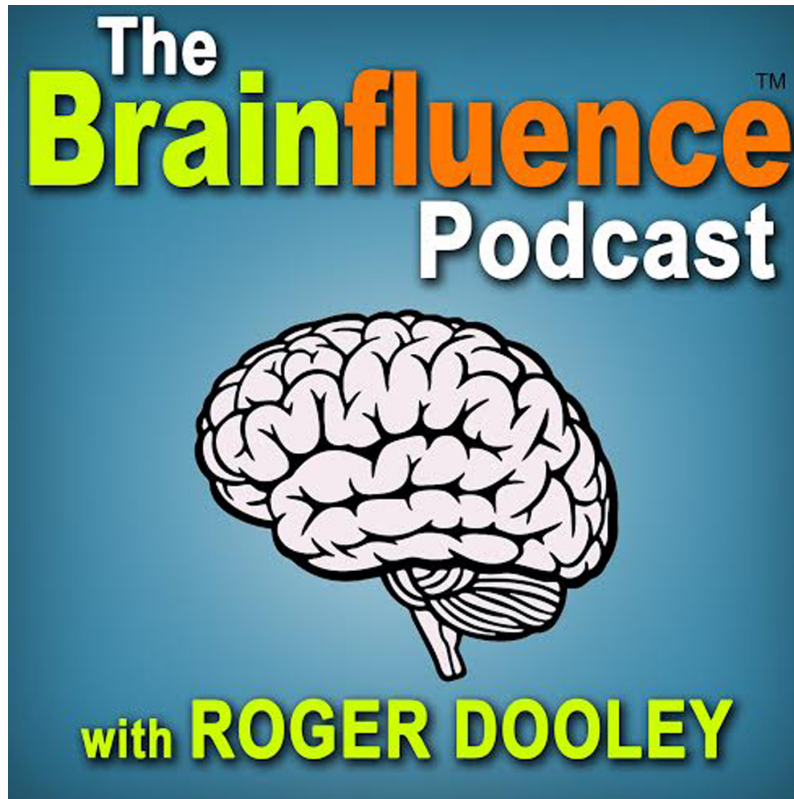


How to Influence People Online and In-Person with  
Brian Ahearn

<https://www.rogerdooley.com/brian-ahearn-influence-people>



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**Roger Dooley**

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Welcome to Brainfluence, where author and international keynote speaker Roger Dooley has weekly conversations with thought leaders and world class experts. Every episode shows you how to improve your business with advice based on science or data.

Roger's new book, *Friction*, is published by McGraw Hill and is now available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble, and bookstores everywhere. Dr Robert Cialdini described the book as, "Blinding insight," and Nobel winner Dr. Richard Claimer said, "Reading Friction will arm any manager with a mental can of WD40."

To learn more, go to [RogerDooley.com/Friction](https://www.RogerDooley.com/Friction), or just visit the book seller of your choice.

Now, here's Roger.

Roger Dooley: Welcome to Brainfluence. I am Roger Dooley. Our guest this week has been on before, and his episode generated a lot of interest. Brian Ahearn is the chief influence officer at Influence PEOPLE. He specializes in applying the science of influence and persuasion in everyday situations. He's one of only 20 individuals in the world who currently holds the Cialdini Method Certified Trainer designation. That's right. For all the people who talk about applying Cialdini principles, Brian is one of the few people on the planet actually trained and certified by the master himself.

In addition to his writing and speaking, Brian authored the lynda.com LinkedIn learning course Persuasive Selling, which has now been viewed by more than 60,000 people. His new courses on coaching went live earlier this year.

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I'm excited to say Brian's first book, Influence PEOPLE: Powerful Everyday Opportunities to Persuade that are Lasting and Ethical, has just released on Amazon. Welcome back, Brian.

Brian Ahearn: Thank you for having me, Roger. I'm excited to be here and excited to talk a little bit about the book.

Roger Dooley: Yeah, well, congratulations on that, Brian. I know that you've been working in that for a while. Who's the intended reader for this book?

Brian Ahearn: The intended reader primarily is our business folks because it really takes a look at some business case studies, it gives lots of business examples, but there's also spillover into things like social media, so even people who aren't in business would benefit from it. I'm a firm believer, Roger, that getting people to say yes to you, whether it's in the office or at home, is a big determinant of your success and happiness.

Roger Dooley: Right. Yeah, I don't know that anybody says, "Yes," to me at home, but-

Brian Ahearn: I can teach you.

Roger Dooley: ... I can try to start applying the principles in the book, and then we'll see what happens. Brian, there have been millions of copies of Cialdini's book Influence sold and a ton of copies of Ariely's Predictably Irrational and other titles, but oddly enough, even today, I see lots of people in business who mostly ignore non-conscious drivers of human behavior and go around trying to persuade people

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with facts and figures and such. Do you find that to be true, and do you think that's improving, or not so much?

Brian Ahearn: I think it's improving a little bit, just by the fact that those books have gained such popularity, but, by and large, I still think that people read those books, they get fascinated by the studies and all the things that they read, but a lot of times they walk away and don't really know how to apply it. That's what my book is designed to do is to take that complex science, boil it down into things where people go, "That makes sense. I could easily do that."

Roger Dooley: Yeah. I think that's something that's really important. A lot of these principles are really quite simple and to apply in real life. I know in my book Brainfluence, people were always commenting, "Well gee, you've made this very readable and accessible," and I think because certainly your book too, Brian, is very accessible. It's not heavy with a lot of scientific jargon, but rather, just it teaches you how to apply some of these very simple things in relatively simple ways.

Brian Ahearn: You know, I tell people, "Go out and buy Cialdini's book. Go read Ariely's books." You want to understand that science. I think that gives you a tremendous amount of confidence, but I didn't feel I needed to go deep into that. I needed to reference it, reference the principles, but give those clear-cut ways to use them in everyday situations.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. One thing I should point out is that your subtitle has a sort of a little Easter egg in it. Why don't you explain... Subtitles, I think, are greatly overrated book features. I

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know on my new book, Friction, I went around a for a few weeks with the publisher going back and forth trying to arrive at a subtitle that worked for them and worked for me. I think that was probably largely an irrelevant effort because people make their decision based on things other than that particular item. But in the case of your book, it does have a little interesting aspect. Why don't you explain that?

Brian Ahearn: Well, the subtitle is actually from the acronym PEOPLE. I've always said that influence is all about people because we can't persuade things. No matter how good I get at this, I can't come home on a hot summer day, talk to my lawn mower and get it to start and cut the grass. But if I do it well, maybe I can get my wife or my daughter to do it if I'm not able to get out there and do it. Everything is about people. I'm not sure where the epiphany came from, but it just occurred to me one day that this is all about "powerful everyday opportunities to persuade that are lasting and ethical." That spells PEOPLE. I really think that's the foundation of how we go about doing this.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. When Bob Cialdini first wrote Influence more than 30 years ago now, just about all important interactions were in person except for an occasional phone call, perhaps. Salespeople saw their customers face-to-face. Business associates met in person. Today, these in-person interactions, yeah, they still happen, but lots of interaction is digital. We communicate by email, by text, social media like Twitter and Facebook, and with tools like Slack. Even in the office even you got people who are sitting in one desk away, and they're doing the Slack with each other rather than actually talking. In some cases, of

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course, automation is just completely replacing human interaction. How well do you think Cialdini's principles have held up in the digital era?

Brian Ahearn: Well, I think they're just as relevant. The only thing that's changed is the medium. I mean, in the evolution of human beings, all of a sudden, humans were able to write, but that was just a different form of communicating. Then we had printing presses, and then we got the telephone. I'm sure that every step of the way, there were some people saying, "Wow, this technology that we have now is only hurting communication. People aren't talking as much because they're reading or they're not sitting down with each other because they're on the phone."

But it still comes down to it's communicating, and how people's brains work, science seems to agree that that hasn't changed in some 40 or 50,000 years. We just need to learn how to take that research on the psychology of persuasion and apply it to different medium.

Roger Dooley: Say you are trying to do a better job on your social medium of choice, whether that's Twitter or LinkedIn or Facebook. What are some things that you can do that might apply influence principles that would help you connect with people, perhaps attract new people, or get people to pay attention to what you're saying?

Brian Ahearn: I've got a great example from a talk that I did here in Columbus, Ohio about a month ago. I was going to give this talk, and as people registered, I was getting emails for each person that registered. For those that I did not reach out to invite, so anybody who saw the ad on the

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website, signed up for it, I, before the end of the day would email them back. It was a short email, so if you had signed up, it might've said, "Roger, I saw you just signed up for my talk in New Albany next month. Really appreciate you doing that. I'm not sure if we'll have an opportunity to talk, so I've reached out to you on LinkedIn."

Now, I didn't personalize my LinkedIn invite, which I normally would do, but I didn't do that because I personalize the email. I had lots of people responding back to those emails and accepting the LinkedIn. But here was the difference maker. It wasn't a really large talk, but we had about 125 people registered, which was about the most that they'd ever had. But the difference was 95 of those people showed up, whereas in the past, they had 123 or 124 register, and only 72 showed up.

There was a big difference in the number of people that actually followed through. I believe that was because of the personal connection back to each of them. If they replied, I would have a little banter back and forth with them. They were able to see my LinkedIn, see my picture, know that I was a real person, and that compelled them. I know it compelled them because I had one person in the meeting during the Q&A say, "I thought I was the only one who got that email," so it worked really, really well.

Roger Dooley: That's a good point because typically for an event... I assume that was a free event since typically half the people might show up. I've talked to organizers of events like evening meetups and free lectures and whatnot, and that 50% number seems pretty standard. I mean, it may

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be 40% or 60%, but somewhere in that range, unless people have actually shelled out a bunch of money for a ticket, that's how many people show up because there's no real cost to not showing up. You book the reservation, and then something else comes up, or you're just feeling kind of tired and feel like putting your feet up and watching TV or reading a book or something instead. But in this case, that outreach probably created more of a personal bond where now that person might feel like they would be missed, which-

Brian Ahearn: Yes.

Roger Dooley: ... and I think that's a very powerful human thing. When people are trying to develop a workout habit, often they will find a workout partner simply for that social pressure to show up when they say they're going to show up and not be there because if you're just going to an anonymous gym in the morning and you don't show up, nobody really cares, but if you've got a partner there, then that happens... in fact, even years ago, I haven't been in the gym that good lately, but there was one that was at a great community, just the people talk to each other a lot.

The first day I showed up, guy came over and introduced himself and introduced me to some of the other people there. In that case, you have that same sort of pressure... not pressure, but you knew that if you did not show up on the expected day that does somebody'd say, "Hey, where were you?" It makes a difference. I think there's a really good lesson there for people that that little bit of extra outreach can make a difference. Would you say is that

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reciprocation, or is it just typical sort of human personalization and connection?

Brian Ahearn: Well, I think it was a little bit of the reciprocation because when I did something they felt a little obligation to do something in return. My talk was actually about persuasion, so I was actually pre-suading them too to get there. Again, the proof is in the pudding, whereas before, seven out of about 12 were showing up, I had almost 10 out of 12. You get to that personal side to where they, again, they see you as an individual. If they went over, if they took a moment and looked at that LinkedIn, then they could see some authority because of what I do. It all created this momentum where significantly more people ended up showing up.

I think I'm with you. I think organizers, if they want to have successful events like that, knowing that a free event can be hit or miss, there's nothing lost if they don't show up, they would do well to let the speakers know in advance. Then hopefully those speakers would take advantage of that opportunity. Certainly connecting with people afterwards is great, but that doesn't impact their ability to get there, and that's what the organizers want is they want a full house.

Roger Dooley: Right. Well, that's one good takeaway. Let's go from that to an obscure little thing, and that is sticky notes. I thought your anecdote in the book about collecting overpayments was great, but start with the original science on that.

Brian Ahearn: There was a study done in which a company wanted to see if they could positively impact people's response to a

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survey. They sent out a survey the traditional way. It went out with a cover letter, and then the survey, so the cover letter gave clear instructions on what they wanted people to do. When they did it that traditional way, 36% of the people took the survey.

When they put a variable in, on the cover letter, they personalized it by writing a little handwritten note. When they did that, the survey response rate went up to 48%, so that's pretty good jump to go from 36-48% for doing nothing more than taking a moment to personalize those cover letters.

But in the third variable, they sent the same survey, same cover letter, and had the same handwritten note, except this time, it was on a yellow sticky note. Survey response rate went up to 75%. It more than doubled the initial response rate because the theory is not only did the yellow sticky note catch your attention, it's signifies this person did a little bit more. They took a little extra time to do something, and that's what consciously or subconsciously got so many more people to take the survey.

That was the backdrop to what I had taught our accounting department one summer. Then it so happened that at the very beginning of the next year, our company had overpaid insurance agents in one of the operating states. It was a \$700,000 error where 150 agencies were overpaid. Our charge was how do we get that money back as quickly as possible?

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Well, I defaulted to what I had taught the accounting department, reminded the home office accounting manager, and he made sure to put a yellow sticky note on every one of the 150 letters that went out and personally sign them. When I called him a few weeks later to ask how the collection was going, Roger, his exact words were, "I'm floored." I said, "Why?" He said, we've gotten money back from 130 of the 150."

Now, the optimist in me said, I literally said, "You mean we didn't get it all back?" He did what you did. He laughed at me. He said, "Come on. We're talking about money. I expected them to say things like, 'It's your mistake. You fix it,' or, 'Put me on a payment plan,' or, 'Take it out to next month's commission,' anything except sit down and write a check." He goes, "I'm floored." We ended up getting the money back in full from 147 of the 150 agents within two months. He was a believer.

Now, this is an accounting guy, rational, as rational as you get. He was such a believer, Roger, that when his town had a school levy that came up, and he still had a couple of girls who were in school, they sent out an FAQ to all the people who had not voted in the prior election, and they had superimposed on it a sticky note, and he personally signed 2,500 of these flyers. The school levy passed by a wide margin.

Roger Dooley: Well, that's impressive. He obviously learned his lesson, didn't he?

Brian Ahearn: Yes, he did.

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Roger Dooley: But I think in lieu of signing 2,500 sticky notes, something else that I've seen done occasionally is have machine-printed sticky notes that appear to be personalized and signed individually. Now, that probably isn't quite as good as putting a person's a name like, "Brian, I hope you take a look at this," or, "Brian, I hope you can act on this," and sign it "Roger," but if you're trying to do this at scale, I know I've seen those.

I haven't seen one in a few years, but I have gotten solicitations like that where, at first glance, I thought, "Well, somebody put a sticky note on this thing they sent me," and then after closer inspection of being a skeptical direct marketer, I examined it carefully and said, "Okay, this is not personalized. It's machine printed," but it certainly got me to look and to react to the piece as opposed to probably just shoveling it right into the trash with the other junk mail.

Brian Ahearn: Yeah. I do think though that you run the risk of, when you're trying to take advantage of something where we all know that getting something personalized feels good, but I think that if we start to realize it wasn't personalized, it begins to lose its effectiveness. If we talk about the giving of gifts, for example, if I give you something, you probably feel good about that. The more it aligns with who you are and what you like, the better you feel because you think, "Wow, Brian really knows me." But if I give you something that you clearly know everybody's getting, like a calendar just before the beginning of the new year, doesn't really have nearly as much effect.

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Roger Dooley: Hard to believe you were the only one that got that calendar.

Brian Ahearn: Yeah. You have to be careful because I think if people start feeling techniqued... and I'm aware of this. I see things that come in the mail, and I've seen the sticky note before with a little initial and my... I remember way back when, when it was kind of new, I thought, "Was that John? That's a J. Is that..." and then I realized it wasn't, and it caused a boomerang effect for me where I just, if I saw that, it was a turnoff, and I would just throw it away immediately.

Marketers need to be careful about how they're doing that because when somebody feels tricked, they don't like that. The only time we'd like to be tricked is when we go see a magic show. We're expecting to be tricked but, but nobody wants to be tricked into doing something.

Roger Dooley: Right. Well, yeah, I guess I think I probably got the same piece you did many years ago that just had some nondescript initials on it, and I started to think, "Oh, okay, do I know this JH person," or whatever it was, but then I realized it was mass-printed. But on the other hand, if you did personalize it and it was just printed, in other words that it was signed "Brian," it wouldn't be deceptive. It would just be, I don't know, maybe you didn't write that by hand, although there is one other technique I wrote about in a blog post a few years ago where I spoke at a conference, and within a day, or a couple of days after, I got this really nice note from the organizer just thanking me for participating and whatnot. Just a little handwritten

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note is on a very nice card with the organization's logo on it and handwritten everything, clearly personalized.

I thought, "That's really nice," but as I later found out from talking to them, they employed a service that they could send the message and the names and addresses and for, I don't know, is it just like three bucks a piece? They would hand write it for them. I didn't really feel that was a bad thing for them to do because this came in a handwritten envelope and a handwritten note. I just thought it was a nice personal touch that had they sent me an email, that would have been fine too, but it would've not have had the same impact. But again, you could... some people might object to that, saying, "Well, what? You didn't actually hand write that yourself?" but I don't know. What do you think, Brian?

**Brian Ahearn:** Well, I think that what we're talking about is levels of personalization and how much we feel we should reciprocate to that. It's nice to get a gift. It's nicer when it feels like it's personalized, but when you really truly know that it was the individual who wrote that by hand, it means even more. That's really the basis of reciprocity, that obligation we feel to give back when someone first gives to us. The more effort that they put in, the more we appreciate it, and the more likely we are to do something for them should they ask in the future.

**Roger Dooley:** Right. Well, I guess as your first book is just about to come out as we're speaking and is probably out by the time our listeners are hearing this, one thing that you'll find is that people react to inscribed books. I know I've found that over the years. When people know that the

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author has personalized that book to them and perhaps put in a little bit of extra thought, that really goes a long way, and many people appreciate it. I mean, others may not, but for those folks that do, it's a great thing. I encourage you to, going forward, inscribe plenty of books to people. I think that will be building some of those longterm connections.

**Brian Ahearn:** I agree. I've got a couple where Cialdini signed them. I got some pre copies at certain times when he wrote things, and I would never give those away. It doesn't matter what it means to anybody else. I know who he is that he took the time to do that, and you can't put a price on that.

**Roger Dooley:** Yeah. We were just talking about sending an email to people that ended up setting you up for a nice, really high attendance rate at evening meeting, but I'm curious, a lot of times, people don't even open emails. Have you found any good subject lines using influence principles that seem to get people to respond better than others?

**Brian Ahearn:** Well, it will always depend on what you're trying to do. If you are in the midst of trying to build relationship with somebody, then there's going to be certain principles that you're going to want to engage, principle of liking or principle of reciprocity. If that email is intended for somebody to overcome some objections or uncertainty, then you're going to want to have something in that subject line that either taps into consensus, what's everybody else like you doing, or authority, here's what the experts say. If it's something that needs to move people to action, then you're going to want to tap into consistency. What have people like that person said or

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done in the past because most of us want to remain consistent, or what would they lose by not opening this email? Scarcity. It really depends on what you're trying to get to with that particular audience.

Now, I will say this though. I am not in favor of the kinds of things that we see on social media where it'll say, "Oh, this made so-and-so's head explode," and people like, "Oh, my gosh, what they..." and I know early on I'd open that. It was nothing. It was just disappointing, and so I've kind of rebelled back against that. I don't spend any time opening those. I think when you go too far like that and you disappoint after somebody has opened, you lose a lot of credibility.

Roger Dooley: Well, yeah, I think that the sort of clickbait article titles and email titles have worn out their welcome. I mean initially it was-

Brian Ahearn: Yes.

Roger Dooley: ... pretty interesting, and you did want to find out what made this person's head explode or which item number three you won't believe, but then after a while, you realize you're just being manipulated.

Brian Ahearn: Right.

Roger Dooley: But actually, that brings me to another topic, Brian.

Brian Ahearn: Can I say this real quickly? As an example though of practicing what I preach, as the book is coming out and I'm wanting people to post things on social media, I'm sending an email to a lot of people who I've had contact

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with over the years, and the subject line plays on the Paul McCartney, John Lennon "I Get By With a Little Help From My Friends." It literally says that, and because they know me, and their friends are going to probably open that up. I think reminding them of that friendship is going to make them more likely to say, "Well, yeah, I'll post something on LinkedIn or Twitter where I will send something out to my email list." That's an example of I want to tap back into that relationship.

Roger Dooley: One other technique, if you aren't just sending out a mass mailing, but trying to address individuals, you've mentioned liking at the very outset, and sometimes, if you can point out something you have in common, particularly in a cold contact, like you're reaching out to somebody because you'd like them to read your book or help you with something or whatever, if you can find that thing in common that you have with them, gee, you're both alumni of a certain school or you both spend time in Cleveland or whatever the case might be, that can be a, I think, one way to get a very high open rate on your emails is to... and of course that's a one-off thing each time. It's something that you can't really automate, or it'd be very difficult to automate, but if you can use that and you're doing targeted outreach, it can be pretty effective.

Brian Ahearn: Absolutely, because we naturally will want to connect and help with people who we view as similar to ourselves. I mean, that goes back just over the course of evolution when people were in smaller tribes. Anyone who looked like you sounded like you, anything that you had in common was probably friend, and there was better

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chance of survival when two or more were gathered together.

Roger Dooley: Yeah. Where I was headed was your, we're talking about these clickbaity and manipulation things, and I wanted to get into what are called dark patterns where using these behavioral science and influence techniques in a way that is not transparent, maybe not true, and possibly even unethical. This has been a subject that I've been hearing about for years. Now, I think Harry Brignull coined the term "dark pattern" and had these deceptive website practices or, and not just website but any kind of marketing practices where they make it very easy to sign up for something but almost impossible to then figure out how to get out of having signed up for those ongoing payments.

But there was just recently a study I think done by Princeton scientists about analyzing thousands of websites at scale to look for dark patterns. Some of the things that they were talking about, they found a lot of websites were actually potentially legitimate influence tools, things like scarcity cues, that there is limited supply left, and there's certain number left, countdown timers, and how long until you get, can you still get next-day shipping, and then those kinds of things that really aren't deceptive even though they've been shown to encourage action.

But I do encounter as I'm sure you do too, Brian, sites that really overdo the, some of the travel sites where if you do a hotel search, you're going to find probably 10 queues on that page that somehow are invoking scarcity or social

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proof, that "52 people have booked this hotel in the last 24 hours" and "three people are looking at it right now" and "there's only two rooms left at this price," and the price trend is up and all these things that are drop by drop making you want to panic and immediately click that Book Now button for fear that you're going to miss this phenomenal deal.

I'm assuming that most of those are true, although sometimes I wonder if when there's only one room left if I book it, if the next day I come back, I'm not going to see that, "Oh, hey, they found another room with that same price. Well, that was lucky for them."

But what amazed me about this study was the researchers found that there are actually fake influence tools that you can buy that are like plugins for your eCommerce software that will create fake scarcity cues, like they'll show, "There's only two left," but it's around a random small number that have absolutely no basis in reality.

I guess I know that whenever I've seen Bob Cialdini talk, he always emphasizes, and of course, in his writings too, this stuff has to be ethical. Of course, your E in PEOPLE is ethical, but really, I found that shocking. I think the one thing we can draw from that maybe is that since people have found it useful to create tools that simulate these conditions that we know that these principles work in real life. That's like one more validation that actual scarcity can be a useful tool, but you don't want to lie about it.

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Brian Ahearn: Right. Well, it's interesting that you bring that up, Roger, because right now, I believe it's Expedia has a commercial that goes right to the heart of that where the spokesperson for Expedia is talking to somebody, and they say, "Yeah, I got the last room here, and it was only \$105," and somebody overhears them and said, "I got the last room. It was \$100," and he gets this look on his face, like, "What?" Then somebody else says, "What? I thought I got the last room, but I paid 120." Then the Expedia guys says something like, "I got it for \$85."

Then towards the end, he says, "Well, at least I got the last ticket to the football game for only \$200," something like that. Then all of a sudden, the other guys are going, "Wait a minute. I thought I got the last ticket." It's just a play on the fact that Expedia is trying to warn you, "Don't fall for that stuff."

Roger Dooley: Of course. If you go to Expedia's website, you're going to see some of those same techniques there.

Brian Ahearn: Yeah. Then the other thing to this point, Roger, where you said sometimes it's so over the top, but I would caution people that when it's really over the top, think about a magician where they do things to distract you so that something else can come in. You might say, "I'm not going to fall for that because it's so blatant," but you're not aware of what's happening because you're so focused on that other thing.

I do believe that's probably a strategy of many of those companies too. They continue to do it because, unfortunately, it works. I say unfortunately from the

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standpoint of it can deceive somebody and it can get what they want. That ends up hurting people like me and you and Cialdini and others who try to do things the legitimate way because you or I may present something, and it truly might be kind of end-of-the-line, it's scarce, and yet, people may resist it a little bit thinking that wool is going to be pulled over their eyes because it has been before.

Roger Dooley: Right. Yup. I do find one company that does that pretty well is Amazon because everything is not scarce there. Most things are not scarce, but when they are down to two in stock, they'll show you that little indicator there. I think that really does end up helping sell those last two items. But you really don't doubt Amazon. Amazon has a tremendous trust factor overall, and the fact that not everything has one of those limited indicators on it adds more credibility to it when you do see it.

Brian Ahearn: Yes. When you start to realize, like if you didn't buy and you went back the next day and you saw that it was gone, you'd realize, "Darn it, I missed that opportunity," and I think then you're going to have more trust for that particular site. But as you said, if you get what you think is the last room at that price, let's say it's \$125, and then the next day you go on and you see "last room at \$123," you're going to think, "Okay, they're just varying now. They had one room at 125, one at 123, one at 121," or something like that, and you realize they're just using trickery. They'll try to say, "No, I'm legitimate. There was a room at this price, this price, and this price," but you know, a dollar here, a dollar there is nothing.

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Roger Dooley: Yeah. Well, and sometimes it's just blatantly wrong. I remember a home automation company, they sold a relatively inexpensive gear that would control your lights and such. I don't believe they do this anymore, but when you visited their website, there was always this giant sale that was ending at midnight. This was like second-coming type on their website. "Offer expires," big countdown timer until midnight, and "these deals are going away," and everything, of course, was on what appeared to be on tremendous sale. The first time you go there, I'd say, "Wow, I really lucked into this," but if you go back the next day and you see the exact same thing, it's like, "Okay, these guys are not doing it right."

Brian Ahearn: That's where you may end up not shopping there at all just to resist that. I know that when I've heard Cialdini talk on interviews or you read his books, and he says, "If you think somebody is being deceptive in that, the only way that you can take action is with your feet and your wallet. You need to go somewhere else." Sometimes even if it means paying a little bit more but reward the company that's doing it the right way.

Roger Dooley: Right. I think that it's actually probably a pretty good practice because if a company is being deceptive, even a little bit deceptive in one area, and you can see that, that immediately is going to drop your trust in that company, and you're going to assume that if you have a problem with your purchase that maybe they're not going to be quite as welcoming to you as some other company that you think is operating in 100% ethical way. They may end up sticking you for some extra charges or not taking it

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back or not honoring their warranty or whatever the case might be.

But, Brian, one thing I did say, you talked about where you go back and the item is available, one way that I've seen a few companies get around that sort of perception that things are in perpetual short supply where presumably they really are in short supply is they will leave some items on their website with a big "sold out" indicator just to show you that, "When we say that this is in limited supply or there's only five left, we really mean it because look at this other stuff here that sold out." Now, again, I'm assuming they're doing that in an honest way and not just sticking up some random sold-out products there to convince you that they're telling the truth.

Brian Ahearn: Again, if it's legitimate, then kudos for them because they're giving you a tangible indicator that what they were saying before is true. But if they're not, like you say, then you're no better off. They're still trying to trick you to get you to do something down the road.

These principles and things beyond these principles in psychology, like anything in life, can be used for good and can be used for bad. When I interact with people, one of the things I try to emphasize very early on is how important the principle of liking is, and not that I try to get you to like me, Roger, but that I truly try to come to like you. If you had more people in the world who were looking at others and saying, "I want to like my customers, vendors, the people that I work with," well, most people naturally assume friends do right by friends, so if you see that I truly like you, you're more open to what I may ask,

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and the reality is, because I like you, I would never take advantage of you.

That's where we need to get people thinking about these principles on a personal level so that manipulation is taken off of the table. I come to like you. I want to do what's right by you. Everything else gets naturally easier.

Roger Dooley: Boy, Brian, we could go on and on and talk about this stuff all day and geek out on it, but we don't really have time to do that. But I really encourage our listeners to check out the book Influence PEOPLE simply because it is packed full of little nuggets, just like the post-it note story. That is one of many, many useful tips and anecdotes in there. I think people who enjoyed my book Brainfluence will certainly enjoy Influence PEOPLE as well.

Let me remind everyone that today we are speaking with influence expert Brian Ahearn, author of the new book Influence PEOPLE: Powerful Everyday Opportunities to Persuade that are Lasting and Ethical. Brian, where can people find you and your ideas?

Brian Ahearn: Well, if people want to reach out to me on LinkedIn, I'm always willing to accept. If you don't put a note in there like, "Hey, I heard you on Roger Dooley's podcast," expect that you'll get a message from me asking, "How did you come across my profile?" My website is influencepeople.biz, and if people go out there, there's all kinds of resources. I've been blogging for more than 10 years. I've been guest on podcasts, and so I list those and links to those videos and certainly the book, but they can

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also go to places like barnesandnoble.com, amazon.com, and just type in "Influence PEOPLE Brian Ahearn," and it should pop up. I would appreciate it if people buy it to shoot me a message on LinkedIn and let me know what you think about it.

Roger Dooley: Great. Well, we will link to those places and to any other resources we spoke about on the show notes page at [rogerdooley.com/podcast](http://rogerdooley.com/podcast). We'll have a handy text version there too. Brian, thanks for being on the show, and good luck with the book.

Brian Ahearn: Thank you very much, Roger. I really appreciate it.

Thank you for tuning into this episode of Brainfluence. To find more episodes like this one, and to access all of Roger's online writing and resources, the best starting point is [RogerDooley.com](http://RogerDooley.com).

And remember, Roger's new book, *Friction*, is now available at Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and book sellers everywhere. Bestselling author Dan Pink calls it, "An important read," and Wharton Professor Dr. Joana Berger said, "You'll understand Friction's power and how to harness it."

For more information or for links to Amazon and other sellers, go to [RogerDooley.com/Friction](http://RogerDooley.com/Friction).

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