

How to discover and use the right persuasion strategy using “10 Ms analysis”

By Alex Epstein

In today’s high-opposition world of energy projects, the success of projects is determined, not just by financial and technical abilities but by companies’ persuasive abilities.

To what extent can a company architect and execute a persuasion strategy that actually persuades the stakeholders that need to be persuaded for a project or policy to move forward?

Companies’ answers to this question often determine whether a project will be wildly profitable, crippled into mediocrity, or completely destroyed.

When energy companies are approaching persuasion strategy they should use the same results-obsession, rigor, and creativity as they should use when conceiving the rest of their business strategies.

The 10 Ms of persuasion strategy

With this in mind I have developed a framework for discovering the best persuasion strategy, which I call the “10 Ms.” I’ll introduce them in the form of my fundamental “persuasion equation,” which is this:

Given your persuasion Mission, Metrics, Monkey Wrenches (obstacles), and Money (at stake), what is the most cost-effective combination of Markets (audiences), Messages, Messengers, Methods, Media, and Materials to achieve your persuasion goals?

Since millions and sometimes billions of dollars depend on answering this question correctly, the 10 Ms should not be assumed, nor should companies only consider conventional answers—they should *discover* their 10 Ms through research, testing, and creativity.

Answering the 10 Ms

1. Mission: What is your mission? What do you hope to accomplish with this persuasion project?
2. Metrics: How will you measure success?
3. Monkey Wrenches: What are the biggest obstacles you face?
4. Money: How much money is at stake? How much are you currently budgeting for these efforts?
5. Markets: What are the most important markets or audiences to persuade?
- 6. Messages: What messages will be most persuasive?**
- 7. Methods: What methods of explanation are most effective to communicate the message?
E.g., one-on-one conversation, long-form, short-form, visual.**
8. Messengers: Who will be the best messengers for your message?
9. Media: What media channels will be most effective?
- 10. Materials: What are the key new materials that need to be created?**

(The Ms in bold are our focus at the Center for Industrial Progress—specifically, creating Master Messaging and materials that can easily be applied for every market and messenger and medium.)