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The Influence Codebook : A Taxonomy of Influence Tactics in Time-Pressured High-Challenge Online Decision Making Collaborations

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ABSTRACT

We derived a comprehensive, empirically-grounded taxonomy of 47 influence tactics, organized into four themes of relational, emotional, cognitive, cognitive and a combination of such strategies. This work bridges cognitive science and organizational behavior on influencing, negotiating and decision making in emotionally-tense online settings; offering a novel framework for adaptive influence. Moving beyond traditional, static models like Cialdini's principles or Feser's typologies, which often present context-neutral inventories, our research captures the real-time, adaptive, and often hybridized nature of strategic communication under pressure. Through a rich, role-based simulation of a time-pressured corporate crisis, we observed how practitioners dynamically sequence and blend influence tactics to convince each other. Our research paves the way for a richer, multimodal understanding of digital persuasion, highlighting the need to integrate verbal analysis with nonverbal cues and physiological measures in future work.

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Introduction

In any domain, from business to professional settings or even everyday interactions, part of our collaboration requires compliance, influencing and pursuing each other to become united and work harmoniously towards a common goal. Compliance enables one to think differently about another person, object or issue. (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986). Compliance leads to persuasion and "persuasion is an activity that involves one party trying to get another party to do (or not do) some action or to believe (or not believe) something" (Hunter, 2018, p.15). It's a process in which someone (a persuader) tries to get the other person (the persuadee) to see things in a way he/she wants or do a certain act as he/she wishes (DellaVigna and Genzkow, 2010). In organizations and work teams, persuading others comes from having control over important resources like information or decision-making power (Anderson et al., 2012).

Persuasion and influence have a rich history, perhaps since human beings realized that for improving their life conditions, they would benefit from living together over living alone; and that to change and shape other's opinions and actions towards a higher-order common goal, influencing each other effectively would be needed. Ibrahim (PBUH) was an ancient influencer (around 2000 BC) who saw that people of his time worshipped the sun, or stars and the moon. He was surprised but to help them find the right, he initially followed each of these different groups: he worshipped the sun like those who worshipped it. But when the sun set, he said I don't like to worship something that is sometimes available and sometimes unavailable to me. He then joined another group who worshipped the stars and the moon. But when the sun rose and the trace of the moon and stars faded away, he raised the same logic. He then introduced the God he knew that was always available - in one's heart and everywhere. Many people were convinced and converted to him.

Modern research on persuasion and influence is not a one-dimensional topic driven from one or a few research areas, but a complex interdisciplinary field that draws insights from various academic domains, including Economics (Camerer, 2003), Politics (Druckman, 2022), Marketing (Cialdini, 2001), Social Psychology (Petty & Cacioppo, 1986), Communication Studies (Perloff, 2017), Information Systems (Ajzen, 1991), and Artificial Intelligence (Hunter, 2018). The massive literature and numerous theories in this realm can be overwhelming, and researchers need to take a comprehensive perspective embracing multiple theories and viewpoints when narrowing into a specific topic. Effective influence and persuasion are crucial skills, specifically needed in high-risk situations such as team crisis management (Yukl, 2013). These skills can help us achieve most desired outcomes through efficient communication and interaction during time pressure. They also allow us to shape team attitudes, beliefs and behaviors in limited times, leading towards personal and social success. Today, one of the most important areas for applying social influence techniques is in "online platforms". These techniques are used to shape individuals' attitudes and behaviors in digital environments. Guadagno and Cialdini (2009) reported strategies commonly used for online persuasion such as reciprocity, commitment, and social proof. Websites often use testimonials and user reviews to build trust and develop a sense of community among their users, encouraging compliance with calls to action.

Persuasion and Negotiation

Negotiation is a fundamental skill for an individual to achieve a desired outcome and as mentioned in the previous paragraph, negotiation and persuasion are closely intertwined (Acuff, 2008). Persuasion techniques are often employed within negotiations to influence the process of decision-making through changing ideas or behavior, often focusing on reaching a joint agreement for different needs or ideas (Saee, 2008; Fisher and Ury, 2012). This area of research embraces a vast domain of human interactions and flows into various fields such as politics, business, family and everyday life. Studies highlight that persuasion involves tailoring arguments to the personality of the persuade and the context of the negotiation, which can significantly enhance the outcome (Cialdini, 2021, p. 101). For those who want to create more compelling arguments in negotiations, it is more successful when using influence tactics like rational persuasion or inspirational appeals (Yukl & Tracey, 1992). Influence tactics like reciprocity, scarcity, and authority play a noteworthy role in persuasion during negotiation too. It's also important for negotiators to have the ability to read emotional cues and understand the underlying needs of each other. In other words, it takes 'emotional intelligence' for collaborators to manage their own emotions and emotions of their peers, so they would achieve better outcomes (Schlegel et al., 2018; Kazemitabar et al., 2022). Furthermore, effectiveness of persuasion enhances by selecting the right influence tactics based on personality and negotiation context (Cable & Judge, 2003). Selecting the right combination of tactics, helps negotiators maximize their influence and consequently reach favorable agreements (Hargie, 2016).

Frameworks and Models in Persuasion

There are different types of frameworks, helping us understand approaches leading to persuasion. The "Persuasion Knowledge Model" (PKM, Friestad & Wright, 1994) is one of such models. This framework explains individuals' *responses* to various persuasion strategies, and includes three main processes: acquisition, activation, and reaction:

Acquisition of Persuasion Knowledge: Involves people learning persuasion tactics through various resources including their own experiences, social interactions, and media consumption. As people age and gain more exposure to a number tactics, their persuasion knowledge improves and evolves (Hamby & Brinberg, 2018).

Activation of Persuasion Knowledge: Happens when individuals recognize and interpret the true intention and underlying motives behind a persuasion attempt. The activation can trigger their perception about the persuaders's intent either in positive or negative ways (Isaac & Grayson, 2017, 2020).

Reaction to Persuasion Knowledge: As persuasion knowledge gets activated, collaborators start to copy behaviors so they can achieve their salient goals. Various goals may range from making informed purchase decisions to avoiding manipulative tactics (Kirmani & Campbell, 2004).

This framework provides valuable insights for both theoretical and practical applications. It helps predict collaborators' reactions by understanding how they process persuasion, so we would be able to influence them. This can also help us design more transparent and ethical campaigns. (Eisend & Tarrahi, 2022). By using this framework, persuasion strategies can be improved based on identifying which tactics may provoke negative responses (Aguirre-Rodriguez, 2013) and collaborates can enhance their education to be able to resist manipulative tactics (Ham & Kim, 2019). However, although this framework can at times be useful, there are several limitations to the PKM model. PKM was developed in the 1990s, primarily addressing traditional advertising, thus its relevance to modern digital environments and online settings is limited. PKM presents the persuasion process in a fairly linear and one-way direction (agent → target). Research is needed to understand how persuasion (especially digital) is interactive and dialogic, e.g., in social media, and how it unfolds over time towards co-creation of meaning. This framework also underemphasizes contextual factors like mood, personality, environment, social norms, and platform effects. Its predictive power in real-world settings is also limited.

Model of the "Nine Influence Tactics"

Feser (2016) identified two main types of persuasion approaches: hard influence tactics and soft influence tactics. These approaches form the model of "Nine Influence Tactics," which range from self-focused to other-focused strategies.

Hard influence tactics include the following:

1. Requesting: The simplest form of influence is to make direct demands in order to get others act. It often reinforces with reminders.
2. Legitimating: Using authority, credentials, or rules in turn to justify actions. This also includes management directives, laws, or expert opinions.
3. Coalition: Enlisting the support of others to persuade someone. It can be implemented by creating a network of supporters constructing consensus or an "us-versus-them" dynamic.

Soft Influence Tactics include the following:

4. Rational Persuasion: supporting a claim by using logical arguments and evidence. It also helps to show its feasibility or importance.
5. Socializing: Using praise, flattery, and warm behavior to build relationships and influence others.
6. Personal Appeals: making a request by leveraging friendship, loyalty, or past relationships, so these appeals make the request approved.
7. Exchanging: Offering something valuable in order to take something in return for desired actions. It is based on reciprocity and mutual benefit.
8. Consultation: Counseling, seeking input and suggestions from other people to improve or support a proposed activity or change.
9. Inspirational Appeals: Appealing to people's values, ideals, or emotions to gain their commitment to a request or proposal

These tactics vary in their focus, from direct and authoritative approaches to more relational and emotional methods, providing a range of strategies to influence others effectively. However, this model is over-simplified and doesn’t account enough for contextual factors such as organizational culture, power dynamics, or industry-specific constraints. Also, Feser’s model views the nine tactics as distinct and relatively stable, without guidance on how to shift between tactics or combine them dynamically based on evolving interpersonal feedback. Another drawback to this model is that is emphasizes what the influencer can do, but it underrepresents the responder’s mindset, personality, motivation, and readiness to change. In other words, Feser’s 9 tactic model is rather one-sided and doesn’t consider mutual understanding or emotional intelligence deeply enough to understand when and why one should use each tactic strategically over time.

Unidirectional and Bidirectional Persuasion

Unidirectional persuasion involves a one-way communication process, including a persuader delivering a message or claiming an argument and a persuadee who receives it. In this process, the persuader provides no opportunity for the persuadee to respond and there would be little to no immediate feedback or dialogue. Commonly, this method is implemented in scenarios where the goal is to inform, instruct, or influence without direct interaction (Hunter, 2018; O’Keefe, 2016). There are diverse examples of areas in which unidirectional persuasion can be expanded, including: a) product advertising (i.e., television or magazine advertisements, as they're trying to persuade consumers to purchase a certain product), b) political speech (politicians deliver speeches to persuade voters before elections), c) government advisory messages (i.e., public service announcements encourage behaviors such as recycling).

Lateral unidirectional persuasion: This process involves persuasion between colleagues, teammates or peers where both the persuader and the persuadee are from similar organizational positions. For example, when a project manager tries to persuade a fellow team leader for adopting a new process, lateral unidirectional persuasion happens. There are certain factors determining the effectiveness of this approach, including the credibility and influence the persuader has among peers, plus the clarity and appeal of the message that is delivered.

Upward unidirectional persuasion: This process is allocated for persuading superiors or anyone in higher positions. An example would be a project manager aiming their senior management to receive funding for a project. It's clear that in this type of persuasion, structured arguments supported by evidence and data are demanded, as it must align with goals and priorities of the organization to gain approval.

Downward unidirectional persuasion: This type occurs when someone wants to persuade a subordinate or those in lower positions. When a project manager leads team members to follow a new project plan, s/he is using downward unidirectional persuasion. This approach relies on how clear and fair the message is going to be perceived by persuadees, as well as the authority and credibility of the superior.

In contrast, bidirectional persuasion involves a two-way communication process where there's an interaction between the persuader and persuadee, engaging in dialogue. In this approach, there would be enough space and opportunity for feedback, discussion, and mutual influence, which makes this process more reciprocal with further informed outcomes. Sales meetings (e.g., interaction between a salesperson and a customer in a car showroom); medical counseling (e.g., dialogue between a counselor and a patient about treatment options); and basically, most of our everyday discussions (e.g., an employee negotiating a raise in their wages with their employer) are example of this kind.

Lateral bidirectional persuasion: This process includes peers or teammates at the same organizational level, having interactions in order to achieve a mutually-agreed upon decision. It gives them the potential for mutual influence and collaboration. The effectiveness of this approach relies on open communication, active listening, and the ability to reach a consensus. For example, when two project managers discuss their methods and decide to integrate their respective teams' efforts, lateral bidirectional persuasion occurs.

Upward bidirectional persuasion: In this approach, collaboration transpires between juniors and seniors, where they exchange ideas and feedback and enhance the process of participatory decision-making. The effectiveness of this method has several factors, especially how openly superiors accept feedback and the way subordinates can communicate. For example, in a hospital setting, junior doctors might suggest updated treatments or methods based on recent research by senior physicians in order to improve patient care protocols. If senior doctors are open to this feedback and integrate these suggestions into the hospital's practices, a dynamic interaction shapes here where both parties contribute to refining patient care decisions.

Downward bidirectional persuasion: When interactive persuasion towards subordinates happens and there's also room for discussion and feedback, downward bidirectional persuasion is used. The effectiveness of this approach depends on the senior's skills for creating an open and safe environment, plus the junior's willingness to have a role in the discussion. For example, in an educational setting, a teacher might use this approach when she/he introduces a new learning method in class. The students can be encouraged and share their thoughts and ideas about the method and give the teacher some feedback. By using this dynamic, the teacher creates a collaborative environment, which not only motivates students but also enhances their sense of ownership over the learning process.

Direct & Indirect Influence Tactics

Direct persuasion is about intending the message or request through transparent and explicit communication. In this approach, there would be little ambiguity about the persuader's real intention and the process proceeds clearly. There are a bunch of examples displaying this process including (a): The persuader requests a message straightforwardly and the desired outcome is also transparent. For instance, a child might say, "I'll work really hard and get better grades if I have my own iPad. (b) unilateral assertion: The persuader expresses the demand firmly and doesn't consider the persuaders' perspective on the claim. For example, "Let's go to the amusement park!", and (c) direct persuasion, practically the persuader's intentions and desired outcomes are explicit and can be achieved through clear communication.

In contrast, indirect persuasion involves nimbler methods in order to acquire the desired goals. This technique doesn’t make any explicit demands, but mostly uses various hints, suggestions, analogies, or metaphors to convey the looked-for message. There are a few examples explaining the nature of indirect persuasion including: (a) using hints and suggestions by the persuader to imply what he /she wants without stating it outright. For example, "Amir has an iPad, and he got an A in history," subtly makes a sign that having an iPad might help him in achieving better grades. (b) Indirect threats can change and persuade people's perception of the situation, make him/her think about negative consequences if the desired action is not taken. For instance, "I will never ever talk to you!" can be an indirect way to persuade someone to play with a toy.

Persuasion Styles, Persuasion Strategies

Cialdini (2001) has shown that characteristics of the persuadee play an important role on choosing an approach between all the various approaches that exist. Persuadees might have diverse personalities, for example they can be analytical-aggressive (i.e., having a detailed preparation, using logical arguments, and showing assertive behavior). They may also be ethical, which means their priority is sticking with moral principles, honesty and integrity. Or unethical and goal-directed, who only care about the goal to be achieved and not how it should be based on morality issues. Other distinctions include being sociable, who emphasize on positive relationships in a friendly and cooperative atmosphere, or non-sociable, preferring being alone in getting work done.

In the same article, Cialdini (2001) identifies six core strategies that persuadees with different styles may apply in discussion and decision-making sessions:

1. Cooperating: Emphasizes on finding common ground and collaboration to reach an advantageous solution for both parties. It is focused on mutual benefits and is about positive relationships.

2. Negotiating: This process seeks an agreement which benefits both parties by balancing different interests, and its final goal is mutual satisfaction. It requires a degree of interdependence and a willingness to compromise.

3. Struggling: This approach is more aggressive compared to others, including one party aiming to dominate or outmaneuver the other. Focusing on winning and competition often happens among collaborators in this process.

4. Collaborating: Various methods such as joint problem-solving, working together to find mutually beneficial solutions and leading to win-win outcomes are used in this approach. Especially when negotiations get complex, these methods can be demanding.

5. Competing In this procedure, the focus is on achieving exclusive goals and prioritizing personal success, sometimes including others' expense too. This strategy is useful in high-stakes situations but may lead to risk relationships.

6. Compromising: When both parties focus on finding a middle ground even by means of giving up something, compromising happens. This approach is a quick way to decrease the conflict but may not always be the best way to get the most efficient outcome.

Robert Cialdini’s (2001) persuasion principles are among the most widely cited frameworks in the fields of psychology, marketing, and leadership. However, the model potentially oversimplifying the complexity of real-world influence into its six principles. Also, similar to Feser’s (2016) model, Cialdini’s principles are presented as static tools rather than part of a fluid, adaptive process; and it is not clear for a novice to know how to select or combine these six principles based on goals, timing, or audience personality and profile.

From this stage and based on gaps of the previous models, we will introduce factors that can help strengthen our research on influence, namely factors that can guide “how to select” and/or “combine influence tactics”, in order to understand where and how which tactic(s) is/are best to be used. Effects of linguistic style and vocal tone is mentioned, and afterwards the link between personality and negotiation is elaborated.

Choosing Influence Tactic Antecedents

Choosing the appropriate influence tactic in negotiations and collaborative decision-making sessions is more of an art. It is also very crucial for having a good influence on others and has various aspects that have to be considered, involving a suitable understanding of the style of argumentation, persuaders' nature, language of persuasion and also persuade's personality. There are experiential knowledge and psychological studies supporting this claim, including a psychological investigation by Cialdini & Goldstein (2004) which demonstrates that more favorable outcomes can be achieved by adapting strategies to individual personality traits. They all guide us to design an effective influence strategy to achieve more favorable outcomes.

Argumentation Style

According to Hunter (2018), argument style includes a myriad of dimensions: personality of the persuader, the language used, and the structure of the dialogue.

Personality of the Persuader: It plays a significant role in the success of persuasion. For instance, some features like authority, expertise, and knowledge are traditionally seen as positive traits, while other features like attractiveness or celebrity status are conditional depending on how they would be perceived by the audience. A teenager might be more persuaded by a celebrity than a government expert (Amgoud & Prade, 2005). By figuring out the personality traits of the persaudee, selecting the right strategy can be done more efficiently. The OCEAN model (Openness, Conscientiousness, Extroversion, Agreeableness, Neuroticism) is a framework which characterizes personality traits (Baumann & Brewka, 2010). For example, you can persuade individuals who "follow the crowd" by telling them the fact that the majority voted, while persuading others who "follow rules" is through claiming that it's the responsibility of a citizen to vote (Amgoud & Cayrol, 2002).

Emotions Invoked by Arguments: Emotional arguments can be very useful in persuasion. They are a powerful device to influence others by invoking various emotions such as stress, guilt or pride in them. Emotional arguments (e.g., making parents proud by completing a thesis) can be more effective with certain audiences compared to logical arguments (e.g., higher chances of a high-paying job with a PhD) (Atkinson et al., 2005). Studies show that audiences with personality types such as conscientiousness, openness, and agreeableness are more influenced by emotional arguments (Baumann, 2012).

Language/Framing of Arguments: The effectiveness of an argument relies on some strong ingredients, including words, metaphors, and other rhetorical tools, as they have a strong impact on the result of persuasion. For example, using terms like "freedom fighter" versus "terrorist" can strongly manipulate the perception of the audience. Newspapers often use such tricks (framing effect, ingroup bias, affect heuristic, semantic priming, and many more) by using specific language to align with their viewpoints, supporting the idea of how powerful word choice in argumentation is.

Selection of Arguments: It claims that effectiveness of persuasion doesn’t necessarily arise as we use all possible arguments but depends on selecting ones that are more suitable to change the persuadee's mind. It's essential to consider the personality of the persuader, the way of persuasion, and the persuadee's personality (Baroni et al., 2011). Cialdini (2001) highlights that arguments with an appealing style of authority (e.g., citing health experts) are particularly persuasive. Attitudes and other psychological aspects, such as the psychology of color, language, and cultural traits, can offer valuable insights for persuasion strategies (Baroni et al., 2011).

Effect of Linguistic Style and Vocal Tone on Persuasion

Many factors affect the impression of persuasion. One of them is the way the speaker uses language, especially in terms of linguistic style and vocal tone. There are some rhetorical tools which are very efficient as they have a strong impact on how a message is getting perceived by the audience and how the listeners will react to it (Tom & Eves, 2012). Usually, they are found in political speeches, advertisements, and propaganda. Hypophora is the act of posing and answering a question. It can be used in order to frame the arguments clearly (McGuire, 2000). In contrast, rhetorical questions invite reflection and do not expect an answer (Harris et al., 1997). The repetition at the end or beginning of sentences is an approach we see in epistrophes and anaphora (Katrandjiev et al., 2016). By using that, the speaker can create a rhythm, which has two effects: It makes the speech more memorable and evokes the emotions of the audience including anger and joy (Harris et al., 1997). Other tools exist, such as repetition (McGuigan, 2011) or antanagoge, a strategy to pair criticism with optimism (Cui & Zhao, 2014). They are usually used to balance tone and increase familiarity, which can lead to boosting the impact of persuasion. These approaches highlight important ideas and influence the emotions and cognitive engagement of the audience with the message.

Method

Purpose of the study

Based on the aforementioned review of literature, the aim of the current research is to explore a comprehensive list of influence tactics that can be used within high-stakes simulated authentic contexts characterized by time pressure and complex decision-making. The crisis management scenario of the current study demands swift persuasion and rapid consensus-building, making this research an especially relevant and under-explored area in the study of influence dynamics.

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Simulations in Learning Soft Skills

Contemporary simulations are a potent pedagogical tool for developing soft skills like leadership, communication, and decision-making. By replicating real-world scenarios within controlled, low-risk environments, they provide immersive experiential learning (Kolb, 2014). This bridges the gap between theory and practice, enhancing engagement and knowledge retention (Seidel et al., 2019). Their efficacy is maximized when integrated into comprehensive educational programs (Baldwin & Ford, 2018), with collaboration between educators and industry experts ensuring scenario authenticity. However, simulations present limitations. Their development is often costly and resource-intensive, and the resulting models may oversimplify the complexity and unpredictability of real human interactions (Lovelace et al., 2016). Furthermore, their effectiveness can vary with individual learning styles, potentially disadvantaging those who benefit more from direct peer and mentor interaction. Therefore, while superior to passive learning for skill mastery, they are most effective as a component of a broader curriculum.

Participants

Participants were 24 MBA students (M age=25, 8 female) from a leading Middle Eastern university, primarily with STEM backgrounds and limited practical business negotiation experience. All provided informed consent for multi-modal data collection following institutional ethics approval.

Team Formation

Based on the research objective to investigate the use of influence tactics, three-person groups were determined to be optimal. This size allows for observing dynamic interpersonal responses while remaining analytically manageable, resulting in eight groups. Participants completed the Big Five personality test, and a final team composition was derived through iterative trials. For the simulation, group roles were assigned based on personality scores so that roles would best match each students' personality trait: audit committee heads were selected for high extraversion and toughness, founders for the next highest extraversion, and strategy committee leaders for low extraversion but high agreeableness.

Context and Student Roles

The simulation scenario involved a corporate crisis at "AZS" in the fictional nation of "Slovetzia." To ensure preparation, participants received a "Public Information" PDF and supporting videos detailing the company's context and a two-year backstory. The corporate governance framework is a two-tier system, consisting of a high-level supervisory board responsible for policy and macro decision-making (supervisory), and a lower board is in charge of executive work (executive board). As illustrated in Figure 1, all three simulation roles are positioned on the supervisory board and possess similar formal power.

Based on the "Public Information" file, the simulation's crisis was triggered when the Chairman of AZS's Supervisory Board gave an unauthorized, politically charged interview, creating a critical situation for the company. An urgent meeting was convened with four board members: the Chairman (who acted as a non-participating observer), the Founder, the Head of Audit (Z), and the Head of Strategy (Y). The chairman is the only observer in this meeting (one of the authors fulfilled this role as the observer of each team), while the other three individuals will assume one of the three mentioned roles. The three active participants were required to collaboratively reach a consensus on one of three predetermined response options:

1. The chairman publicly apologizes for the "misquotation" in the interview and blames the journalist. However, this may lead to negative media attention and a widespread crisis.
2. In public, the founder criticizes the chairman's point of view and announces his removal from the chairmanship of the company.
3. The chairman quietly resigns, and the founder sends an informal message that the situation has been addressed.

Three distinct "Private Information" files were distributed exclusively to the participants in each role (Founder, Head of Audit, Head of Strategy). These files detailed role-specific backgrounds, preferences, and a unique scoring table. The scoring table quantified the outcomes of the meeting's three main topics. Each participant's objective was to maximize their own score by persuading the others to agree on favorable options, with their final performance assessed against these predefined criteria.

1. Accuracy of the "Planning Document", and its intime submission prior to the meeting
2. Correct performance of ascribed roles according to the private and public information
3. Total points obtained from the final voting
4. Analysis of the topics and characters of the meeting in two parts

Participants had to reach a timely consensus on three urgent issues: the chairman's resignation terms, his replacement candidate, and a response strategy for the magazine.

Schedule of the event

A "Simulation Introduction" was distributed one day prior, outlining the schedule, process, and a two-stage grading system emphasizing agreement within a one-hour deadline. On the simulation day at 7:00 AM, participants received "Public Information," a "Planning Document," and their role-specific "Private Information" files. The "Planning Document" was submitted by 11:50 AM, followed by a collective briefing on Skype where authors addressed questions. From 12:00 to 13:00, teams conducted their negotiation in separate Skype meetings supervised by trained assistants. A one-minute video from the chairman initiated the session. Post-negotiation, participants had a 20-minute debrief, followed by a 40-minute written analysis of the interview conditions. They subsequently completed a "Project Questionnaire" by 8:00 AM the next day. The final deliverable was a team report, due one month later, comprising: (a) individual and peer analyses, (b) a merged team analysis, and (c) a transcript of the negotiation and debriefing.

Materials

The main sources for the research included the Big Five personality test answer sheets completed by the participants. The Skype meetings from 12:00 to 14:20 on the simulation day were fully recorded by the assistants, providing voice and video files for eight teams, which were primary sources for our data analysis. Additional sources included audio files sent by participants to the assistants after the negotiation and in response to 10 questions. Also, each team member was required to submit a reflection questionnaire with 30 questions by 8:00 am the following day. The researchers enforced these deadlines to reduce recall errors and capture the participants' emotional state. The open-ended nature of the questionnaires allowed for in-depth responses in the participant's own words, offering insight into their understanding of the situation. Due to the questionnaires' unstructured and qualitative nature, reliability and validity measures were not applicable. The final source was the negotiation report prepared by each team.

Procedure of Data Gathering

This study employed a problem-based learning (PBL; Hmelo-Silver, 2004) framework, structured in three phases. The initial phase introduced organizational behavior concepts—such as crisis management, negotiation, and emotion regulation—through instructor-facilitated activities. The second phase was the core simulation event, conducted on Skype for its recording and breakout room capabilities. The final phase consisted of two reflective activities (detailed in Figure 3), designed to consolidate learning and promote long-term knowledge retention.

Coding scheme

We needed an initial theory-driven top-down codebook based on existing literature to identify various influence tactics for our project. These are the steps we followed to develop the initial version of the codebook:

1. We conducted a search for articles relevant to our topic and compiled an online file containing the most pertinent ones. Simultaneously, we completed our list of synonyms and keywords to aid in our search.
2. We reviewed abstracts and categorized the articles accordingly.
3. We identified different influence techniques, tactics, and strategies mentioned in previous literature. Also, we recorded all noteworthy information while saving the corresponding references.
4. Using deductive reasoning or a top-down approach, we created an initial codebook by categorizing and subcategorizing the tactics.
5. We deliberated on the categories with researchers to ensure that the sections were distinct enough to prevent overlap in coding. Additionally, we included additional comments to provide clearer definitions for any ambiguous categories.

Results

We first elaborate on the codes derived from the context of this study. Each code is provided with an explanation and an example induced from the data. The total codebook is provided at the end of the results section.

Relational Strategies

In negotiation, relationship strategies focus on creating and strengthening healthy, long-term relationships between negotiation parties. These strategies are formed by trust, mutual respect and collaboration, and aim to build a sense of security in the other party. For example, showing interest in the needs of the other party, avoiding deceptive tactics and focusing on problem-solving rather than short-term self-centered advantages are all among these strategies. Specially for negotiations that require future cooperation, this approach has a significant impact.

Active Relational Strategies

These strategies include explicit and deliberate actions which focus on strengthening relationships between both parties. As an example, active listening to the opinions of the other party, asking open-ended questions to better understand their needs and feelings or suggesting solutions that shows empathy and interest in solving their problems, are part of this approach. This procedure also affects interactions positively and creates an environment based on trust and collaboration.

Using Reciprocal Exchange. This tactic includes offering discounts or services in order to create a sense of obligation or commitment, so that the other party feels under debt and enhanced responsibility, and gets persuaded to collaborate. The two below examples provide illustrations as to how this code is used in influencing others in negotiations. As an example, "*The basis of our plan in the first stage is to somehow leverage our influence with that organization-whether through the favors you provide for them or the connections you have with them-in order to persuade them so they refrain from their previous position and accept responsibility and apologize for spreading fake news*".

Having Legitimate Power. This code refers to using the power individuals have based on their official position, company rules or organizational contracts. Each party can convince the other that accepting their condition is necessary because of the existing regulations or organizational power. An example is when one says: "*I am the owner and the manager of this company and Mr. Z has 20 percent of its equity. Neither of us wants this company to face any losses*".

Coalition. This tactic includes building an alliance with other individuals or groups in order to strengthen power and intensify influence and pressure on the other party. By attracting the support of a third party, negotiators increase their bargaining leverage; e.g., "*That's okay, and we will do that. But I want you to respect me and X's opinion on this matter too, and what we see as appropriate may be something you don't see from your perspective*."

Passive Relational Strategies

These strategies focus on indirect or unclear behaviors that help improve relationships implicitly and indirectly. For example, avoiding negative or maladaptive feedback, bearing silence in a meeting to reduce tension, or even using positive body language (for example, smiling or making eye contact) without speaking, are part of this category. These strategies are commonly used to manage the emotions of other parties and create a sense of calmness in the negotiation atmosphere.

Leaving the Decision to Others and Withdrawing Oneself. This tactic refers to decreasing contributions and active participation in the negotiation and leaving space for other parties to reach the final decisions. This strategy is usually applied to decrease tension, create an environment of cooperation and avoid direct conflict. As an example: "*We can have you as the supervisor for now and for the next week, we can think about it later*."

Relational & Emotional Strategies

These strategies are a combination of emotion management and relationship creation, and they specifically focus on influencing by building emotional connections. For example, showing empathy for the problems of others, using positive language and gratitude, and even talking about personal issues, such as mutual interests, can increase trust and sincerity. These tactics help people to feel they have been understood and, consequently, motivate them to collaborate more. Managing negative emotions such as anger or disappointment is also part of this maneuver.

Hard Relational & Emotional Strategies

These strategies include tactics which influence others through emotional pressure or strong feelings. For example, showing controlled anger, creating a sense of anxiety or worry about the consequences of a decision, or even using heavy silence in order to induce feelings of guilt fall into this category. These methods are usually applied when a person wants to direct the other towards his/her own desired direction, albeit caution should be taken in order to prevent any potential harm to the relationship.

Threatening Others. Using direct or indirect threats to scare people and persuade them to accept the conditions of the other party; e.g., "*If we get into the blacklist, there will be no organization left anymore and not only will we all become unemployed, but also all of our capital will get destroyed. It makes us lose the organization we built just because of a few spoken words or a simple mistake*."

Threatening to Leave the Meeting. Expressing the intention of leaving the negotiation session with the purpose of building a mental pressure and speeding up the decision process. An example of this code is when one says: "*There is really no reason for me to stay in this discussion any longer unless we can reach an agreement on this issue*."

Blaming Others for Lack of Responsibility. Transferring responsibility for failure or problems to the other party or third parties to weaken their position. This tactic is getting used in order to divert attention from one's own shortcomings and place the other side on the defensive; e.g., "*I expected people to use their own power resources more and at least put me in a certain predicament, but this did not happen*".

Exaggeratedly Taking Something as an Insult. An extreme reaction to a simple comment or action and conversion of it to a personal offense in order to put the other party under pressure; e.g.: "*This suggestion of yours shows that you have no respect for my efforts*".

Accusing Others of Selfishness. Expressing that the other party only cares about his/her own profits in order to question their opinion's validity: "*Look, it's not really fair to dismiss them only because they expressed their personal opinion and a journal publication quoted them correctly or incorrectly. It can have negative organizational consequences for us*".

Insulting Others. Using harsh language to weaken the opponent and gain an advantage over the opponent. This tactic aims to provoke emotional reactions, shake the other party's confidence, or shift the focus away from the main issue by creating tension or intimidation: "*Because you argue like this, it seems like I have been personally insulted, that is my inference*".

Giving Rewards. Using material or non-material rewards (such as praise or promotion) as leverage for persuading the other party to accept the conditions: "*Agreeing to this proposal now could put you in a great position for future collaborations with our company*."

Soft Relational & Emotional Strategies

These strategies focus on creating positive feelings and friendly and sincere environments. For instance, showing sympathy, thanking for the other party's time and effort, or creating a sense of safety and comfort in negotiations are in this category. This approach is especially effective when the purpose of using it is for reinforcing trust and creating long-term relationship. Soft strategies make the other party feel valued and tend to cooperate more. An example is where one says: "*I really appreciate your time and the effort you've put into this. I just want to make sure we're both feeling comfortable moving forward*."

Ingratiation. This tactic involves compliments or showing affection along with good manners in order to please the other person, beyond their efforts and contributions; e.g.: "*Now Mr. X, you are more in charge and more experienced*".

Showing Empathy. Understanding and expressing support for the other person's feelings to create a deeper connection. As an example; "*We know that the previous boss was a very good boss. However, I'm really upset that these things happened in the last two or three days and that Mr. Bayat wasn't aware of the company's interests and talked like that. Especially since my relationship with him was becoming more intimate and personal*".

Using Inspirational Appeal. Presenting a motivating perspective to encourage the other party to cooperate. This tactic aims to inspire action by appealing to emotions, values, or ideals such as integrity, purpose, or a shared mission: "*Excellent, thank you very much my friends for attending this meeting. I hope that together, we make a decision that is in the best interest of the company, its members, and its future*".

Using Referent Power. Appealing to personal credibility, experience, or position to influence. This tactic relies on the respect, admiration, or authority the speaker holds to gain trust and shape the other party's decisions without needing direct persuasion: "*As I said the final opinion will be Mr Bayat's opinion. I have already presented my arguments*".

Using Religious Beliefs/Swearing to God. Appealing to religious values or divine oaths to increase the sincerity of statements. This tatic can create a powerful emotional bond and it makes it harder for the other party to doubt or challenge the speaker's intentions: "*Unfortunately, we have no other choice. The reputation of the holding matters. If we even ignore our own company's prestige, the reputation of the holding will be tarnished*".

Motivational Speeches. Using inspirational speeches to stimulate the motivation of the other party. These speeches aim to energize, uplift, and emotionally engage the listener: "*We've faced challenges before and come out stronger—this is our moment to rise above and make it happen!*"

Express Gratitude for Past Services. Thanking the other party for their previous cooperation or efforts to strengthen the relationship: "*I have learned so many things from him and we are definitely going to have him as a board advisor, invitee of the board or as part of this organization. After all, he has worked very hard and we shouldn't ignore the efforts of such individuals*".

Cognitive Strategies

Cognitive strategies relate to how individuals think and process information during a negotiation. These strategies include using logic, deeply analyzing the situation, and presenting compelling reasons to support their opinions. For instance, using detailed information and statistics, comparing different scenarios, and offering creative solutions can influence the other party's thinking. These strategies are especially effective when the other party is looking for logical and reasoned reasons in order to make a decision; e.g.: "*According to last quarter's data, our customer retention increased by 25% after implementing this approach. If we apply the same method here, we're likely to see similar growth trends*".

Using One's Expertise. Using specialized knowledge, skills or personal experience to increase the validity of opinions and influence on the other party; e.g.: "Based on the data we've gathered from over 200 successful projects, this approach consistently delivers the best results."

Guiding People by Rhetorical Questions. Asking questions that seem obvious in order to indirectly lead the other party to your point of view. This approach creates a conversational flow that feels collaborative rather than pushy, making it easier to build consensus; e.g.: "*Isn't it clear that we all want the most efficient outcome possible?*"

Using Information Power. Controlling or disseminating key information to strengthen your negotiating position; e.g.: "*We have access to the latest industry forecasts, and they clearly indicate a downturn—this gives us a strong reason to renegotiate the terms*".

Using Rational Persuasion. Presenting rational reasoning or logic based to prove the correctness of your opinion This strategy relies on facts, evidence, and structured arguments to appeal to the other party's sense of reason and objectivity; e.g.: "*If we reduce operational costs by just 10%, our profit margin will increase by at least 5%—the numbers clearly support this decision*".

Understanding Others' Opinion First. Listening to the other party's point of view and understanding them before expressing their own opinion in order to build trust and decrease resistance; e.g.: "*As Mr. Z is older than me I prefer that he says his opinion first and then I will tell you*".

Cognitive Emotional Strategies

Cognitive emotional strategies are a combination of logic and emotion and they help parties be influenced rationally as well as emotionally. These strategies include using data and rational analyses besides infusing positive emotions or sympathy. For example, presenting a logical argument alongside expressing the emotional impact of a decision can persuade the other party to accept your point of view. This is especially true in situations where there is a need to balance rationality and emotion to resolve conflict. These strategies help build trust and mutual understanding and can lead to positive, lasting outcomes. An example is where one says: "*Based on our analysis, this plan will reduce costs by 15%, but more importantly, it ensures job security for the entire team — and that's something we all care deeply about*".

High Positive Cognitive-Emotional Strategies

These strategies focus on inducing strong positive and motivating emotions in the other party. For example, using sincere praise, showing excitement and enthusiasm for the collaboration, or providing logical reasons that create a sense of hope and future opportunities fall into this category. This approach effectively increases the other party's motivation and encourages them to accept the proposals or joint decisions; e.g.: "*Your team's creativity has been truly impressive, and with our combined strengths, I'm confident we can create something groundbreaking together. The potential here is enormous*".

Trust Building Through Benevolence. Showing benevolence and honesty in behaviors for strengthening the trust of the other party; e.g.: "*I want to be transparent with you; I've taken your concerns into account because I genuinely want this to work well for both sides*".

Collaborative Decision Making. Involving the other party in the process of decision making in order to create a sense of ownership and shared commitment; e.g.: "*How about we list all the options together and decide which one works best for both of us*?"

Active Listening & Positive Feedback. Paying full attention to what the other party is saying and providing positive confirmation for strengthening the relationship; e.g.: "*Your opinion is very interesting. It looks like you have a lot of experience in this area*".

Soothing Bitterness with Kind Words. Using a compliment or friendly words before bringing up sensitive topics; e.g.: "*We appreciate our previous CEO as he made positive changes in the company, but the political climates such that this interview could end up being very damaging for us*".

Alleviating Problem Difficulty. Breaking the problem into smaller pieces or offering simple solutions for reducing the stress of the other party. This approach helps maintain a positive atmosphere and encourages collaboration, even when the task seems daunting; e.g.: "*Let's tackle the easiest part first, and the rest will feel much more manageable*".

Moderate Cognitive-Emotional Strategies

These strategies are a combination of logic and gentle emotions that influence the other party in a balanced way. For example, presenting logical arguments along with expressing neutral or mildly positive emotions, or using language that is both rational and friendly, fall into this category. This approach is useful when the goal is to balance rationality and emotions to reach an agreement and avoid provoking strong reactions; e.g.: "*I see where you're coming from, and I agree this solution makes sense logically. Let's also make sure it feels right emotionally, so we both feel confident and move forward*".

Trust Building Through Ability. Showing practical skills and abilities to prove competence and gain the other party's trust. This approach builds credibility by demonstrating results and reliability; e.g.: "*You've seen how I managed tight deadlines before—I'm confident we can make this happen together*".

Trust Building Through Expertise. Using technical knowledge or relevant education for increasing the credibility of the opinion. This approach strengthens trust by demonstrating authority and deep understanding; e.g.: "*Given my experience in this field, I can assure you that this approach is both scientifically sound and practical*".

Reminding of Ethical Issues. Invoking ethical principles to influence the decision of the other party. This approach not only highlights moral considerations but also aligns choices with shared values to encourage responsible decision-making; e.g.: "*Before we move forward, let's make sure this aligns with the ethical guidelines we stand for*".

Using Complicated Terms to Intensify Words. Saying simple concepts with technical or complex words to increase the seriousness of the statements. This approach adds weight to the message by creating a perception of expertise or sophistication; e.g.: "*Our findings are predicated on a comprehensive inferential synthesis, not just surface-level observations*".

Filtering Out Undesirable Options. Limiting options to what the person is willing to accept, without explicitly rejecting other offers. This approach gently steers the decision toward the most reasonable choice and it keeps the conversation positive and focused; e.g.: "*Out of the possibilities we've discussed, this one clearly aligns best with our goals*".

Persisting on One's Position. Insisting on one's position to force the other party into submission because of weariness; e.g.:

"Y: I will take the responsibility for it so rest assured. If I fail to do this, I will resign my position.

X: But your resignation will take one of our valuable team members from us.

Y: Then be assured as I really believe in my work and negotiation skills that I know I can solve this problem and none of these problems we discussed right now will arise and the sense of commitment that CEO has to this company naturally develop in employees and there is no danger threatening us".

Acquiring Guarantee to Accept an Opinion. Requesting a written or verbal commitment to carry out the proposal. This approach builds trust and accountability and it ensures that both sides are clear on the next steps; e.g.: "*Let's get this in writing so we both know exactly what's expected*".

Using Collective Words. Expressing opinions with plural pronouns (such as "we") to create a sense of community in decision making; e.g.: "*If we all pitch in and tackle this together, we'll get it done faster and no one has to go it alone*".

Highlighting Similarities. Pointing out commonalities between your opinion and the other party to strengthen your position; e.g.: "*I know you value clear communication as much as I do, so I'll keep everyone in the loop at every step*".

Emphasizing Vagueness of Consequences. Downplaying the negative consequences of a decision to reduce the fear of the other party; e.g.: "*Look, there's a chance that things won't be perfect, but chances are you'll be fine—so let's not overthink it*".

Emphasizing Quick Agreement. Encouraging the other party to accept quickly before they reconsider or change their mind. It's about gently pushing for a decision while keeping things light and confident, so they feel comfortable moving forward; e.g.: "*We should make a decision as soon as possible as the next meeting is going to start and we cannot think about this case for a long time*".

Reminding Time Pressure or External constraints. Forcing opponent(s) to lower their expectation by reminding about external determinants like time constraint, law, superior norms, etc. to reach consensus sooner; e.g.: "*We only have 30 minutes left before the offer expires, so we need to come to an agreement now*".

Postponing the Decision. Postponing the final answer to gain time or more information. This tactic can be used strategically to reduce pressure, reassess options, or wait for a more favorable moment to decide; e.g.: "*I think we should hold off on this decision until we have the latest market analysis next week*".

High Negative Cognitive-Emotional Strategies

These strategies include infusing extremely negative emotions such as fear, hopelessness or anxiety to the other party. For instance, stressing the undesirable consequences of decision-making, using heavy silence for implementing mental pressure or expressing negative truths in a way to make the other person worried, fall into this category. This approach is usually used when someone wants to make the other party to change his mind or action, but it should be used with caution to avoid any damage to the relationship. An example is when one says: "*If we don't act now, the entire project could fail, and everyone's efforts will be wasted*".

Attacking Others' Words. Rejecting or sharply criticizing the other party's views by pointing out apparent flaws or contradictions in their statements; e.g.: "*What you're saying doesn't add up and contradicts the facts we've already established*".

Attack to Others' Expertise. Belittling the other person's knowledge or experience to question the validity of their opinions; e.g.: "*With all due respect, your limited background in this field makes it hard to trust your judgment on such a complex issue*".

Attack to Others' Reasoning. A strong criticism of the logic and arguments of the other party by pointing out the instability or flaws in their analysis; e.g.: "*Your proposal overlooks key market trends and relies heavily on outdated statistics, which makes your conclusions unreliable*".

Bolding Mistakes in Others' Arguments. Highlighting blunders or misinformation in the other party's statements to weaken their position. By pointing out inaccuracies clearly and confidently, it can shift the momentum of the negotiation in the user's favor; e.g.: "*Your timeline doesn't add up — the project can't be completed in three weeks based on the resources you've outlined*".

Guarantee to Avoid Problems & Promise Future Alternatives. This tactic includes offering guaranties for decreasing risk and offering substitution options in the future to persuade the other party; e.g.: "*I will try to bring in the legal team for the upcoming meetings so with their help we can find the best plan for both gaining some leverage over the journal and minimizing the advantages we give them. In this way, we can achieve a win-win negotiation. So please don't worry about this matter at all*".

Taking Benefits or Avoiding Future Risks. This approach is to develop the idea that current decision can lead to long-term profits or prevent potential risks; e.g.: "*By securing this contract now, we'll protect ourselves from market fluctuations that could cost us dearly down the line*".

All codes are themed and categorized into a concise table (see Table 1).

Table 1. Summary of influence tactics in terms of macro and micro-level codes, their definition and their example

Macro-Level Codes			Micro-level Codes	Definition	Example	Symbol
Relational Strategies		Active	Using reciprocal exchange	Influencing others by giving them something so that they will return the favor back immediately or in the future.	"If you accept this condition, we will also show flexibility in payment deadlines."	RA1
			Having legitimate power	Influencing others because of one's formal position or authority in an organization or society.	"According to Article 5 of the contract, this is a non-negotiable issue."	RA2
			Coalition	Forming a smaller group of people who agree to act together and use their collective power to force the remaining others to accept something or act similarly	"Our supplier group also agrees with this approach and considers it necessary."	RA3
		Passive	Leaving the decision to others and withdrawing oneself	Stepping back and refraining from being actively involved in a group decision making process.	"This is your decision. I will be neutral on this."	RP
Relational & Emotional Strategies	Unethical	Hard (Direct)	Threatening others	Expressing or suggesting a threat of harm, danger, etc.	"If you don't agree, we will cancel the project."	REH1
			Threatening to leave the meeting	Attempting to control and change the power dynamic of the team, where all of the sudden, everyone must console and appease the threatener	"If this condition is not acceptable to you, I have to end this meeting."	REH2
			Blaming others for lack of responsibility and imposing all problems on other(s)	Transferring responsibility for failure or problems to the other party or third parties to weaken their position.	"This problem was caused by the lack of cooperation of your team."	REH3
			Exaggeratedly taking something as an insult relative to oneself	An extreme reaction to a simple comment or action and conversion of it to a personal offense	"This language of yours is not appropriate for this meeting."	REH4
			Accusing other(s) that they only think about themselves	Expressing that the other party only cares about his/her own profits	You only care about your own needs and don't consider ours at all.	REH5
			Insulting others	Using sardonic language	"This idea of yours is completely impractical and useless!"	REH6
		Soft(indirect)	Ingratiation	Praising insincerely or too eagerly.	"I am always honored by your honest support on projects."	RES1

	Ethical	Hard (Direct)	Giving Rewards	Returning for good that is offered or given for some service or attainment	"If you accept the offer today, you will receive an additional ten percent discount."	REH7
		Soft (Indirect)	Showing empathy	The action of being sensitive to, understanding, and showing care to others, when they are experiencing or have experienced problems.	"I understand how stressful this has been for you."	RES2
			Using inspirational appeal	Appeal designed to evoke enthusiasm or emotion. When someone arouses our enthusiasm for an issue by touching our values or what we want to become or obtain, they are using inspirational appeal.	"With your cooperation, we can make a big difference in this area."	RES3
			Using referent power	Influencing others due to their admiration, respect, or identification with us.	"Given my 20 years of experience in this field, this approach is the most effective option."	RES4
			Using religious beliefs, Swearing to God	Pressuring through using values, morals and religious beliefs	"I swear to God, this is my final offer."	RES5
			Motivational Speeches	Encourage others that they can do something although they may think they cannot	"I believe in your ability to lead this change. Everyone is counting on you to take the next step."	RES6
			express gratitude for past services	Thanking the other party for their previous cooperation or efforts to strengthen the relationship.	"Thank you very much for helping us with the previous project. We need your experience this time too."	RES7
Cognitive Strategies			Using one's expertise	Influencing others to listen because of one's skill or knowledge in a particular field	"As I have 15 years of experience in this field, this method is the best option."	C1
			Guiding people in one's desired way by asking rhetorical questions (Socratic)	Using argumentative dialogue based on asking and answering questions in effort to highlight common beliefs and opinions between discussants.	"Do you really think this approach will reduce costs?"	C2
			Using information power	Influencing others because one has more information about the topic.	"New data shows this strategy is 30% more effective."	C3
			Using rational persuasion	Using logical arguments and factual evidence to prove something is worth considering or not.	" Our analysis shows this investment has a 20 percent return".	C4
			Understanding other's opinion first before revealing one's point of view	Hiding one's thoughts away from others until after they explicate their viewpoints, to adopt responses accordingly	"I want to know how you look at this matter before I say my opinion."	C5
Cognitive Emotional Strategies		High Positive	Trust Building Through Benevolence	Showing benevolence and honesty in behaviors for strengthening the trust of the other party	"I want to be transparent with you; I've taken your concerns into account because I genuinely want this to work well for both sides"	CEHP1
Cognitive Emotional Strategies		High Positive	Collaborative decision making	Including everyone in the decision-making process to reach consensus and shared commitment to the decisions.	"Let's explore together how to solve this challenge."	CEHP2
			Active Listening and giving positive feedback	Being a mindful and focused member in the decision-making process, welcoming others to express their thoughts more.	" Sounds great! I have heard the remarks of both gentlemen."	CEHP3
			Soothing the bitterness of words by saying something nice	Using soft answers to decrease the harshness of critiques and making others imply more to one's suggestions.	"I always appreciate your attention to detail. If you'll allow me to give my opinion on this..."	CEHP4
			Alleviating the level of difficulty of a problem	To make problems associated with a decision seem less severe than anticipated.	" This challenge looks big, but with small steps, we can manage it."	CEHP5

Moderate	Trust Building Through Ability	Showing practical skills and abilities to prove competence and gain the other party's trust.	"You've seen how I managed tight deadlines before—I'm confident we can make this happen together"	CEM1
	Trust Building Through Expertise	Using technical knowledge or relevant education for increasing the credibility of the opinion.	"Given my experience in this field, I can assure you that this approach is both scientifically sound and practical"	CEM2
	Reminding of ethical issues	Mentioning ethical issues to stimulate other's emotion and change their mind.	"This decision may conflict with our work values."	CEM3
	Using Complicated Terms to Intensify Words	Using jargon and complicated expressions that are difficult for others to understand, to intensify the effect of one's words	"This approach requires holonomic?? Analysis and systemic interactions."	CEM4
	Filtering Out Undesirable Options	Highlighting one's favorite option(s) or distracting others from one's undesired option(s)	"Between these two options, the first is certainly more cost-effective."	CEM5
	Persisting on One's Position	Continue stating an opinion repeatedly in spite of difficulty or opposition until others get tired and accept.	"I still believe this is the only way."	CEM6
	Acquiring guarantee to accept an opinion	Providing assurance of the decision to be made, often with a promise to fulfill obligations. Guarantee that one can avoid problems, and giving promises	"If you agree, we should record this agreement in the contract."	CEM7
	Using Collective Words	Using words such as "we" instead of "I" to intensify the strength of one's propositions.	"We must take this risk to achieve our goals."	CEM8
	Highlighting Similarities	Focusing on similar backgrounds and common experiences with others in the meeting to strengthen one's position.	"Like you, I care about the quality of the project."	CEM9
	Emphasizing Vagueness of Consequences	Showing there is a lack of preciseness and high risk in what is being thought or decided upon.	"It is impossible to predict the exact results of this action, but it is not a serious risk."	CEM10
	Emphasizing Quick Agreement	Insisting decisions to be made soon to avoid possible disagreements in the future.	"If we agree today, we can launch the project tomorrow."	CEM11
	Reminding others about time pressure or external constraints	Forcing opponent(s) to lower their expectation by reminding about external determinants like time constraint, law, superior norms, etc. to reach consensus sooner.	"We have to finalize by the end of the hour."	CEM12
	Postponing the Decision	Refraining from making a decision and leaving it to perhaps an unknown future because maybe others will resist less and downgrade from their interest later.	"Let's postpone this discussion until the next meeting."	CEM13
High Negative	Attacking to others' words	Attacking and cutting down others word to weaken their position.	"This suggestion of yours is completely untenable and has no connection to reality!"	CEHN1
	Attack to others' expertise	Attacking to other's skills and knowledge to decrease the others' expertise power.	"You don't have a single piece of credible evidence in this area; how can you claim this method is correct?"	CEHN2
	Attack to Others' Reasoning	Attacking to others' reasoning and justifications to undermine the strength of their rational.	"Your argument is based on false assumptions, and you did not provide any real data to support it."	CEHN3
	Bolding Mistakes in Others' Arguments	Trying to correct others' mistake to weaken their words and power.	"You misread the report numbers! It's 30%, not 50%."	CEHN4

Figure 1 presents the frequency of code usage in descending order. Based on the analysis, the codes highlighted in dark blue were those that used 80% of the total codes using. The three most frequently applied codes were C4 (Using rational persuasion), REH1 (Threatening others) and C2 (Guiding people in one's desired way by asking rhetorical questions). Due to brevity, additional analyses based on this codebook are provided in a separate manuscript (blinded authors, submitted) showing the impact of personality on choosing influence tactics, and also the blend of different influence tactics that can be effective in convincing the other party, at different timepoints of the time-pressured high-stakes interaction.

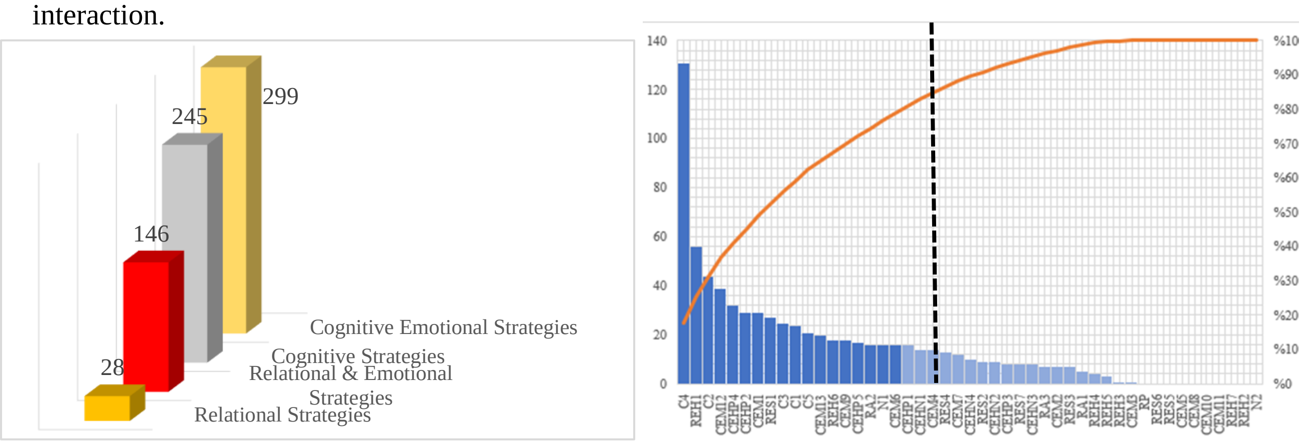

Figure 1. Total number of times each code was used by all individuals and groups

Discussion and Conclusion

The present research aimed to create a comprehensive taxonomy of influence and persuasion techniques in a time-pressured, high-stake simulated online business collaboration. Traditional taxonomies of influence, often derived from controlled settings or retrospective surveys, may fail to capture the multi-modal, and often improvised nature of strategic communication under duress.

Influence in Modern Digital Environments

A key strength of this research is its online, time-pressured setting, which reflects modern remote work challenges. The constraints of a one-hour deadline and limited non-verbal cues led participants to rely heavily on cognitive and cognitive-emotional persuasion tactics. In such conditions, participants relied predominantly on cognitive (Cognitive Strategies = 245 uses) and cognitive-emotional tactics (Moderate = 156, High Positive = 102). The findings indicate that effective virtual influence requires a blend of rational argument and emotional intelligence. Specific tactics like rational persuasion (C4), rhetorical guidance (C2), and empathic support (RES2) were particularly successful, likely because they provide the clarity and emotional calibration that replace missing in-person cues. This aligns with the broader understanding that both logical structure and emotional awareness are essential for productive remote collaboration.

Real-World Authenticity and Simulation Validity

A critical advantage of this research is that unlike lab-based or survey-driven persuasion studies, this study used a rich, role-based simulation that mirrored the complexity of real corporate crises, including mixed motives, individual goals, role conflict, and time constraints. This authenticity allowed us to observe naturally occurring persuasion tactics, including subtle micro-tactics like withdrawing from influence or strategically delaying decisions.

A Comprehensive Model of Influence Tactics

The key contribution of this research is the development of a comprehensive, empirically-derived taxonomy of influence tactics, inductively observed and deductively analyzed within the context of a time-constrained, emotionally-tense online crisis simulation. While established frameworks—such as Cialdini’s principles of persuasion, Feser's tactical typologies, and the Persuasion Knowledge Model (PKM)—provide valuable structured lists and rules, they are often presented as static, context-neutral inventories. This study directly addresses this gap by demonstrating how classical principles are dynamically adapted, sequenced, and hybridized in real-time by practitioners. It captures tactics unique to a digitally-mediated environment, where the limited level of non-verbal cues, the pressure of a ticking clock, and the high cost of miscommunication force a wise blend of cognitive argumentation with emotional appeals.

What tactics dominated?

By looking at Figure 1, we discover that three tactics account for most of the influence moves used by participants: rational persuasion (C4), threatening others (REH1), and rhetorical questions (C2). The prominence of these tactics mirrors Feser’s (2016) ‘Nine-Influence-Tactics’ model. Their dominance here suggests that teams try to default to the same tactics in prior models even under time-pressured high-stake negotiations (Cialdini, 2001; Feser, 2016). We also showed for the first time that rhetorical questions (C2) repeatedly served as softeners to hard tactics like pressure, a combination that we didn't find in former studies. Also, finding that participants rely so heavily on data and rationality is aligned with earlier findings that show that negotiators default to logic whenever possible (Hindriks, Jonker, & Tykhonov, 2011). The results also show that hard tactics are still used commonly. As we can see in data, threats were the second most frequent tactic and right after that, rhetorical questions appear, which are considered a soft tactic.

From single codes to broader families

If we aggregate all our code into 4 macro-levels (Figure 5) we will see this order of use: 1. Cognitive-Emotional strategies, 2. Cognitive strategies, 3. Relational & Emotional strategies, and 4. Pure Relational strategies. What we discover from this data is the fact that participants most often paired evidence with a brief emotional cue and did not rely purely on facts or purely on rapport. This finding is supported by a previous study shows that a similar "head-and-heart" blend predicts faster convergence in other distributed teams (Alnuaimi, Robert, & Maruping, 2010), but here quantified second-by-second. Within the Relational-and-Emotional family (Figure 6), hard tactics (≈ 82) outnumbered soft tactics (≈ 64) but they both remained secondary to data-led approaches. An interesting finding was the very low count for Pure Relational tactic, that is supported by Guadagno and Cialdini's (2009), who noted that online settings strip away many cues which are necessary for personalizing persuasive appeals. Without eye contact or informal side-remarks, teams may see little value in purely social comments and instead lean on data plus brief emotions, as our Cognitive-Emotional totals show.

Limitations and Future Research

Similar to other research, this study faces several limitations. The sample was limited to 24 students from similar backgrounds, potentially limiting generalizability. The one-hour simulation, while useful, cannot fully replicate the prolonged pressure of real corporate emergencies. Furthermore, the analysis focused solely on verbal tactics, omitting critical nonverbal cues and measuring success primarily through agreement rates and tactical counts rather than decision quality or longitudinal learning. Future research will need to address these gaps by building a richer, multimodal model of digital persuasion. Planned extensions include integrating video coding for nonverbal cues (gestures, facial expressions, vocal qualities) and employing physiological measures like Galvanic Skin Response (GSR) bracelets to correlate emotional arousal with specific influence tactics and decision shifts. We also aim to explore the cognitive underpinnings of persuasion through immediate thought-listing prompts to understand the mental justifications for accepting or rejecting influence.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study successfully developed a comprehensive, empirically-derived taxonomy of influence tactics within a simulated, time-pressured online collaboration, thereby addressing a significant gap in the literature. Unlike static, context-neutral models, the findings demonstrate how classical principles of persuasion are dynamically adapted and hybridized in real-time under the constraints of digital mediation. The research reveals that effective influence in such environments is predominantly a cognitive-emotional endeavor, characterized by the strategic blending of rational argumentation notably rational persuasion and rhetorical guidance with calibrated emotional appeals, such as empathic support. This "head-and-heart" approach emerged as a functional adaptation to the absence of non-verbal cues and the pressures of high-impact deadlines. While hard tactics like threats remained prevalent, their frequent coupling with softer rhetorical questions illustrates a novel tactical sequencing previously unobserved. Ultimately, the study confirms that authentic, complex simulations are vital for capturing the multi-modal reality of strategic communication, advancing our understanding of influence in modern remote work contexts.

Declarations

Author Contributions

All authors contributed actively to the conception, design, and execution of the research.

Data Availability Statement

We have permission to analyse and publish the simulation data results. Publishing videos, images, voice recordings and any other identifiable data from the simulation is not permitted. Anonymous data is accessible upon request.

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Ethical considerations

Informed consent to use written and verbal data for research purposes was obtained from all participants prior to the simulation. It was clearly stated that verbal data will be recorded and/or analyzed for academic research purposes, and participants were given the option to refuse their data to be recorded at any time prior, during or after the event.

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Conflict of interest

None.

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