

Social Influence



Discussion Questions

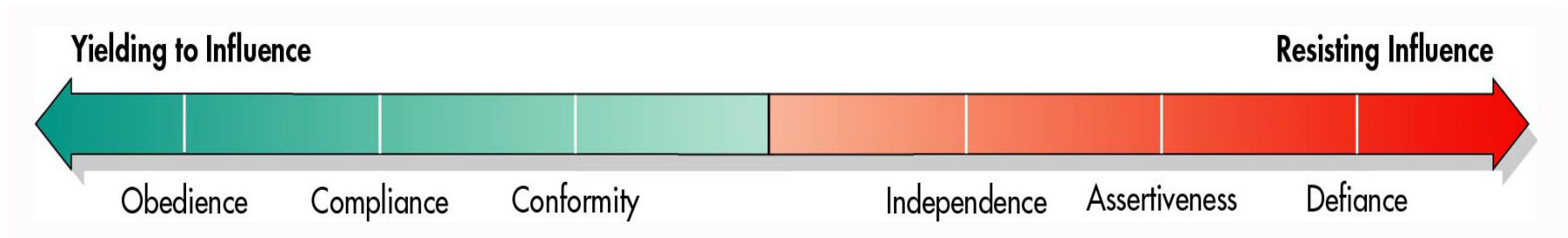
1. What is social influence?
2. What is conformity? Why do we conform? What social factors pressure us to conform?
3. What is compliance? Why do we comply?
4. What is obedience? Why do we obey? Why do we disobey?
5. Who has the greatest influence on us?
6. How can we resist attempts to influence us?



What is social influence?

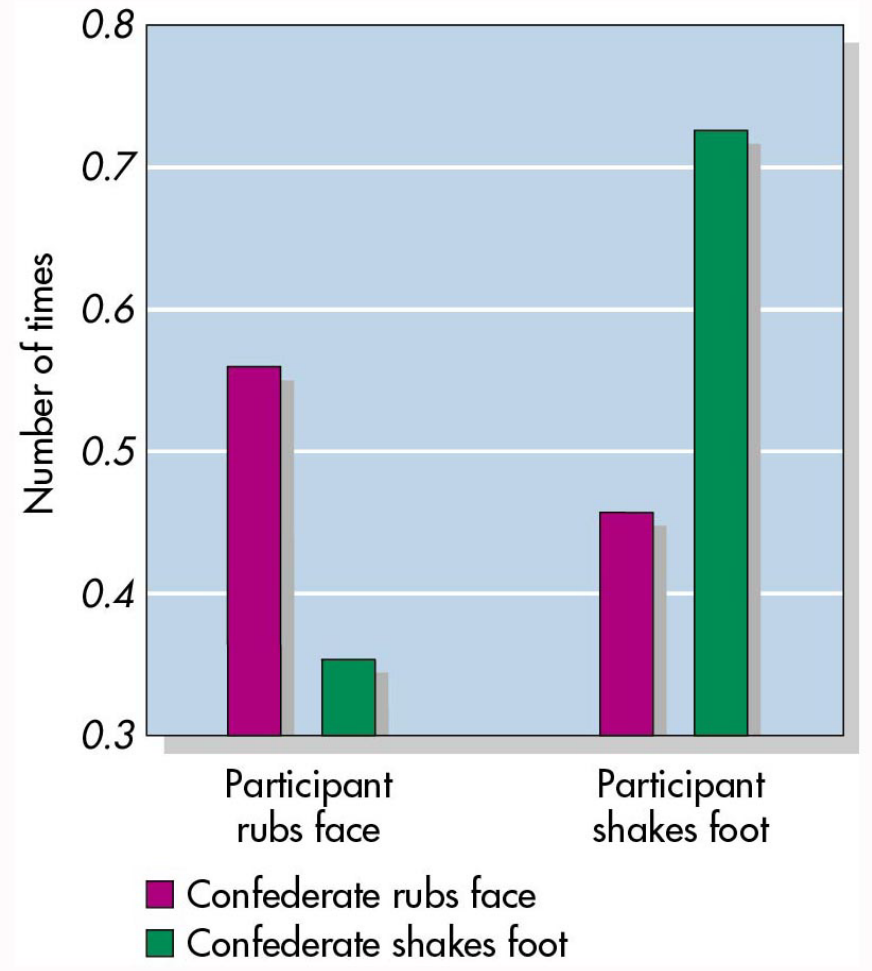
What is social influence?

- **Social influence:** The ways we are affected by the real and imagined presence of others
 - Conformity
 - Compliance
 - Obedience



What is social influence?

- Vulnerable to unconscious, automatic social influences
 - Chameleon effect
 - Emotion contagion



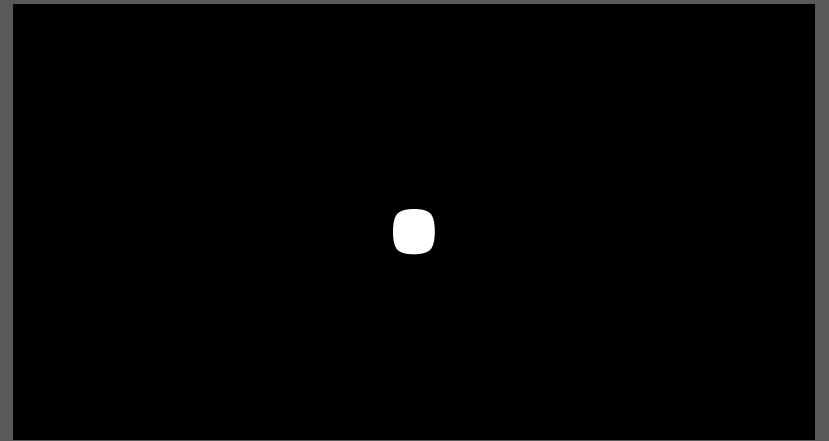
What is conformity? Why do we conform? What social factors pressure us to conform?

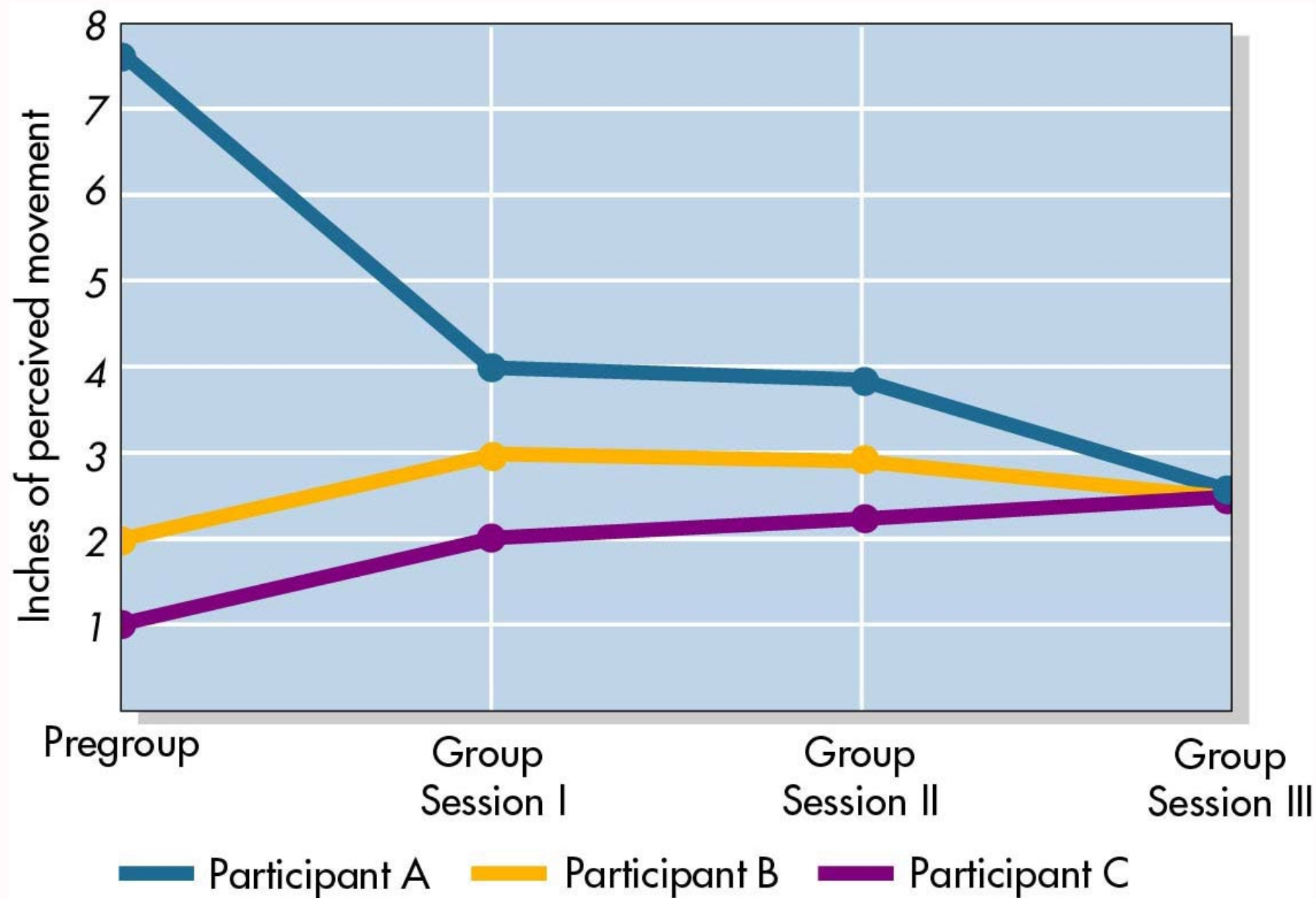
What is conformity?

- **Conformity:** The tendency to change our perceptions, opinions, or behavior to be consistent with the group
- **Private conformity:**
Actual change in beliefs and behavior
- **Public conformity:**
Superficial change in behavior only

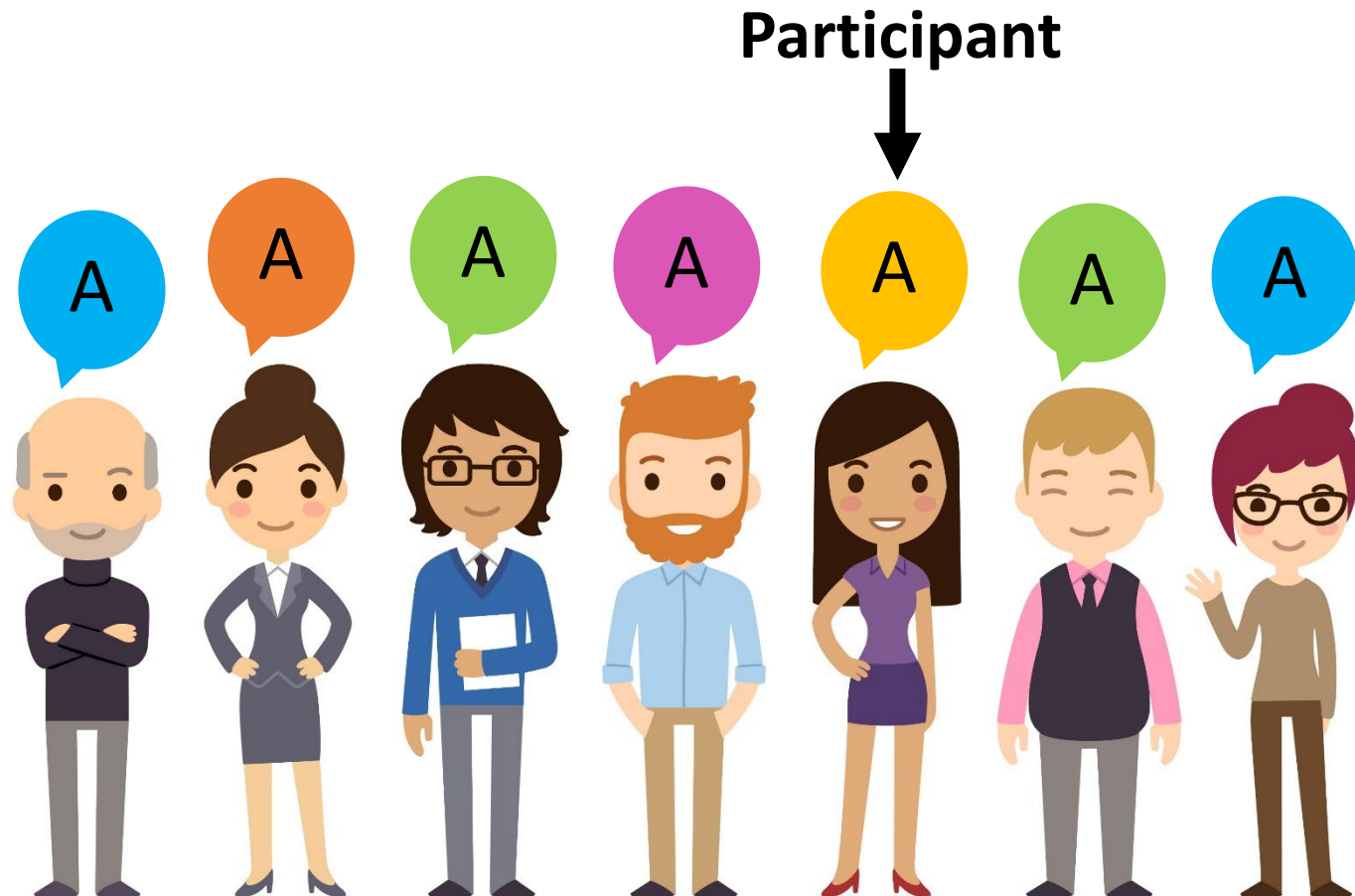
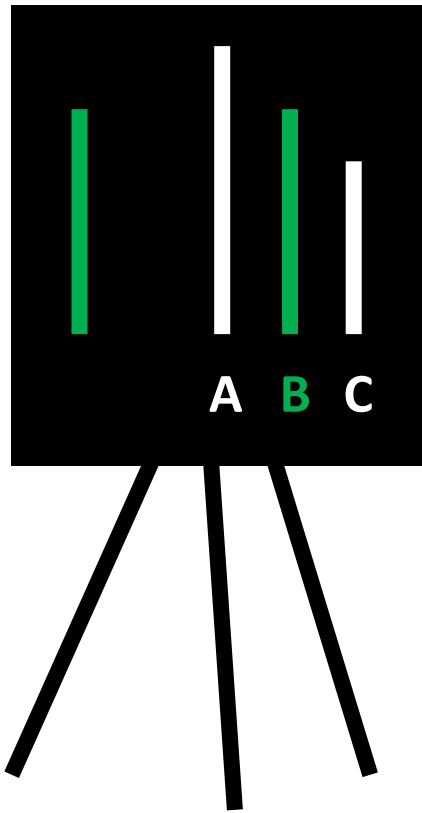


What is conformity?

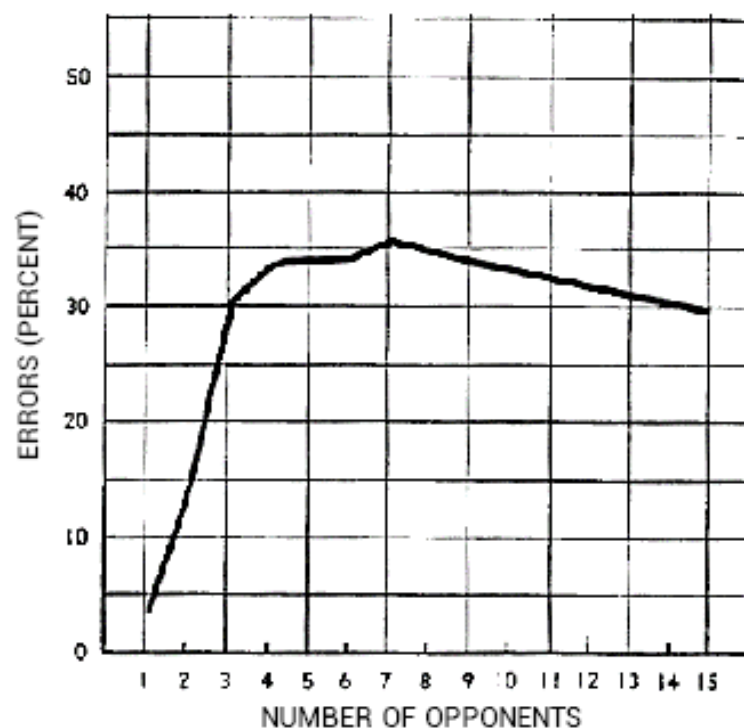




What is conformity?



What is conformity?



SIZE OF MAJORITY which opposed them had an effect on the subjects. With a single opponent the subject erred only 3.6 per cent of the time; with two opponents he erred 13.6 per cent; three, 31.8 per cent; four, 35.1 per cent; six 35.2 per cent; seven, 37.1 per cent; nine, 35.1 per cent; fifteen, 31.2 per cent.

Why do we conform?

- The need to be right
 - **Informational influence:** The power to impact others through information
 - Ambiguous situations
 - Private conformity
 - Sherif's experiment



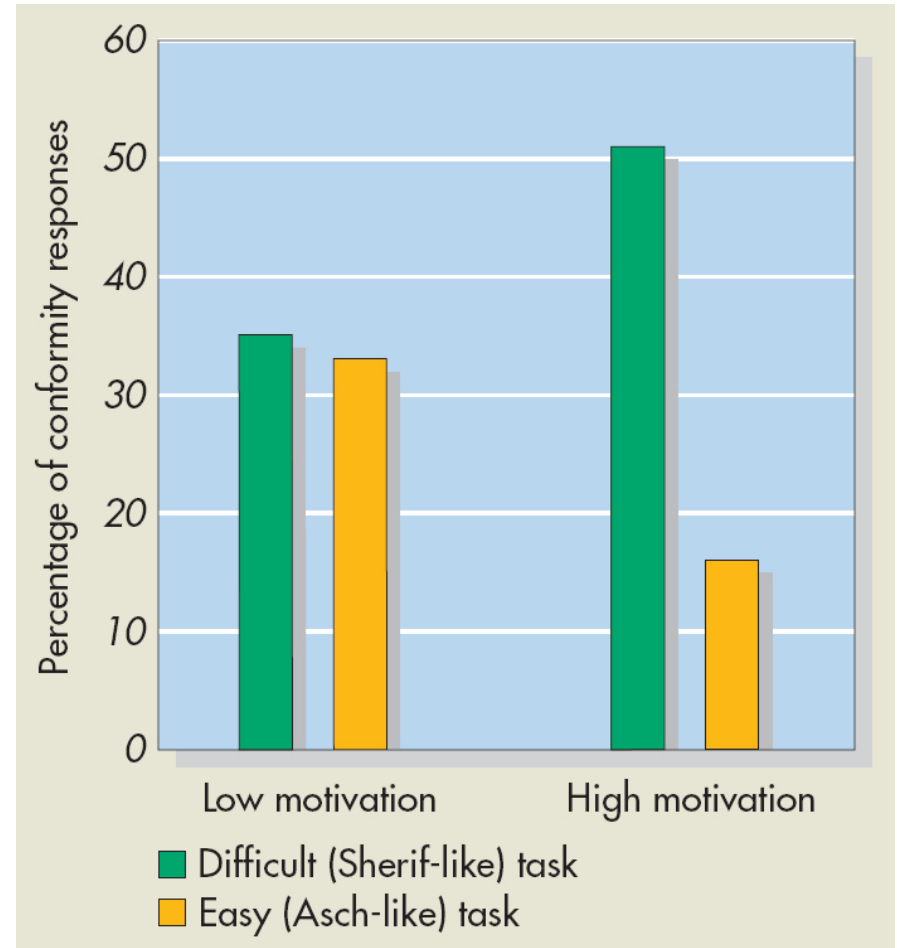
Why do we conform?

- The fear of rejection
 - **Normative influence:**
The power to impact others through peer pressure
 - Unambiguous situations
 - Public conformity
 - Asch's experiment



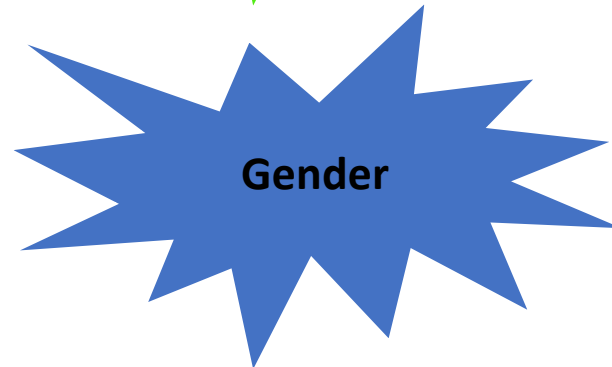
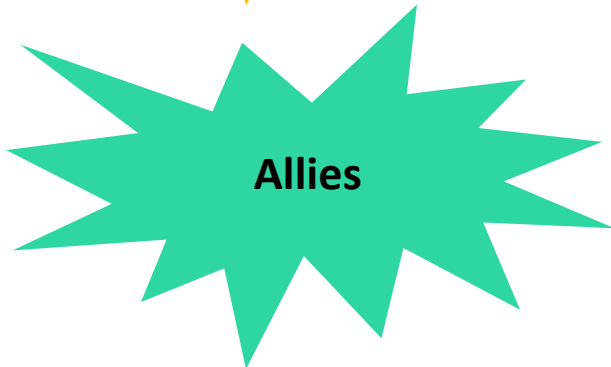
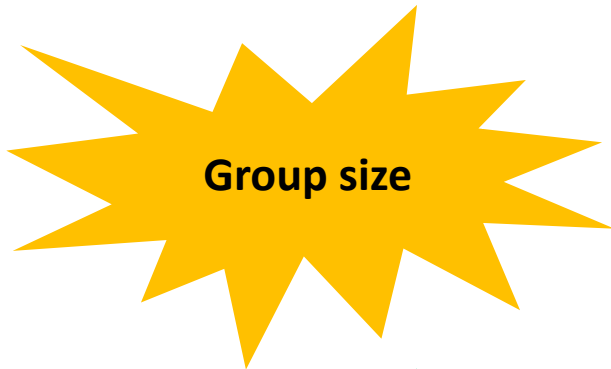
Why do we conform?

- Motivation + Easy Task = Low Conformity
- No motivation = Moderate Conformity
- Motivation + Difficult Task = High Conformity



What social factors pressure us to conform?

- **Majority influence:** The process by which the majority produces change within a group



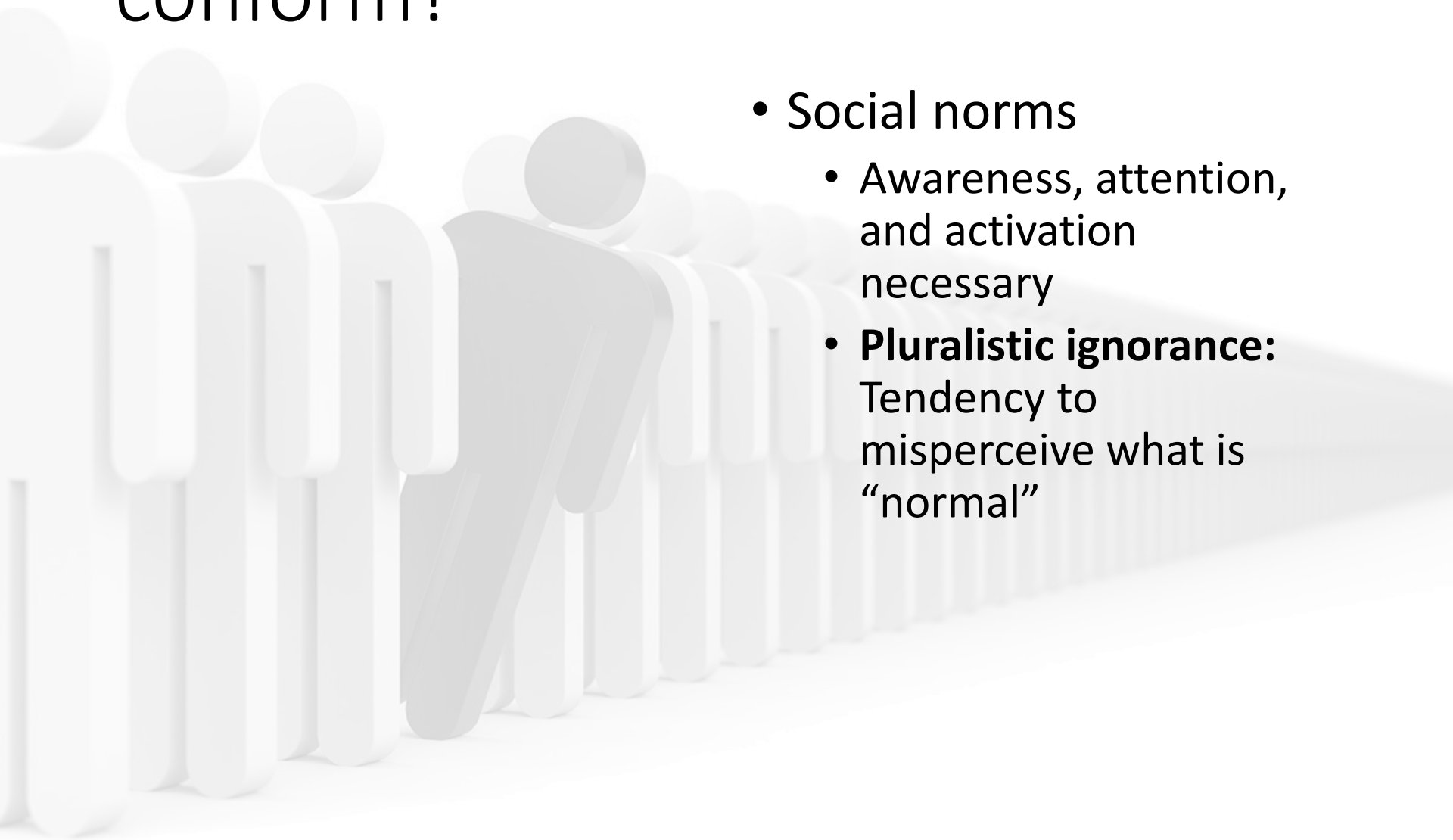
What social factors pressure us to conform?

- Group Size
 - Conformity increases as perception of size increases *up to a point* (**law of diminishing returns**)



What social factors pressure us to conform?

- Social norms
 - Awareness, attention, and activation necessary
 - **Pluralistic ignorance:** Tendency to misperceive what is “normal”



What social factors pressure us to conform?

- Allies
 - Conformity dropped by 80% when an ally was present
 - Any type of dissent can reduce normative pressures
 - More difficult to stand alone

What social factors pressure us to conform?

- Gender
 - Comfort with the task
 - Women conform more on masculine items, but men conform more on feminine items
- Situation
 - Women conform more and men less in public versus private



What social factors pressure us to conform?

- **Minority influence:** The process by which dissenters produce change within a group
 - Vilification for unpopular beliefs
 - **Minority slowness effect:** Occurs when the minority responds more slowly to questions about their attitudes



What social factors pressure us to conform?

- Moscovici (1969) suggested *minority groups* get power from their *behavior*, while *majority groups* get power from their *numbers*.
- Non-conformists have more influence when:
 - Their argument is consistent yet open-minded.
 - They are similar to the conformists.
- Use the “consistent dissent” strategy



What social factors pressure us to conform?

- Hollander recommended the “first conform, then dissent” strategy.
 - Conform to the majority to build power and your dissent (as a minority member) will be more tolerated
 - **Idiosyncratic credits:** Interpersonal “credits” that a person earns by following group norms
 - Then, your dissent (as a minority member) will be more tolerated

What social factors pressure us to conform?

- **Dual-process approach:** Suggests majorities and minorities exert social influence in different ways
 - *Majorities* elicit *public* conformity through *normative* influence using power and control
 - *Minorities* elicit *private* conformity through *informational* influence using consistency and commitment



What social factors pressure us to conform?

- Objective vs. subjective judgments
 - Majorities more influential with factual judgments
 - Minorities equally influential with opinion judgments
- How and when conformity is measured
 - Majorities influential when measured directly and publicly
 - Minorities influential when measured indirectly and privately

What social factors pressure us to conform?

- Culture
 - Conformity rates tend to be higher in collectivist cultures





**What is compliance? Why do
we comply?**

What is compliance?

- **Compliance:** Changes in behavior that are elicited by direct requests

Mindlessness

**Reciprocity
norm**

**Foot-in-the-
door technique**

**Door-in-the-
face technique**

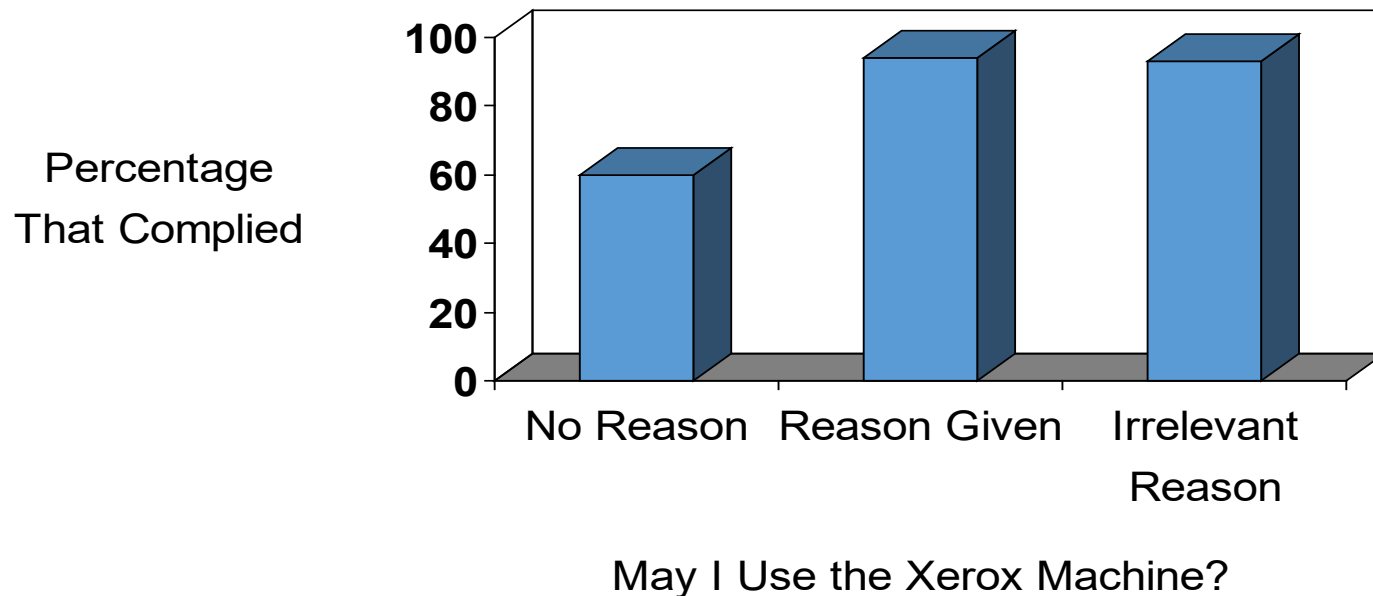
Lowballing

**That's-not-all
technique**

Why do we comply?

- **Mindlessness:** A state of not fully using the conscious mind

Langer et al. (1978)



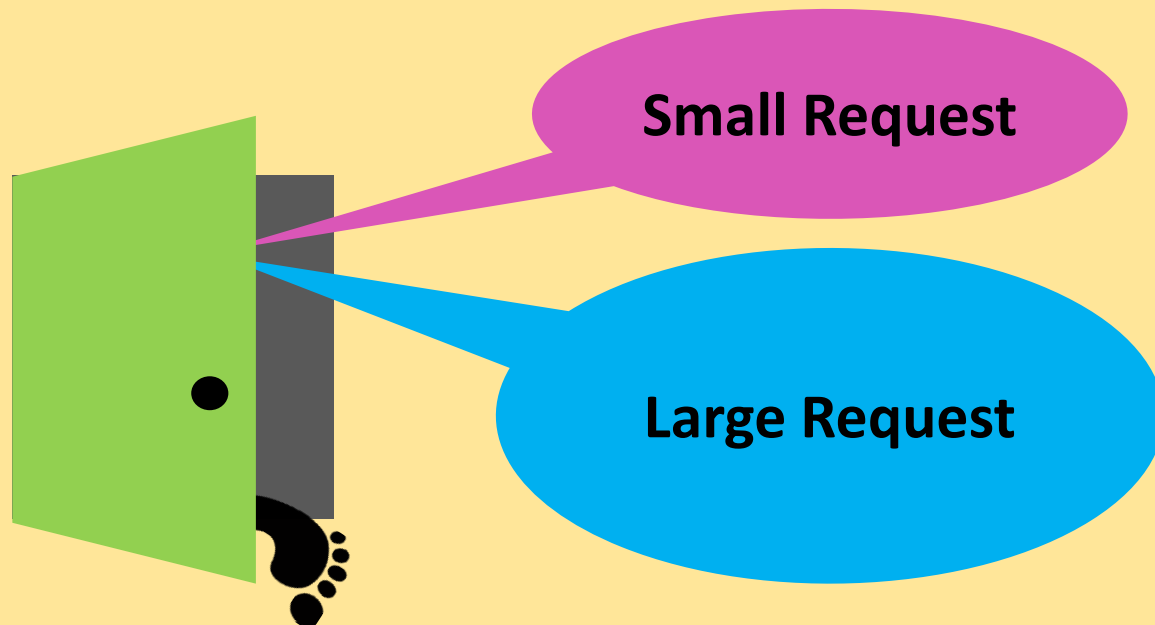
Why do we comply?

- **Norm of reciprocity:** A norm of treating others as they have treated us

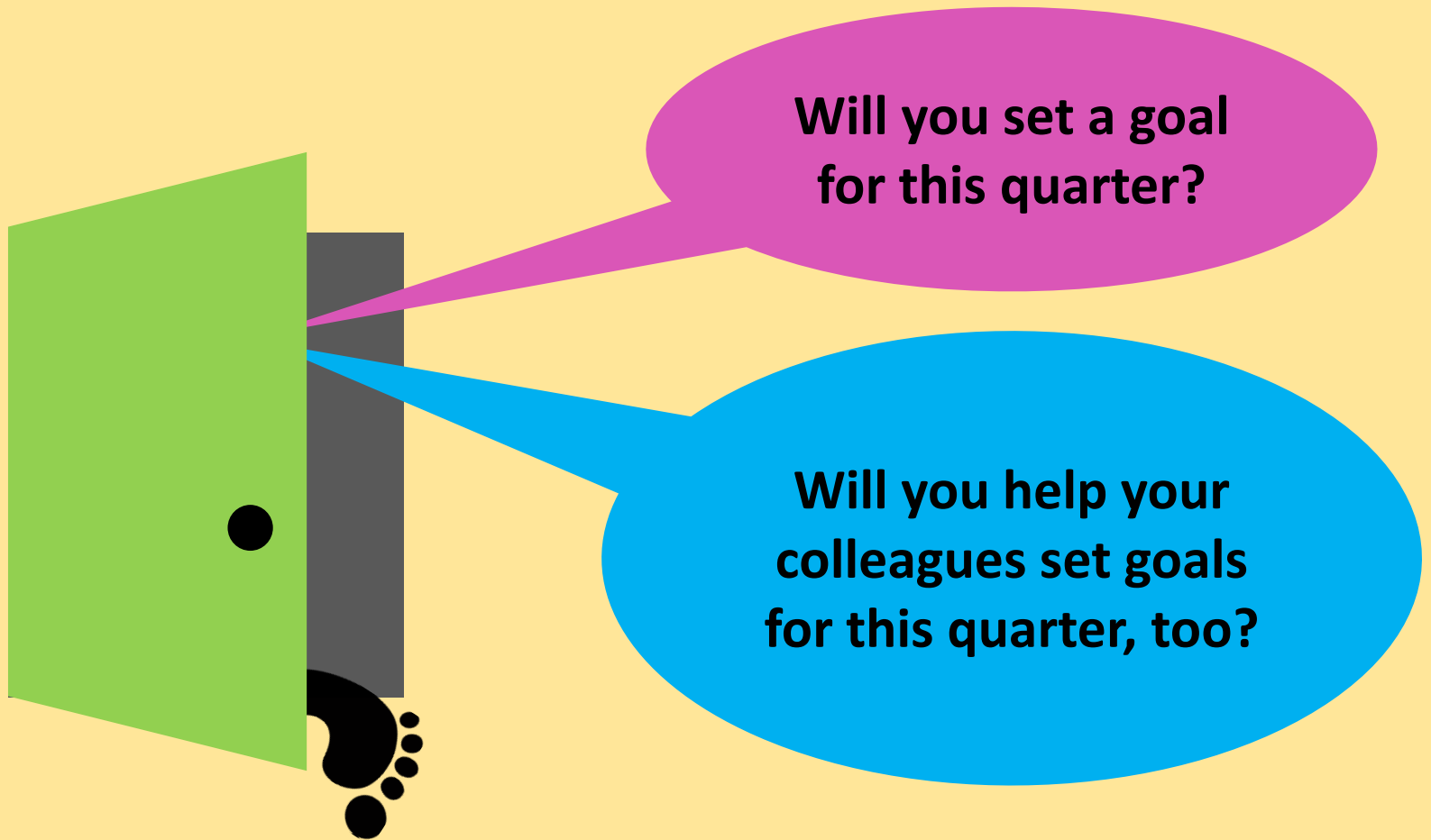


Why do we comply?

- **Foot-in-the-door technique:** Influencer first gains compliance with a small request before presenting a large request

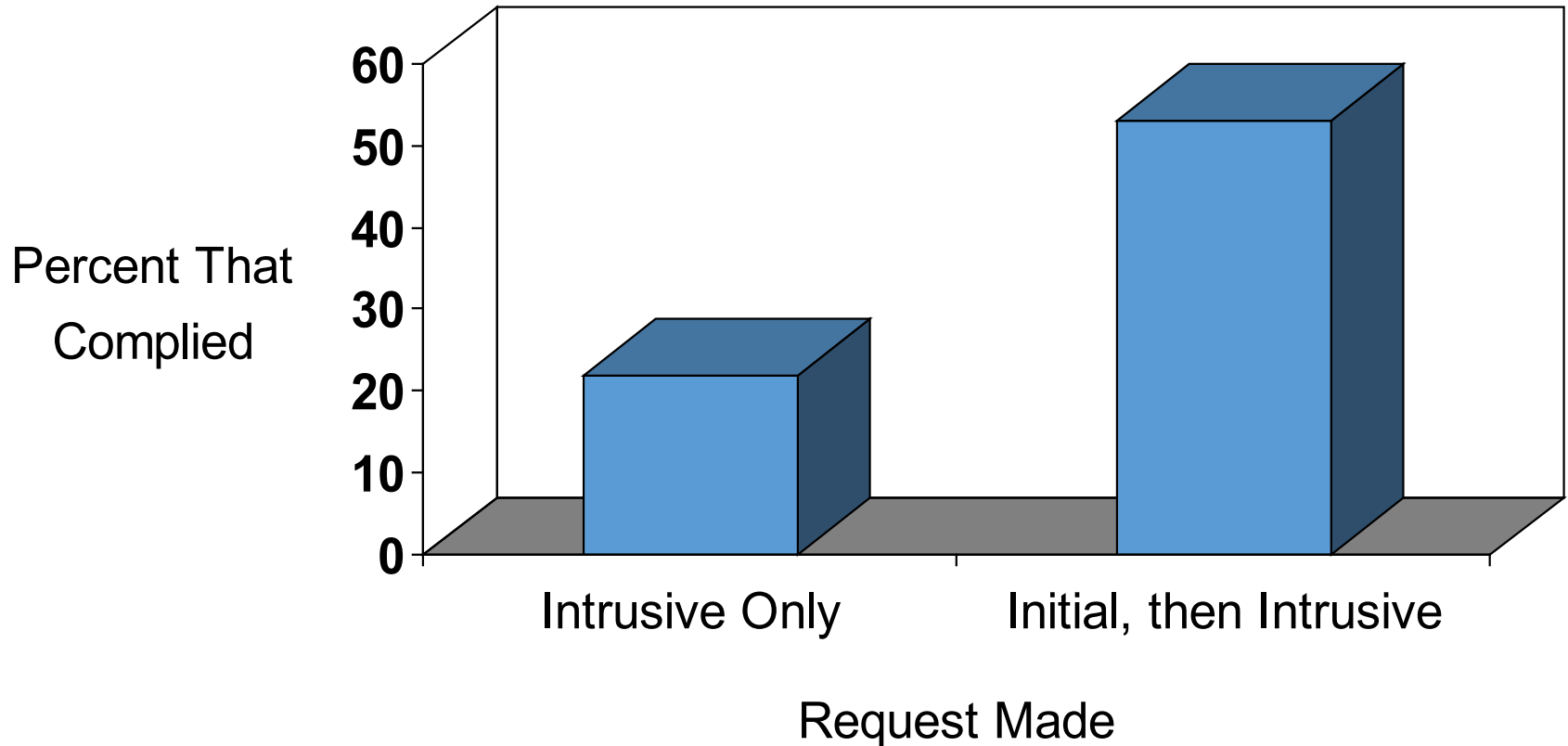


Why do we comply?



Why do we comply?

Freedman and Fraser (1966)



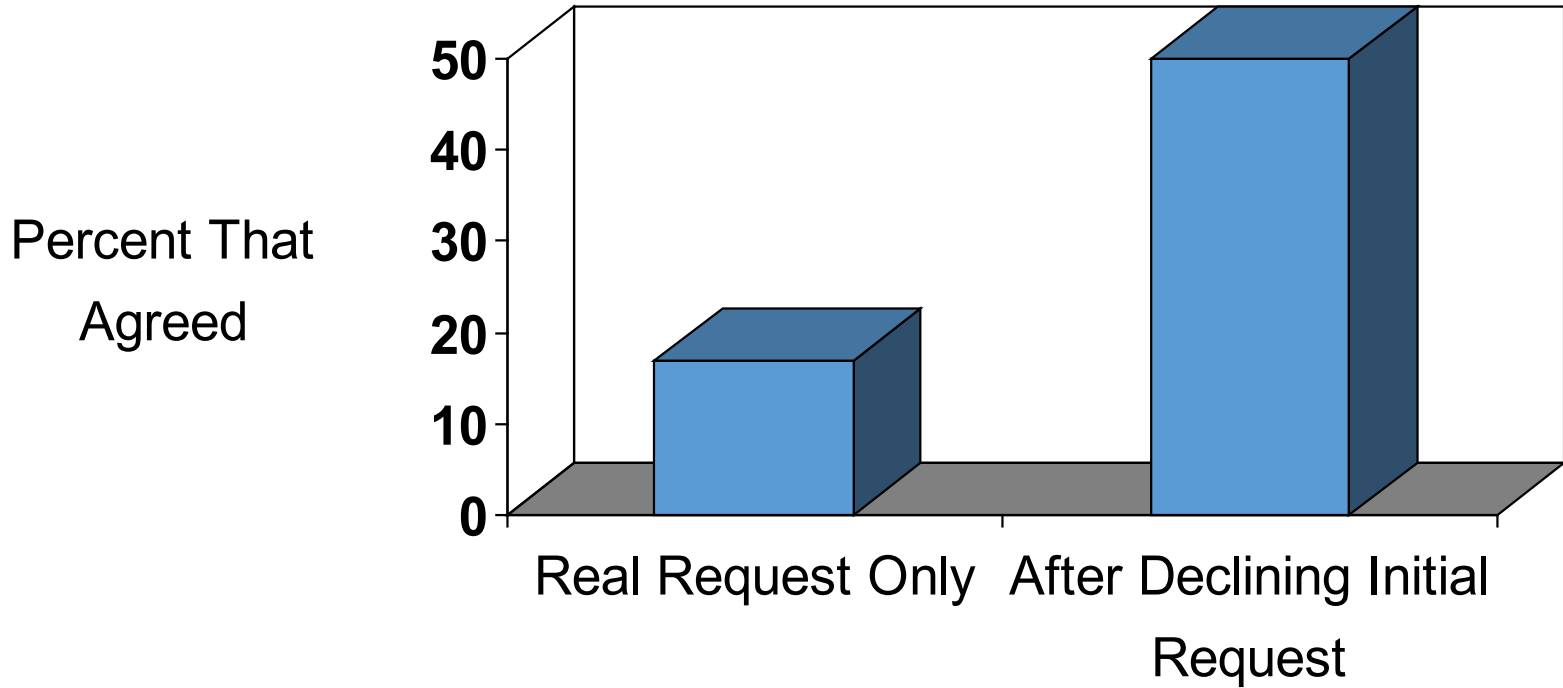
Why do we comply?

- **Door-in-the-face technique:** Influencer first makes a large request that is rejected and then follows-up with a small request



Why do we comply?

Cialdini et al. (1975)



Willing to Take Delinquents to the Zoo?

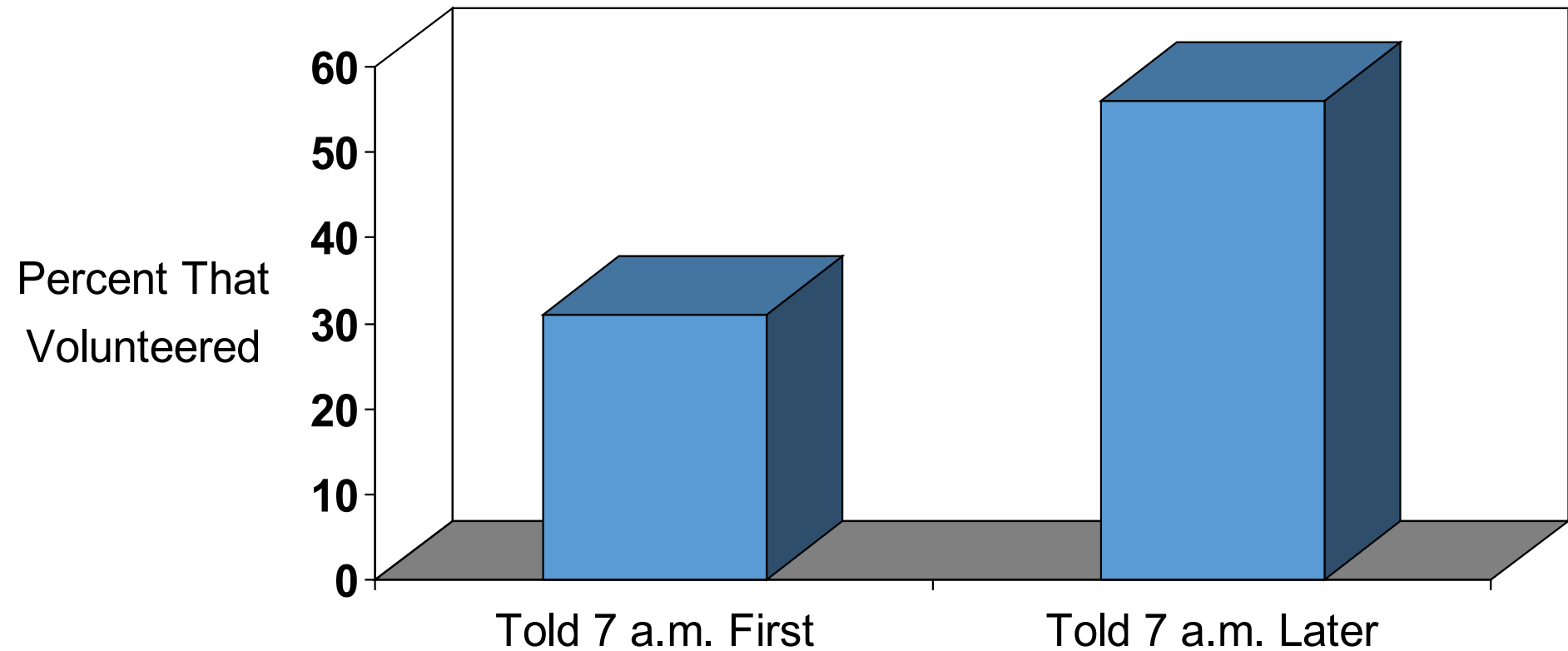
Why do we comply?

- **Lowballing:** Influencer first secures agreement with a request and then reveals hidden costs (thereby increasing the size of the request)



Why do we comply?

Cialdini et al. (1978)



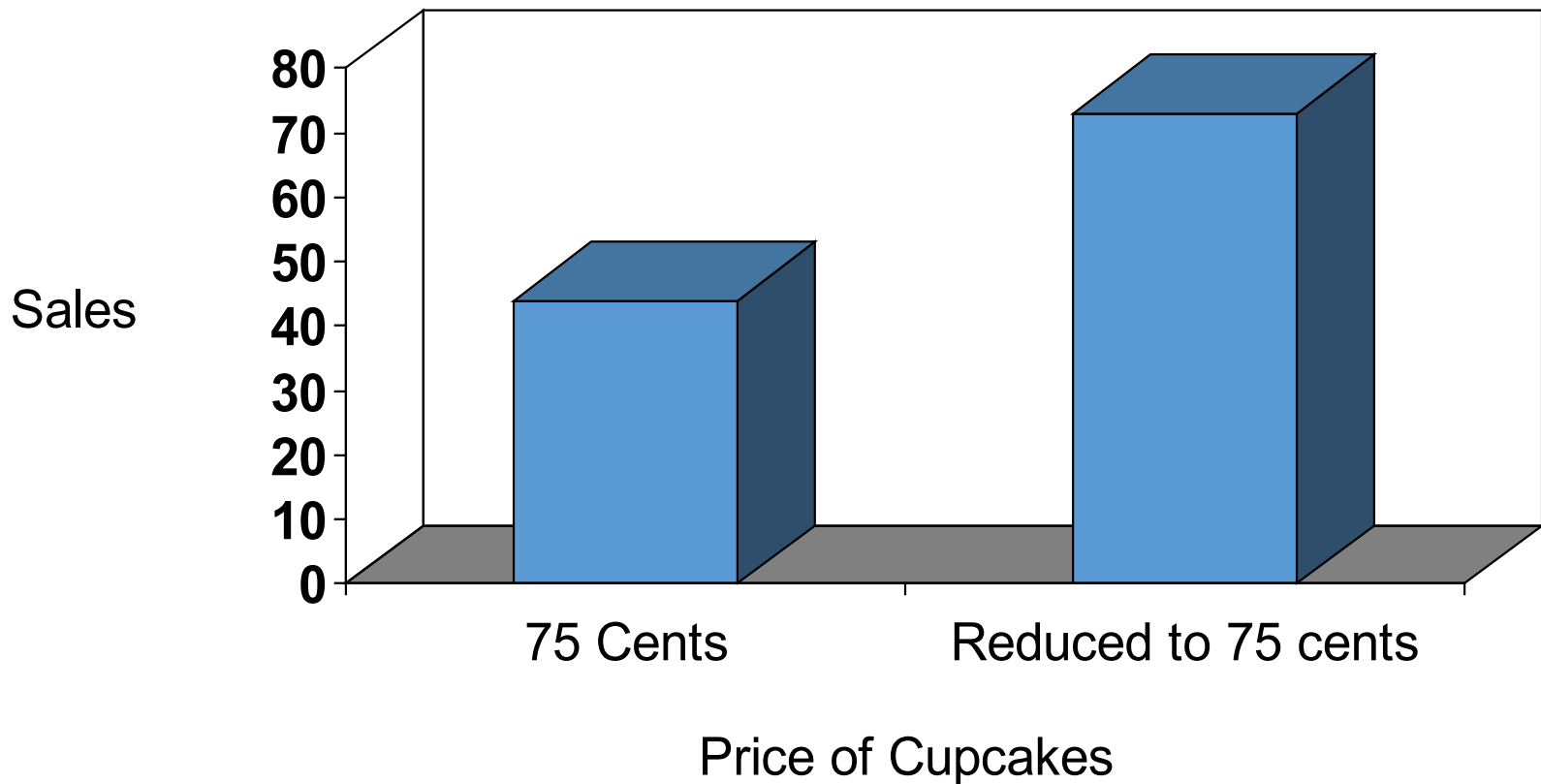
Why do we comply?

- **That's-not-all technique:** Influencer inflates initial request and follows-up with a discount or bonus



Why do we comply?

Burger (1986)



**What is obedience? Why do
we obey? Why do we
disobey?**

What is obedience?

- **Obedience:** Behavior change produced by the commands of authority
- “Crimes of obedience”
 - Holocaust
 - Suicide bombings
 - Torture
 - Wall Street scandals
 - Mass suicide

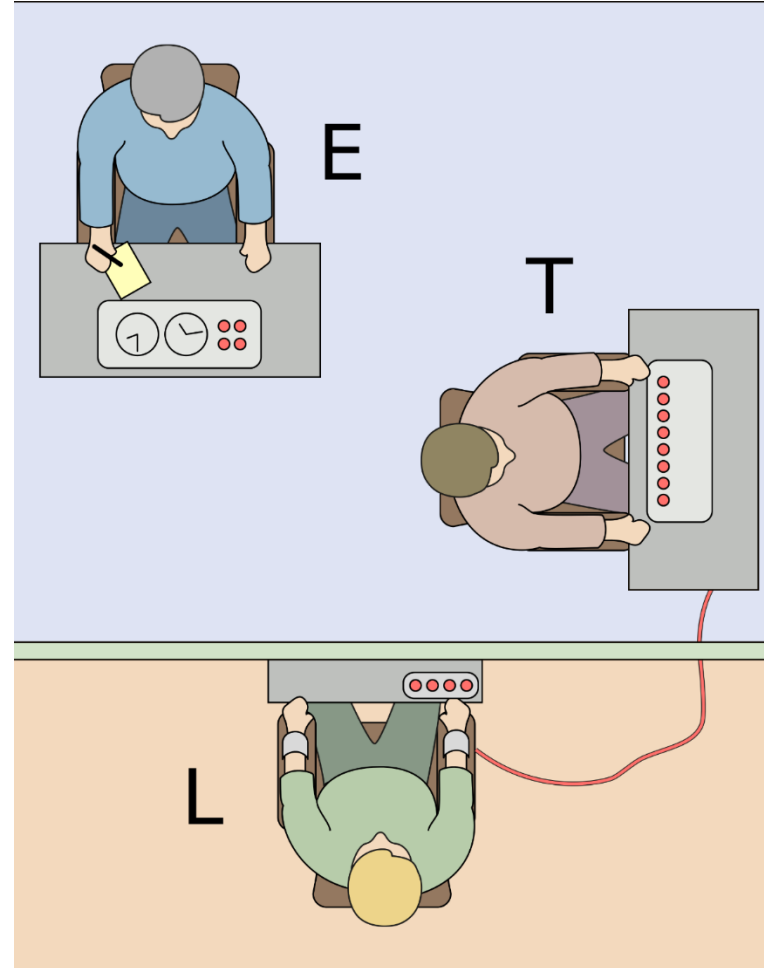


What is obedience?



What is obedience?

- Milgram conducted 18 experiments in the late 1950s and early 1960s.
 - An “experimenter” ordered 40 male “teachers” to administer increasingly painful shocks to a “learner” (i.e., confederate).

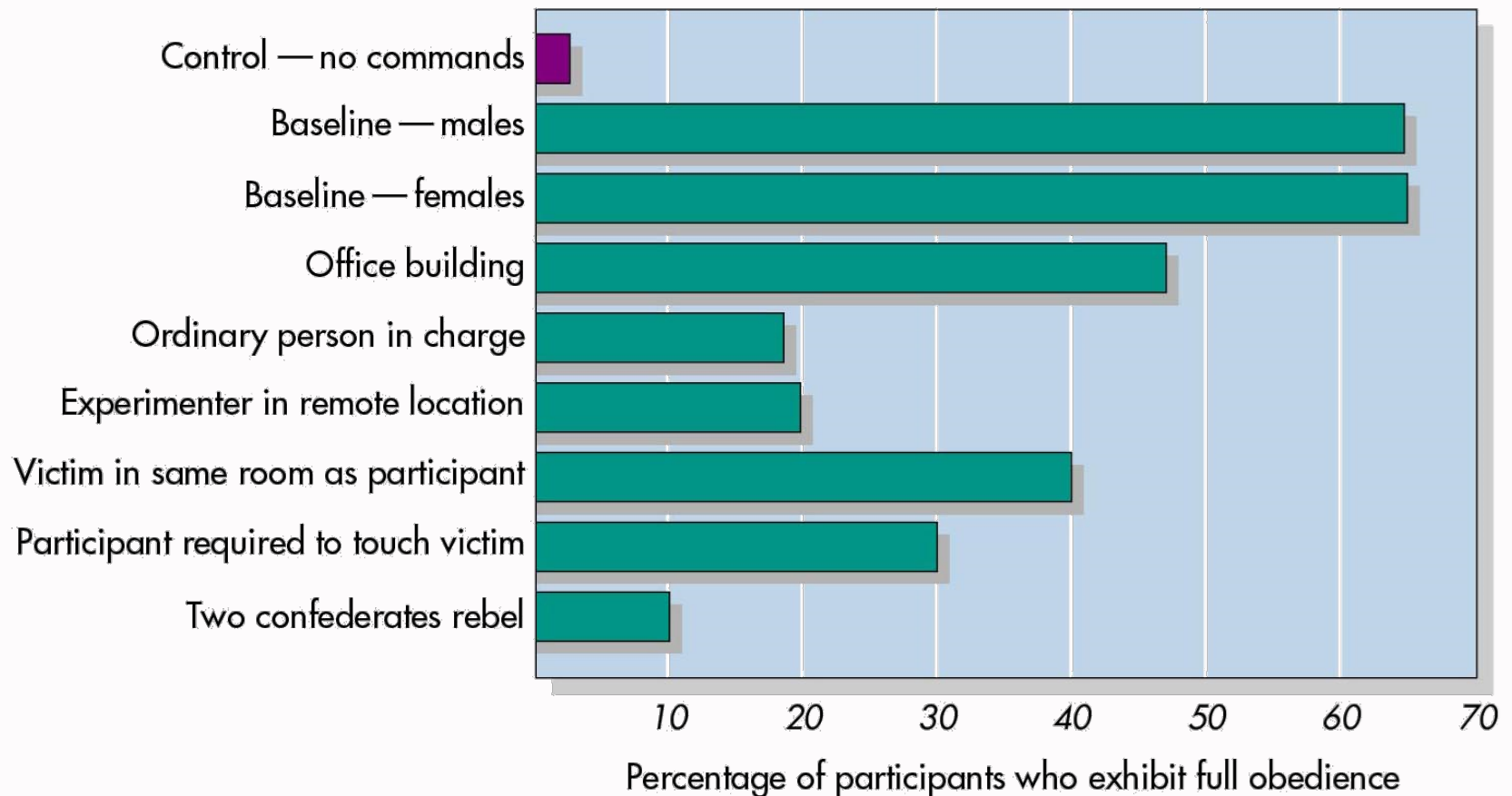


What is obedience?

Participants Who Stopped at This Level		
Shock Level (Volts)	Number	Percent
300	5	12.5
315	4	10.0
330	2	5.0
345	1	2.5
360	1	2.5
375	1	2.5
450	26	65.0

Why do we obey?

Figure 7.7 – Factors That Influence Obedience



Why do we obey?

- Lack of responsibility for consequences of behavior
- Influencer's legitimate authority
- Influencer's physical presence
- Synchrony of behavior
- Gradual escalation of orders
- Social norms
- Personality
- Allies





**Who has the greatest
influence on us?**

Who has the greatest influence on us?

- **Social impact theory:** Suggests the total impact of other people on a target person is a function of:

Source Strength

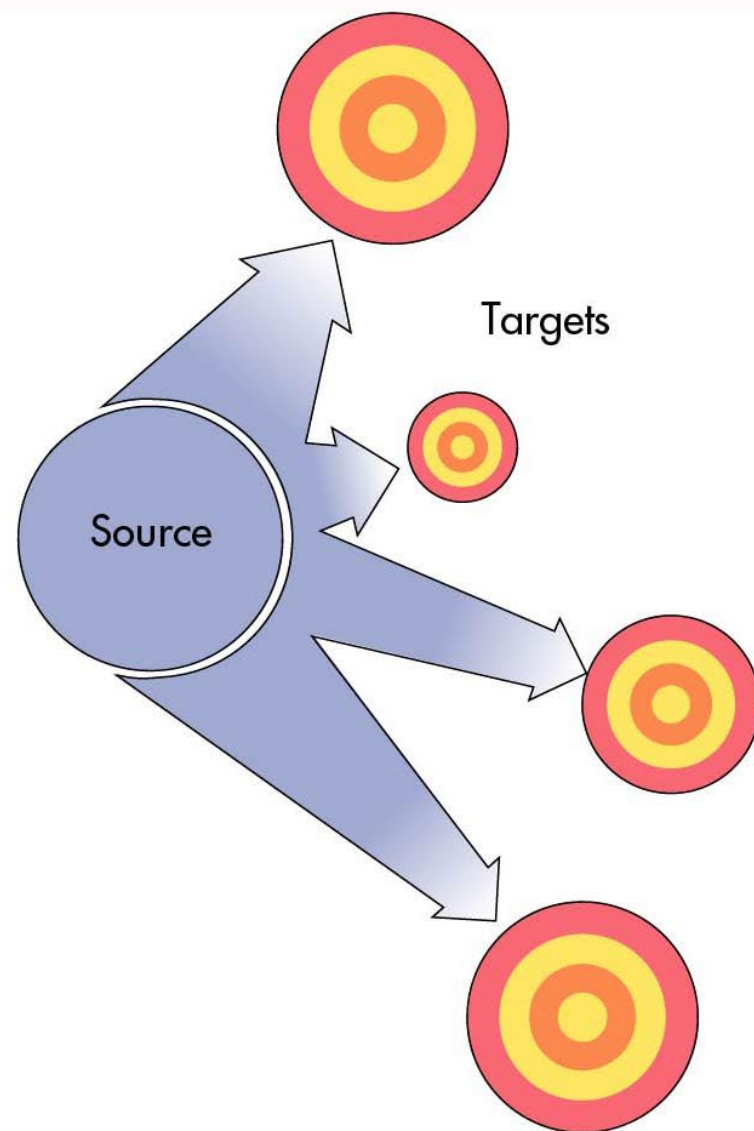
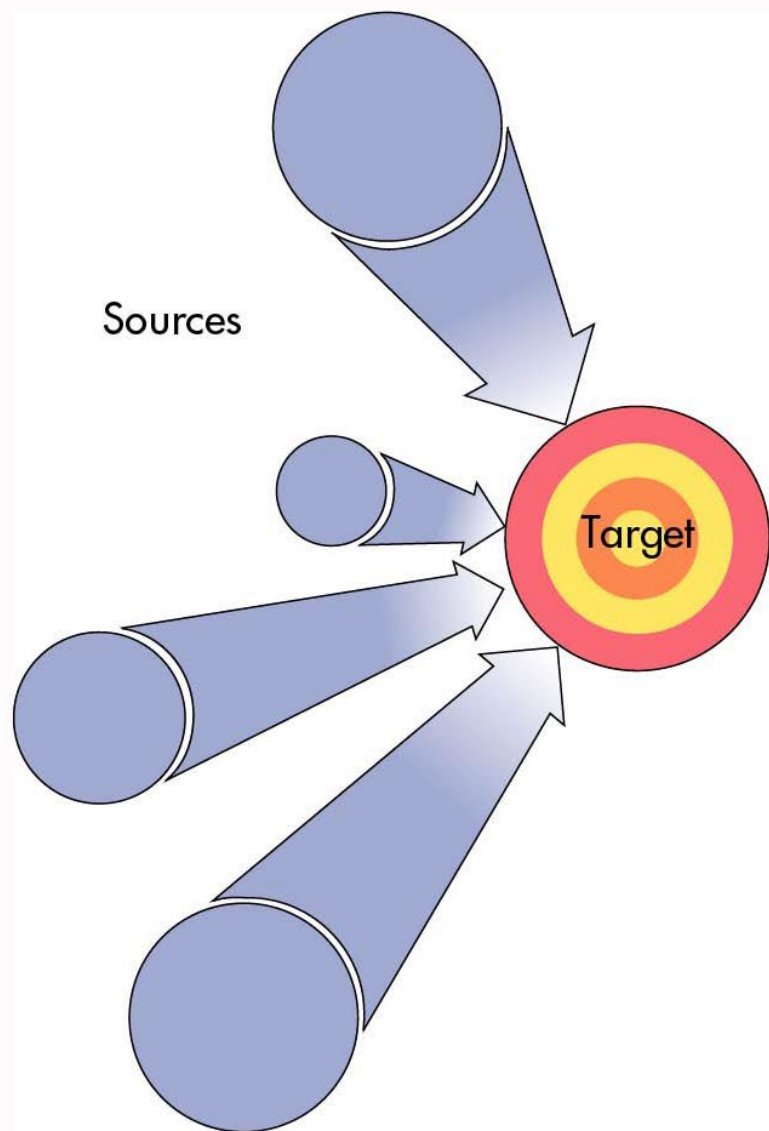
Determined by status, ability, or relationship to target

Source Immediacy

Determined by proximity in time and space to target

Number of Sources

Increases in size increase influence up to a point





**How can we resist attempts
to influence us?**

How can we resist attempts to influence us?

- Deliver consistent arguments
- Be vigilant
- Align yourself with allies
- Do not feel obligated to reciprocate
- Build your courage
- Do not compromise your personal identity and values

