

# Propaganda Techniques and Definitions

## Section A: Techniques of Self-Deception

0. **No Technique:** No propaganda is used
1. **Prejudice:** Using personal prejudices, biases and bigotry, either for or against something or someone
2. **Academic Detachment:** Having a choice between options but choosing not to do either
3. **Drawing the Line:** Being offered only two choices when there are several other options
4. **Not Drawing the Line:** Not having enough and wanting more; "I have two...why not more?"
5. **Conservatism / Radicalism / Moderatism:** Any one of the three is a correct answer...
  - Conservatism** -- Wanting things to stay the way they have always been; loves tradition
  - Radicalism** -- Wanting things to change for the sake of change; dislikes tradition
  - Moderatism** -- Wanting to compromise; seeking peace between conservatives and radicals
6. **Rationalization:** Making excuses for things that have already happened in the past
7. **Wishful Thinking:** Dreaming about things that are going to happen in the future
8. **Tabloid Thinking:** Putting people and things into stereotypical roles
9. **Causal Oversimplification:** Making simple (convenient) excuses for the causes of past events.
10. **Inconceivability:** Refusing to believe or not accepting the truth of an argument or statement

## Section B: Techniques of Language

0. **No Technique**
1. **Emotional Terms:** Uses words to get a strong emotional response (positive or negative)
2. **Metaphor and Simile:** Comparing two unlike things using the words "like" or "as" or "is"
3. **Emphasis:** Heavy verbal emphasis and stress on a word or phrase (shouldn't be mistaken for another technique)
4. **Quotation Out of Context:** Misquoting or using part of a quote to fit an argument
5. **Abstract Terms:** Using terms the speaker clearly does not understand
6. **Vagueness:** Using words with several different or no specific interpretations (some, a little, most)
7. **Ambiguity:** Using words or phrases that have two different interpretations
8. **Shift of Meaning:** Beginning with terms that can be interpreted one way, then changing the meaning of the terms at the end to mean something totally different

## Section D: Techniques of Exploitation (TV ads)

### 0. No Technique

1. **Appeal to Pity:** "Help me or something bad will happen to me."
2. **Appeal to Flattery:** Unsolicited compliments to get someone to do something
3. **Appeal to Ridicule:** Making fun of or joking about a person or thing
4. **Appeal to Prestige:** Offering the listener a chance to be important or famous
5. **Appeal to Prejudice:** Trying to persuade someone to do something because of their background or beliefs
6. **Bargain Appeal:** Offering a chance at a good deal or to save money
7. **Folksy Appeal:** Trying to be overly friendly or close get someone to do something
8. **Join the Bandwagon:** Do what everyone else is doing, because you don't want to be left out
9. **Appeal to Practical Consequences:** "Help me or something bad will happen to you (listener)."
10. **Passing from the Acceptable to the Dubious:** Beginning with acceptable statements, then switching to an unrelated statement or argument to get someone to do something

## Section F: Technique of Maneuver (How to win an argument that you're losing)

### 0. No Technique

1. **Diversion:** Changing the subject of a conversation successfully
2. **Disproving a Minor Point:** Considering several arguments, but attacking only the weakest one
3. **Ad Hominem:** Making a personal attack on the person but not addressing the argument
4. **Appeal to Ignorance:** "You can't prove you are right or I am wrong"...usually ending with a question
5. **Leading Question:** Asking a question to sway the listener toward a desired response or make him/her uncomfortable
6. **Complex Question:** A series of Leading Questions when only one answer is expected
7. **Inconsequent Argument:** Offering evidence or statistics not related to original argument
8. **Attacking a Straw Man:** Interpreting someone's response to be something different; putting words in someone's mouth ("Oh, you mean...")
9. **Victory by Definition:** The speaker can't be proven wrong because the counterexamples don't fit the "real" definition of what is being argued
10. **Begging the Question:** Arguing in circles or restating the original argument itself