



# 5 Elements of Persuasive Writing

**Identify the 5 Elements of Persuasive Writing and  
Improve Your Persuasion Abilities –  
Get to YES and  
Own Your Authentic Voice.**

**by Dori Etter**

Welcome!

Congratulations for taking a wonderful step toward improving your Persuasion abilities. Perhaps we don't think about this often, yet we are confronted with dozens of opportunities to persuade, and literally *hundreds* of persuasive messages daily.

Your opportunities to persuade are often the times when you get to make the biggest impact on your life and your future, such as asking your boss for a raise, or asking a client for the job. And it's also the little moments that can make our lives more enjoyable, like persuading the babysitter to stay an extra hour, or your partner to select the movie you really want to see.

This simple guide will improve your ability to get what you want in life; you'll experience getting more YESes. But there is another angle to consider as you read this guide as well: your viewpoint as the person being persuaded!

By considering that viewpoint while reading, you'll also be empowered to experience persuasion differently – to recognize why a request sometimes inspires you, and sometimes not. You'll gain the ability to get to the underlying message that's inherent in all persuasive writing.



Enjoy!

Dori Etter

Creator of Inspired Income

## 5 Elements of Persuasive Writing

Persuasive writing – what exactly does that mean? Perhaps you learned about persuasive writing in a class in school such as debate, and it was all about defending your perspective. It was about using facts and logic to convince your reader of your point of view. It included lots of "proof" in the form of citations and its focus was linear logic.

While the Persuasive Writing I'm talking about here has some similarities to that "debate class" writing style, it has a slightly different focus. Rather than focusing on linear logic, you'll see that the 5 Elements of Persuasive Writing used most often in business (and everyday interactions) focus on *emotion*. I'll show you why as we dive into each element, and I believe you'll experience for yourself the power of this kind of Persuasive Writing.

This guide is geared toward those whose livelihood and success are dependent upon their ability to persuade (even though everyone can use this information!) I'll be going through the 5 elements with particular attention to how this element empowers you to persuade buyers, clients, and decision makers of all kinds with WORDS, both written and spoken.

So let's begin! The 5 Elements are:

1. ***A Point of View***
2. ***Emotional Connection***
3. ***Story***
4. ***Reader Focus***
5. ***Authenticity***

## Element 1: A Point of View

At its core, persuasive writing is about you the writer taking a particular Point of View. You take the Point of View that you want to persuade your audience to take; you want them to think like you!

This sounds simple, but the element of consciously taking a clearly identified point of view is often missing, particularly with those new to writing persuasively. New clients of mine are often afraid to take a particular point of view for fear of alienating or "scaring away" their ideal client. In fact, nothing could be farther from the truth!

When you take a powerful position you are actually empowering your reader to align themselves with you or against you! – and either outcome is far more desirable than ambivalence. Really, you are looking for the population who will be your Raving Fans, your best customers, your Champions, and it works in your favor to actually *repel* those who are NOT.

You will attract those who agree with your point of view – those who can see your point of view as valid, or possible, or something they can understand. All of these people will connect emotionally with you, and they'll be interested in what you have to say and what you have to sell. They want to see how you present your perspective, and they will willingly allow your point of view to impact their thinking and actions.

Those for whom your point of view occurs as invalid, flawed, or somehow "wrong," will stop following you, or better yet, they may write about you and your "flawed" opinion! This generates free publicity, further solidifies your point of view, and actually sends more new fans your way.

### Here's how you can apply it:

Whenever you sit down to write persuasively, first start with the question: "*What is the point of view I am going to take in this piece of writing?*" This will get you started on the right track toward effective persuasion, and following through with the next four elements will further empower that intention!

Remember, effective persuasive writing is about you the writer *taking a particular Point of View*.

## Element 2: Emotional Connection

The second element of effective Persuasive Writing is establishing an Emotional Connection.

It is proven that buying decisions (really all decisions) are based on EMOTIONS, which are backed up by logic. Emotions *first* – logic *second*!

It's common to attempt persuasion through logic, and partly because we're a "thinking" society with heads ruled by logic. And that's how we've been trained; we know we can trust FACTS, so applying logic naturally feels like the right way to persuade.

Yet, the MOST EFFECTIVE persuasion comes from provoking *emotion*, precisely because it *bypasses the logical mind and goes straight into our subconscious* – with little or no awareness or ability to stop it.

I want to highlight something important. You'll meet people who are extremely analytical, and who will claim vehemently that their decisions are purely based on logic. They'll tell you about all the research they've done to make a decision, and provide a logical case that makes great sense. Yet their decisions in most cases are actually made on a deeper level – an emotional, subconscious level – and all their research and logical analysis is to convince the conscious mind that the right decision has been made.

There's a lot of scientific research that has gone in to discovering how we make decisions, and with the new Brain Science work, more is being uncovered every day. For example, did you know that your favorite color is "chosen" long before you have the cognitive ability to even understand choice? New studies are showing that your "favorite color" is most likely the color that you were exposed to the most as an infant that your subconscious associates with feeling connected – so the color of the toy that your mother used to hold up and shake while she was baby talking to you may well be the cause of your favorite color!

The research is ongoing so we don't know what new discoveries will be made, and we don't know all the ways we are influenced unconsciously, yet it's



## Here's how you can apply it:

Using emotion effectively this way requires that you know something about your audience – about how they view the world and their place in it – so that you can tap into their emotions, and thereby their subconscious mind.

Before you start writing, create a written model of your reader, customer, or buyer, and use this "avatar" to focus on while writing. (I do this when I create a video, or deliver a tele-class too. I actually image my person right in the room with me, and I lead, write, and teach directly to them.) Also, always write to just one person – after all, only one person is reading your book, email, blog post, or web page on the other end. (At least I don't attend many blog-reading parties, do you??)

The very best way to create this written model is to actually *speak with and interact with your audience!* Hopefully, you are providing your service or product to at least some people already – create opportunities to communicate with them. Offer them a free 20 minute consultation or Q&A in your area of expertise as an exchange for answering some of your questions.

Alternately, think of the customers you have enjoyed working with in the past – the customers you were able to get the most results for. What about these customers made them your ideal clients? What about them had them get great results? Use these clients to begin to create your model – and always remember to hone and clarify your model over time as you acquire new, different, and more experiences.



**Here's a quick tip:** Your audience member is **not** you!

While you probably have things in common with your audience, they are not going to be *just like you*; they will most certainly not be as interested in your product or service as you are (if they were, they would be the expert, not you!) So look for where you are similar, and find key differences too. Remember how you felt before finding your answers and developed your particular expertise, because that's more likely the experience level of your audience today.

Remember, effective Persuasive Writing requires *establishing an Emotional Connection*.



## Element 3: Story

The next element on our list is Story – and it's a great element, because it really provides the opportunity to bring in Emotional Connection with your audience.

Think about the people you know as great storytellers. You are naturally riveted by their writing, and you keep reading and engaging until the end. SARK is a natural storyteller and you learn through her stories; you feel the emotions as she shares about them, and you go on the ride with her. That's great storytelling!

Unfortunately, it's really common to tell "about something" or to "describe something" than to share a story. You talk *about something* when you're simply recounting events as they occurred – even with emotion. You *share a story* when your narrative moves characters through time, space, and emotional territory.

A story doesn't have to be long to accomplish all three of these things. Here's a classic and famous example from 1926; a headline from a print ad selling piano lessons:



"Can he really play?" a girl whispered.  
"Heavens no!" Arthur exclaimed. "He  
never played a note in his life."

**They Laughed When I Sat Down  
At the Piano  
But When I Started to Play!—**

Can you see the story? Do you experience the characters, and does it take you through time, space, and emotional territory?

While your stories may not be as succinct and laser focused as this headline (which was accompanied by a half page of text selling piano playing correspondence courses), you now know it's important to move your story's characters through time, space, and emotional territory.

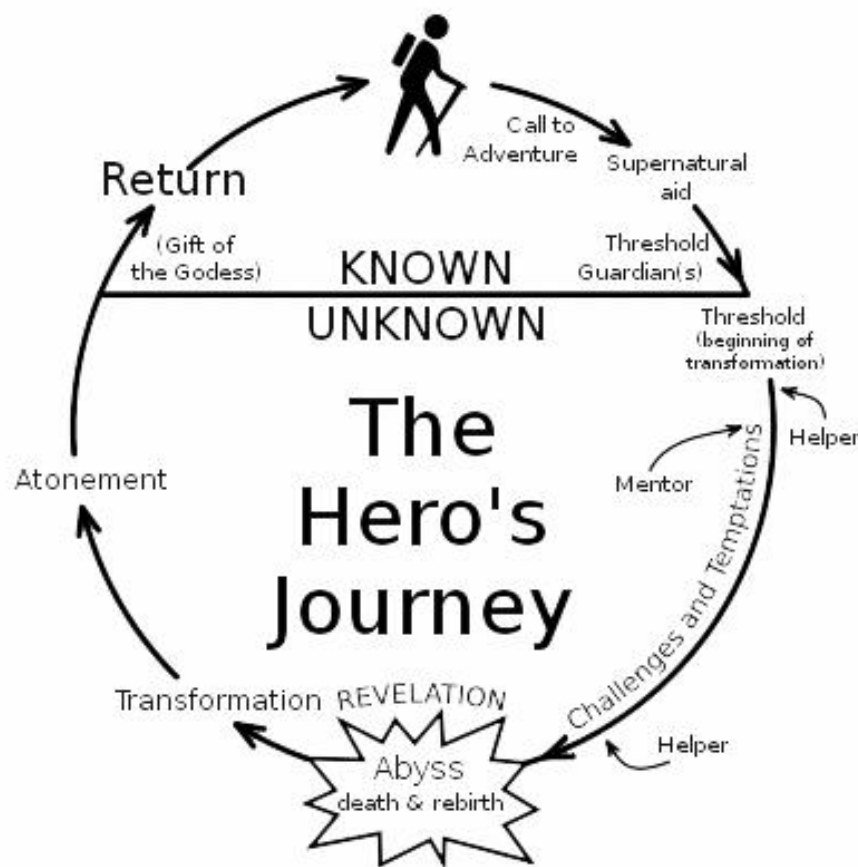
In persuasive writing, the main character (the Hero) is *always* the client or customer, whether this is overtly stated or merely implied.

## Here's how you can apply it:

A powerful model for storytelling is embodied in Joseph Campbell's classic, *The Hero's Journey*. Many of the top grossing movies of all time and countless others use this model effectively. You can too.

[Here's a cute \(under 90 seconds\) animated video of the story structure.](#)

[Here's the extensive Wikipedia article about the Hero's Journey.](#)



And here's a simple image that reveals the path of this epic storytelling structure:

If you like this model and want to explore even more, [here's a great site just for writers.](#)

Remember, effective Persuasive Writing *tells a story.*



## Element 4: Reader Focus

This element is Reader Focus – it means that your writing is not focused on you, the writer, but rather on YOUR READER!

This is such a classic mistake that most of us make in the beginning; we write all about how we feel:

- I'm so happy to bring you this information.
- I know you will find this valuable.
- When I tried this, it really worked.

**Reader Focus is about using the word “YOU” *way* more than the word “I”.**

- You will love this information!
- You will find this valuable.
- You should try this – it will work for you.

Using "you" is one of many ways to create a reader focus, and probably the easiest for beginning persuaders. Then step up to using an avatar and ensuring that your language, images, emotions, and metaphors all match up.

If your avatar were a new mother, an analogy using the word "terror" around her weight would simply not fit; for a new mother, "terror" falls into the category that has to do with her new baby ... not the size of her mid-section. Step into your audience's shoes and you'll do much more persuading.

### Here's how you can apply it:

Using "you" is just one way to tell if you truly have reader focus, but it is simple and easy to start with if you are a beginner.

Take the "you" vs "I" test: Read your last few blog posts or emails; do you have more "I" statements than "you" statements? Count the ratio and see if you can re-write the same piece and with the same intention to communicate, but with "you" sentences instead. Then read both versions and see which one you would rather receive.

**Remember, effective Persuasive Writing is *focused on your reader*.**

## Element 5: Authenticity

The final element addressed here is Authenticity.

While it is certainly not present in all persuasive writing, it is the **cornerstone of any persuasive writing that you do if you want to build a lasting and sustainable business (and reputation!)**



I'd like to point out the confusion around what exactly is Authenticity in persuasive writing. Persuasion often gets confused with *manipulation* or *coercion*. So to stay far away from those two terribly ineffective ways of selling and doing business, well-meaning writers and business owners avoid using persuasive language altogether. And they also avoid doing anything to enhance or improve their persuasive writing abilities – thinking that doing so would somehow cause them to become less authentic.

Nothing could be further from the truth! Learning powerful persuasive writing techniques simply gives you another writing tool – one that empowers your ability to

There's so much to say on this topic that I've developed an entire 6-week course devoted to [\*Selling Authentically using the written word\*](#). I truly know how to move into the realm of effective writing and can have you doing so – without "selling out" on your values or beliefs. I've done it hundreds of times with clients and students just like you, leaving them generating hundreds of thousands of dollars and impacting thousands of lives that they wouldn't have been able to impact without these proven techniques.

At its core, authenticity is simply owning your voice – and when you incorporate persuasion techniques into your writing tool kit, you simply begin to [\*Own Your Persuasive Voice\*](#), and with that comes true power to change your destiny and change the world around you.

There are lots of ways that we're not authentic to ourselves and our own voice, whether writing persuasively or not. If you truly want someone to buy your product, or read your blog, or attend your event, isn't the most authentic thing you could do is to *ask them to do it??!* And yet, simply *asking for the sale* is the most difficult part of

business for many people – and they become masters at avoiding asking, essentially being inauthentic in the process! You can master persuasion and “the ask” by developing and using your own persuasive voice.

## Here's how you can apply it:

First, consider joining me and other heart-based, authentic, and high-integrity writers, bloggers, and business owners for my new 6 week course [Owning Your Persuasive Voice: Selling Authentically Using the Written Word](#). You can follow the link to find out more about it, and begin to develop your knowledge and skills around how to write for income on the Internet.

Second, actually apply what you've gotten out of this free guide. Review it again; identify where and how I use what I'm guiding you to use, and take the "you" vs. "I" test with some of your own writing.

Spend a little extra time on your persuasive writing – and really get honest with yourself when you go to make the ask. If you were in your customer's shoes (remember to use an avatar), would you say, “yes” to what you are offering? Making effective offers is another subject entirely – that's why I'm doing an entire [bonus session on it in my course](#) – along with some templates and training on how to actually present these powerful offers on a website.

Finally, watch for what keeps you from being authentically you in your writing; it's vulnerable and scary to be our full authentic selves, especially when it feels like we are supposed to be the ones “in the know.” Thankfully when we are being truly authentic, we actually connect more with others. I think this is because we are more connected to our Self, and that always leads to good things in business!

Remember, effective Persuasive Writing *authentically uses your own persuasive voice.*



Thank you for spending your time and energy reading this guide. It's my intention that this information will make a difference for you – will empower you to fulfill your passion and purpose, and to thrive while doing so.

With much appreciation for who you really are. XOXO *Dori*