

THE CATALYST

How to Change Anyone's Mind

JONAH BERGER

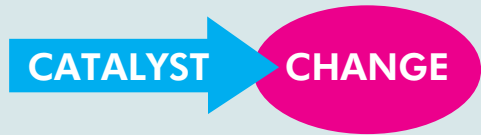
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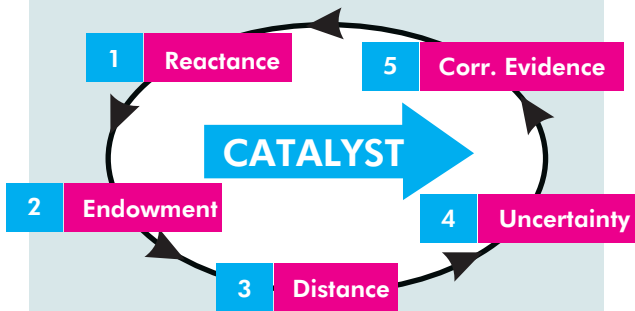
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MAIN IDEA

Change is hard – and the normal approach of pushing people by overwhelming them with facts and figures doesn't work. A better approach is to take a hint from nature and become a "catalyst" instead. Catalysts bring about change by reducing the barriers so change is easy.

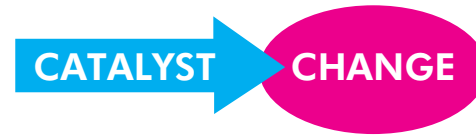


To find someone's mental parking brakes and then actually get people to change their minds, there are five key roadblocks which you have to reduce or eliminate:



"Catalysts have revolutionized chemistry. Their discovery generated multiple Nobel Prizes, kept billions of people from starving, and spawned some of the greatest inventions of the last few centuries. But their underlying approach is equally powerful in the social world. Because there is a better way to generate change. It's not about pushing harder. And it's not about being more convincing or a better persuader. These tactics might work once in a while, but more often than not they just lead people to up their defenses. Instead, it's about being a catalyst—changing minds by removing roadblocks and lowering the barriers that keep people from taking action."

– Jonah Berger



Roadblock #1 – Reactance Page 2

Most people when pushed just automatically push back. They have an inbuilt anti-persuasion protection radar which kicks in whenever someone is trying to persuade them to do something. To lower this barrier, find a workable way to help people persuade themselves instead. If you can make them think this is their idea, they will act.

Roadblock #2 – Endowment Page 3

Many people live by the creed: "If it ain't broke, don't fix it". To ease and ideally eliminate this roadblock, highlight how inaction is not as costless as it seems at first glance. Get people to see that not acting is in fact costing them, and you can release the handbrake.

Roadblock #3 – Distance Page 4

The further away the person trying to persuade is, the less inclined people feel to make changes. You have to make information relevant and within the person's zone of acceptance before they will take any notice. Do that and you can become a catalyst for change.

Roadblock #4 – Uncertainty Page 5

Change pretty much always introduces uncertainty. Catalysts overcome this by making the new things easier to try so people experience things for themselves. Letting people take a no-risk test drive is often essential to becoming an effective catalyst.

Roadblock #5 – Corroboration Page 6

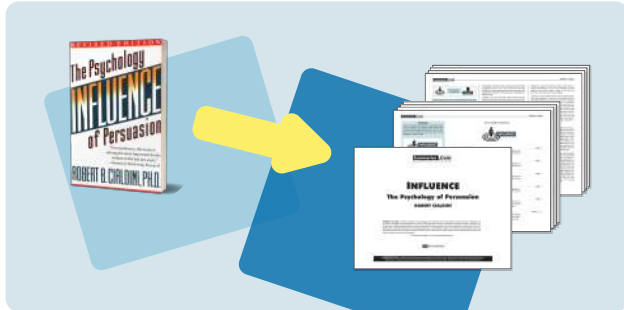
The more people you can get to provide corroborating evidence, the more likely it becomes someone will choose to join their ranks. Catalysts have a knack for providing persuasive reinforcement based on corroboration.

Acting as a catalyst. Pages 7 - 8

An effective catalyst will understand both the underlying science of each roadblock and the principles which can be used to mitigate each of those roadblocks. Pure and simple catalysts REDUCE roadblocks, thereby helping people change their minds, and incite action. Thinking and then acting as a catalyst who specializes in finding the handbrake and releasing it is a great way to operate.

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