

Persuasion Case 1: Case Role B

“Persuadee Role”: The Provost of Universal Public University, a mid-sized university located in Great State, USA.

You will be meeting today with a representative (Dean or other high-level position) of Super School of UPU, and on the agenda is something about starting a new major or a new program/course of study in their school. You didn’t get any briefing materials, so you’re not totally clear on what they want to discuss with you—but you have some thoughts!

- Starting a new major is an 2-3 year endeavor, requires sound market research to ensure that there is the demand for the new curriculum, and requires an informed academic programs committee to thoroughly vett.
- Designing new courses of study is a common proposal that often starts to fall apart when you ask about faculty load and faculty buy in. Who is going to teach the courses? Do we have the faculty on board and if not, then how do we bring them on board? Who is going to pay for them? What if they have a spousal hire?
- Are we being innovative just for the sake of being innovative? Will this new program be here in a decade or longer?
- Technology is something that always seems to become a challenge. While there are a lot of innovative ideas out there, it can be frustrating when the existing technology (at least at UPU) doesn’t support the grand idea. You have heard often from the Chief IT Officer that the IT department is already overly committed.
- A previous provost got into some rough waters when they approved a new program that the department wanted to offer in order to entice a superstar researcher to come to the school. But in the end, the superstar took the retention package at their current university and without them the whole endeavor fell apart. It was a waste of time, money and effort and left both faculty and administrators frustrated and demoralized.
- You are commitment-shy based on that experience, since that event led (in part) to why YOU are the provost now. You don’t want any new programs or institutes that are built on the fame, funding or power of a single individual or even a couple of individuals in collaboration. You want to see strength through depth because that won’t be shaken as badly through turnover.

Persuasion Case 2: Case Role B

“Persuader Role”: The Associate Dean of Universal Public University, a mid-sized university located in Great State, USA.

Today you will be meeting with the Vice Chancellor who has community engagement in their portfolio. You are from the College/School that teaches Ag, Life Sciences and Natural Resources. You have asked to meet with the VC about UPU's community partnerships. Here are some things you believe or know:

- Your school has taken on equity as a core value and tried to implement several strategies that will help it achieve greater equity across a variety of concerns, student recruitment being just one of them.
- Over the past couple of years, a couple of the departments in your School/College have built systems that reach out into communities. Whether those efforts are on community-based participatory research, recruiting, serving community interests or addressing health issues in rural areas, those departments have been able to bring voices to the table and create programs and outcomes that are different than what was happening before. These department leaders and faculty have told you how they can better understand community needs since the community guides the identification and prioritization of issues to address.
- This new way of partnering “shares power” and helps in the development of approaches to treat or intervene in problems and with solutions that can really help improve the lives of real people.
- The picture isn't completely rosy: real people's lives are messy. They don't fit well into “research-based criteria” where you can check all the boxes and control for all factors. They are “bureaucracy averse”. There are competing interests. Mid-course corrections are common when working with communities—and sometimes wholesale changes in directions come about as well. Your faculty enthusiastically say, “that's part of the beauty of it all!”
- UPU has also made equity a part of its platform as well and when the Chancellor is on the news, s/he is always talking about how “UPU cares deeply for the community it serves”. But in reality, UPU seems to be falling into the same old trap of “We know what ails you—we're the experts!” What you're hearing from communities is that UPU comes in on their proverbial white horse and tells the community what to do rather than listen to their needs.
- UPU has long-standing and trusted partnerships representing the community, but the community is changing and those players are not really “the heartbeat” of current community concerns (particularly in the semi-post-pandemic era).
- You believe that UPU has a new opportunity in front of it to fulfill its obligation to be more community connected. You would like to help UPU broaden these connections and believe that the faculty and departments of your College/School can provide that bridge to helping UPU better fulfill its mission and answer the pressing needs of today.

Think about your S-P-I-N:

Situation:

Problem:

Implications:

Need-Payoff: