an accident, or
- drinking while driving can increase the chance you will get in an accident).

Appeal to Fear

In 1932, Adolf Hitler inspired his fellow countrymen with the words:

The streets of our country are in turmoil. The universities are filling with students rebelling and rioting. Communists are seeking to destroy our country. Russia is threatening us with her might, and the Republic is in danger. Yes--danger from within and without. We need law and order! Without it our nation cannot survive.

Herman Goering, founder of the Gestapo, president of the Reichstag, convicted war criminal

“It is the leaders of a country who determine the policy. It is always a simple matter to drag the people along whether it is a democracy or a fascist dictatorship, a parliament or communist dictatorship, voice or no voice, the people can always be brought to the bidding of the leaders...

All you have to do is tell them they are being attacked and denounce the pacifists for a lack of patriotism and exposing the country to danger. It works the same in every country.”

Appeal to Fear

Listen to the ads for/against measures during election time. Rarely will they address the issue, but appeal to your emotions.

- There are communists in the state department
- There are terrorists in this country
- Regulating drug prices will hurt R&D.
- Strict new FDA regulations to address BSE (mad cow disease) would bring little real benefit and cause great economic harm
- Enacting “this law” will restrict your rights.
- (the President), by not being able to hire/fire anyone he chooses will hurt national security.

Other contemporary examples:

- Corporations say that regulations will hurt the economy, lose jobs, etc.
- Gay marriages will destroy the “institution of marriage”.
- Scientists are censoring my theories (that the earth is flat)
- The American military knew that Pearl Harbor was going to be attacked by the Japanese in 1941 and are censoring my theory.
- Governor (former) Ann Richards is appointing gays and lesbians to state positions

Appeal to fear

Sometimes the fear appeal is based on irrational fears such as those based on racial or ethnic prejudice in Hitler's Germany, Stalin's Russia, the junta in Argentina, or Hussein's Iraq just to name a few.

Distinguishing the difference between the legitimate and illegitimate uses of the appeal to fear is difficult because:

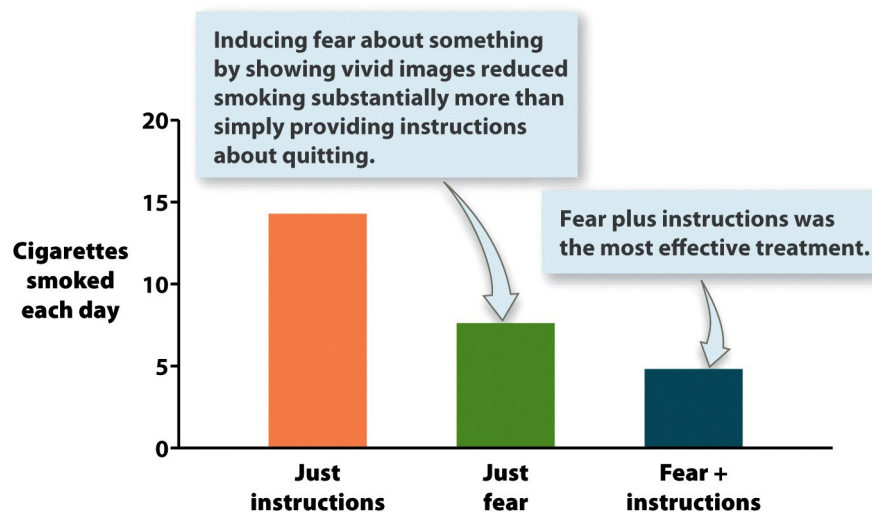
- Most of us don't realize when we are making decisions based on emotion, and not basing a decision on a rational process.
- Fear redirects our thinking away from rational processes in assessing the claim and the evidence for the claim (which are rarely provided).
- Appealing to fear is powerful because it directs our thoughts away from careful considerations of the issue at hand and towards a plan of ridding ourselves of that fear, rather than assessing the evidence for or against the issue.

What conditions make the appeal to fear more effective?

The fear appeal is most effective when

- (1) It scares the hell out of people
- (2) It offers a specific recommendation for overcoming the fear arousing threat.
- (3) The recommended action is perceived as effective for reducing the threat.
- (4) The recipient of the message believes that he or she can perform the recommended action.

Certain tetanus shot programs and anti-smoking campaigns that incorporate all four of these brought better results than programs that only used some of these. Certain threats such as campaigns to "just say no" to drugs or nuclear disarmament are not effective because the listener does not perceive that their behavior is effective or doable.



The Need For Cognition Scale

Scores for the Need for Cognition Scale range from a high of 80 to a low of 18. The midpoint is 54.

Those who have higher scores on the need for cognition scale tend to be more persuaded by high-quality arguments and are relatively unmoved by peripheral cues of persuasion ([page 336](#)).