

**MESSENGERS  
OF PEACE**

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A C A D E M Y



**OPERATION SALAM**  
**DA'WAH IN THE DIGITAL AGE**

# **Module Seven: Da'wah Techniques**

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## In this module

- Learn how to change behaviour
- Learn how to build rapport
- Learn how to disarm people
- Learn how to deal with contentions

## Unit One: Goals of Your Da'wah

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### Determining the Goals of Your Da'wah

Not having clear goals or objectives will confuse your organization and confuse your team. When it is written and you are aware of it, no one can bring you off track.

Look at the following things:

- Identify your target audience.
- Do you have a long-term or short-term goal?
- What resources are available.
- Are you bringing awareness to an issue or do you want people to accept Islam?
- Are you trying to build bridges and establish rapport?
- Consider your reputation. If you want to do community events, then ensure your reputation with the community is good.

## **For the Sake of Da'wah**

- “We’ll take an interest loan from the bank to build the masjid”
- “The money I earn from selling liquor will go to the masjid”
- “I talk to a lot of girls, but only to bring them to Islam!”
- “I entered the nightclub for the sake of da'wah!”

The best interest of da'wah is to always adhere to the pillars and principles the da'wah is founded upon. Compromises are not made when it comes to fundamental issues. Sometimes, compromises can be made on issues of lesser importance based on the needs of time and place, but that is left to the scholars.

**Rule: The ends do not justify the means.**

Machiavelli is the one who popularized this idea from his evil book “The Prince,” which unfortunately affects much of the Western world.

“Verily, Allah is good and only accepts that which is good.” [Muslim]

Remember: As a caller, you prepare your arguments and analogies, study your religion, understand human psychology and understand all the theoretical aspects of giving da'wah, but if you don't prepare your manners and intentions first, you are still grossly unprepared.

## **Understanding Yourself**

Before you understand others, you need to understand yourself. You need to know what your strong points are and use them to your advantage. Be aware of your weaknesses and figure out how to improve.

People are of different types – some are introverts, some are extroverts. We have to understand ourselves and what type we are.

It doesn't mean that extroverts are good and friendly, and introverts are hermits or anti-social. They are just two different approaches people take when interacting with others. There is nothing "good" or "bad" with either approach.

What does this have to do with da'wah? If you understand yourself, you will understand where others are coming from. For example, extroverts like to solve problems immediately, while introverts like to plan, think, discuss, solve problems over time. The extrovert may see this as lack of interest or cowardice, unless they understand the way introverts work. This may happen with a husband and wife, and they must know how the other works in order to not misunderstand their actions and how they deal with things.

We're learning this because it gives us an edge with dealing with people. It helps us understand attitudes of people and will lead to better da'wah and interaction. If we pay a little more attention and try to read expressions, if we use a little more effort to read people, if we try to understand why people phrase things in certain ways or use certain words, we can go far in da'wah.

### **Beware of Being Extreme**

How do we determine what is being extreme and what is being moderate? There are two extremes in any belief system, and there is a middle. In Islam, who is in the middle? The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ). Doing more than what he did is moving towards one extreme, and doing less than what he did is moving towards the other extreme.

We often forget about the "negative" extreme. If the first brother becomes religious, while the second is going to night clubs/drinking/hanging out with girls, the parents may call the first extreme and ignore the second. In reality, the first is moving towards moderation, while the second is in the negative extreme of not practicing his religion.

Often, parents tell their children to be average in religion – do the basic deeds and no more than that, just getting by. But they would never say that about worldly matters, so why settle for less than excellence in the religion? Why settle for average in religion, and push for excellence in the worldly matters only?

“O people of the scripture, do not commit excess in your religion or say about Allah except the truth...” (Qur’an, 4:171)

“The extremists are destroyed, the extremists are destroyed, the extremists are destroyed.” (Muslim)

### **Partisanship**

Nothing cripples da’wah more than partisanship. Having an Amir (leader) and organization is not a problem. The problem lies in making loyalties dependent upon the group and ruining the brotherhood between Muslims because of that extreme and un-Islamic loyalty. Oftentimes you will see the members of a certain group attacking Muslims, or not working with them, for no reason other than those Muslims are not members of their group. This is extremely detrimental to our work and to da’wah.

Our loyalty is to Islam and Muslims first, then to whatever groups we choose to work in. We must understand that there are priorities, and that we must have tolerance in our work.

Even in ‘aqidah issues, the people of the Sunnah are tolerant and work with others. There are often experts in various fields who many not agree with us on everything, and that shouldn’t prevent us from working with them in those specific areas that they are the ideal person to lead.

The areas we disagree on are clear, and those that we agree on are clear. So in the areas that we agree with others on, we should work with them.

## **Opposite Gender**

Many times the da'wah begins sincere and then turns sour when emotions develop. Sufyān Al-Thawri said, "I would not be alone with a woman even if teaching her the Qur'ān."

There are some situations that this is unavoidable. For example, a man comes up to a sister on the street and asks her why she covers her hair. As long as it is in public, and the conversation is limited to answering his question and then referring him to some brothers to answer any other questions, then this is fine. But if the conversation leaves these bounds, that is a problem.

What about public da'wah tables? If a woman comes to the brothers, they are polite and bring her over to the sisters to continue the conversation. The same should be done by the sisters when men come to the booth.

## **Disagreements**

Many times, people split over the smallest issues. They start their own mosques based on some minor issue. If we disagree on the fundamentals of the religion, that is different. Those people are free to go start their own thing. Of course, this is after an effort is made to reform and teach the people – if they still stick to their incorrect beliefs, this is a major issue, and is a valid cause for separation.

Apart from differences in the fundamentals of religion, other issues can be politely debated and even compromised over, in order to maintain unity and keep the group together.

## **Bid'ah**

Is what you are doing changing the way we worship Allah? Was it something done by the Prophet? If not, was there a reason why he didn't do it? or was there no reason?

A bid'ah is an innovated way in the religion that adds to our worship or changes the way we worship, and there was nothing stopping the Prophet (peace and blessings be upon him,) from doing that.

### **Making Things Difficult**

“Make things easy and do not make things difficult, give the good news and do not turn people away.” (Sahih Al-Bukhāri)

Some people become religious and make everything haraam on themselves and on others. This does not make you religious.

We are easy and polite with people even when correcting them from things that are clearly haraam – so what about things that are permissible and allowable for people? We should be even easier and lax with these issues, since there is nothing wrong in them.

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## **Unit Two: Obstacles faced by the Caller**

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### **Expecting instant results.**

For some, when they don't see instant results, they feel discouraged and may even quit. Sometimes, the results show up years later, and many times, you will not even see the fruit of our work at all. Some people are given da'wah, and it doesn't affect them for years. But then something happens and they remember your da'wah, and may become better after that.

While some may not accept Islam from your words, perhaps they become closer and even defend Islam from its attackers. Allah gives guidance to the religion to whom He wills, not to whom you want to become Muslim necessarily.

The idea here is that if something will make you more effective and credible as a caller, use it as long as it is not haram or deceptive.

### **Smiling**

The number one tactic for making a good first impression is smiling. By smiling you achieve four important things:

1. It conveys confidence: People who are nervous and unsure of themselves typically do not smile.
2. It conveys happiness: Humans are naturally drawn to people who are happy.
3. It conveys enthusiasm: It shows you are glad to be there and to meet your prospect, and this in turn makes them pleased to meet you.
4. It conveys acceptance: It lets your prospect know that you are unconditionally accepting of who they are.

## **Use simple words and be straightforward.**

Use simple language everyone understands. If you try to use big words, you will only attract a specific crowd and you will lose the lay people.

Find out the beliefs and obstacles of the person you are talking to. Assess where they are spiritually and their knowledge. Tailor your talk based on that knowledge

Always get the person's name when giving da'wah, but it would be useless to get the name if you don't do the following two things:

1. Remember the name.
2. Use the name.

Using someone's name makes the da'wah very personal. You don't want to sound like you are reading a script; you want to be calling that specific individual to Allah.

## **Changing Styles**

Have different methods and techniques of affecting people. Nuh called his people at different times and places; by night and by day, in secret and in public. The Qur'an also uses different methods.

## **The Primacy Effect**

It is the process whereby your first impression of another person causes you to interpret the rest of their behavior in light of that initial opinion. Everything you do will be seen through the lens of the first impression. If someone's first impression of you is good then everything else they see of you will be considered good.

Consider this list of words:

- A. Cold person, industrious, critical, practical, and determined.
- B. Warm person, industrious, critical, practical, and determined.

A study showed that people had a harsher perception of person A than person B. The rest of the words are the same, but they were evaluated through the lens or the impression they got from the first word.

## **Change**

Is it possible for someone to change their personality, character or manners or are they things that you've been created with and cannot change? What you have to your advantage as a caller is that everyone wants to change. When change is welcomed and planned, it can be a fairly easy process provided there are no obstacles involved.

However, despite the desire to improve, we sometimes encounter people who refuse to change. This could be due to certain obstacles.

Obstacles to Change:

1. The individual may not be aware of the fact that they need to change. To you the person's flaw may seem obvious because you view it objectively. Understand that what you see as obvious may not be obvious to them.
2. Staying the same is easier. Many emotional habits are formed early in life. It takes a long time to "perfect" them, so even a simple change may not always be easy.
3. Staying the same is more beneficial. Sometimes an individual may be aware of their bad habit yet still refuse to change. This occurs when the person perceives that the "payoff" for staying the same is higher than the benefit of changing.

4. The person may not know what to change. The individual may be aware that they need to change but does not know what he or she needs to change. That's why they say, "knowing what to change is the beginning of wisdom."

5. They may not have proper resources. Resources play a great role in the changes that we need to make. Can you see how resources can affect changes related to our health, education and financial goals? Like money for gym, healthy food, some may be constrained due to time, family responsibilities etc.

6. External shackles: External shackles are those that people or society place upon us, such as someone who wants to pursue a certain career, but their father wants them to take over the family business.

7. Self – imposed shackles: Self-imposed shackles are those that we place upon ourselves, and they stop us from moving forward. Examples are laziness, procrastination and excessive guilt.

8. Learned helplessness: When a person feels they are not in control so they might as well give up, or when their actions are perceived to not influence outcomes.

9. Linking the change to a sign or an event: for non-Muslims, this involves waiting for a sign, divine or otherwise, to tell them to make the necessary change. Someone may agree with you on every creedal point but is waiting for sign. When you find a person who was interested in Islam for a while, ask how long?

## **COGNITIVE DISSONANCE THEORY**

Cognitive dissonance is the discomfort felt when there is a difference between: What you believe and how you behave. What you already know or believe and new information or interpretation. To reduce this discomfort, one of the following may occur:

Changing the action

Changing the belief/attitude  
Justifying, blaming and denying  
Criticizing the item  
Convincing yourself, “it won’t happen to me.”

Examine the following with regards to cognitive dissonance theory:

Buyers’ Remorse (post dissonance): after buying something you feel it’s expensive -- then you convince yourself that I need it, it’s useful, it’s better quality, etc in order to feel less guilty.

Hazing is ritual one goes through to be part of group or fraternity -- you are doing things out of the ordinary and you explain to yourself that I care about this group and therefore am ready to go through these ridiculous rituals.

Basically, it’s like the story of the fox and the grapes, where, when he could not reach the grapes, he walked away saying, “They are sour in any case.”

Other things that are related to Cognitive Dissonance Theory:

Effort justification: where working for something (or paying more) causes someone to like it more.

Selective attention: when you only pay attention to what is consistent with what you believe.

Selective interpretation: only interpreting information consistent with your beliefs.

Selective retention: you only remember information consistent with your beliefs.

The more obscure and convoluted the subject, the more profound it must be.

## Reciprocity

Reciprocity is a basic norm of human culture. It is when a person tries to repay what another has provided. When someone yells at you, you yell back! In negative behavior, don't give others the ability to manipulate you.

E.g. A salesperson spends a lot of time explaining a product to you, so you feel need to buy it.

THERE ARE NO HARD AND FAST RULES FOR DA'WAH -- these are suggestions and you must be wise to understand the circumstances.

Your approach depends on many factors including the individual, time and place. The caller has to be malleable and flexible.

What if someone is being rude, arrogant or argumentative? Don't reciprocate! Try to disarm them using the following phrases: "We're only here to share our beliefs with you."

Explain how understanding each other leads to peaceful co-existence and mutual understanding.

"I'm not here to argue with you."

If you tell someone "I'm not here to argue," you will almost never get the response, "well, I am!"

But if you do get that response, then simply tell them that that is not conducive to finding the truth. If they still insist you have the following options:

1. Highlight the seriousness of the situation (maybe they are not aware of rewards and punishments).

2. Ignore the argumentation and speak gently; they might do the same.

3. Begin to wrap up the discussion because you can't move forward.

### **How do you calm down an angry person?**

Use the rule of Reciprocity. Just remain calm and friendly and in a few minutes the person will reciprocate! You can ask the person why they are angry.

### **Your Approach**

For the most part there are no hard and fast rules with da'wah, and there is no magic wand. The approach you use depends on many factors including the individual, the time and place.

### **The Art of Disarming**

Research has shown that if people like you, you are more likely to get a "yes" out of them.

What makes people like you?

Jokes: It's hard for someone to be angry with you if you are making them laugh.

Gifts: not only is it hard to be angry with someone who has just given you a gift, but you also feel the need to reciprocate.

Praise: we all like people who praise us and have a good opinion of us.

Similarities: we naturally like people who are similar to us.

Good manners: it's hard to dislike a well-mannered person.

## Unit Three: Da'wah Methods

Allah uses different methods of da'wah so you should use all these varied methods. When Allah mentions an issue in the Qur'an, He will prove it and get people to act upon it using many different methods. Sometimes:

He gives a direct order.

He mentions the benefits of doing it.

He mentions the consequences or harm of leaving it.

He mentions the rewards and punishments.

He uses stories and analogies.

### Logic vs. Emotion

Which do people use more – logic or emotion?

Does the Qur'an use more logical arguments or more emotional arguments?

It is said that people use emotion to make 90% of their decisions and then use logic to justify them. So which is the more powerful da'wah tool, logic or emotion? How do you make decisions?

The two are connected.

Paradise and hellfire – it's both logic and emotions

Logic and emotion are actually linked! Can you think of any emotion that you get for no reason? The answer is "NO"! The reason behind the emotion is the logic. All the sentences below are logical and factual, but they illicit an emotion!

"Your mother passed away."

"I divorce you!"

And so on and so forth.



Tears don't roll down for no reason; something has to cause the emotion.

### **Getting People to think**

A study showed that if you ask people for 37 cents, you greatly increase your chances of getting that than if you ask for a quarter (25 cents). The reason is that people are used to being asked for a quarter so they automatically say 'NO' without thinking. But when asked for a specific and peculiar number like 37, it gets them to stop and think.

The whole point is to get people's minds to work! Consider the difference between the following phrases when handing out materials:

Would you like some reading material?

What is the most important thing in life?

Make sure you read this important message before you die ( or before you throw it away)!

The last two will get people to think and increase the percentage of people who will agree to take what you are distributing.

By the same token, if your meeting starts at 8:57 instead of 9:00, the odd timing will make your attendees pay more attention to arriving on time. When you tell people the meeting is at 9:00, they assume it won't start until 9:10.

### **Answering Questions**

Whether you are giving da'wah to Muslims or non Muslims, you will most likely be asked many questions. Some questions deserve to be answered, but sometimes you need to correct the question before you answer it. The way a question is phrased can be your insight as to what misconceptions they have about an issue. Consider the following questions:

1. Why does god need us to worship Him?
2. Can God create a four sided triangle?
3. An atheist asks, “What is it about the Qur’an that makes you so sure there is a God?”

No matter how well you answer question number one, you will always be affirming that God needs us to worship Him. You need to fix the question first before you proceed. The rule is :

“Do not immediately accept the person’s premise, or you may be at a disadvantage.”

### **Ways of Answering Questions:**

1. The flip-side of the argument: by getting them to think of what the opposite of their argument means, you get them to understand why their question is incorrect.
  - a. Why do Muslims grow their beards? Why do you grow beard? Ask why you should not? Why don't you? Why do you shave? It's natural for men to grow facial hair.
  - b. Why are Muslim women covered? We are born naked so why do you wear clothes? Modesty. So Muslims are more modest. Nudity as sign of liberation. So are you not fully liberated then since you still have some clothes on?
2. Using facts: many statements are factually and historically inaccurate. Use facts to refute claims and answer questions. always keep your statistics updated , how many died in all the wars? Homicide. Money,
  - a. More people die because of religion than anything else on earth.
  - b. Why do you cut the hand of the thief? - Is prison the best solution to all crimes? 374% of the budget is spent on prisons and 74% for education. There is no deterrent and proper rehabilitation for prisoners, so they end up in jail frequent visitors. 2009 1.3 million violent crimes in USA

3. Always start with the simplest explanation first: if that works, then move on to your main topic. If not, give a more detailed or sophisticated answer as the situation necessitates.

4. Explain the concept and the purpose: sometimes it's hard to understand the details without the bigger picture. Make sure you explain the reasons and wisdoms before you proceed.

a. How could your Prophet ride on a winged horse? They are referring to al-Israa wal-Mi'raj. They ask about Jibreel opening chest heart of prophet? Why can it not be possible when humans can do it so why not Allah?

The bigger picture is belief in Allah and His Asmaa and Sifaat, and consequences of disobeying Him.

b. Why doesn't God appear to us and address us directly? When the unseen becomes seen then it's too late the door of repentance are closed

c. If god is capable of doing anything, why can't he beget a son if He wants to? It's not befitting His majesty. Do you think of priests having family?

5. Use analogies to explain issues and concepts. If the person still doesn't understand, use a simpler analogy.

a. If God is good, why does He allow so much evil on earth?

The analogy of parents and children; two students good and bad one passes to next class and other does not. We don't attribute evil to Allah – it's due to our sins - clear glass cannot be dark by itself. How do you explain natural disaster? Tests and trials for all believers and non-believers, they result from sins and lessens the barakah in life.

b. Is there a God? How did the 96% of earth population believe in God; how did they know? God would have announced himself.

c. There is only one life and no resurrection. How would you describe the Creator if there is one? He has to be absolutely Just. Even a child also understands retribution, if the table hits him, he stops crying when mother hits the bad table, honey guide bird in Africa guides you to honey with the deal that you leave some honey for it.

In Christianity, everyone is saved but if you're rewarded whether or not you're good, what's to stop you from being good? If God is all forgiving then what's to stop you from sinning.

d. Why should I pray if my final destination is written? -e.g. your teacher knows you are a good student and getting A but you still have to sit for exam.

Your sustenance is written for you so why do you need salary check and work?

A teacher knows his students well and can predict how much will they get in their grades but you are not forced to get the grades predicted by teacher - Allah knows perfectly our final grades -- but we still have to take the test

6. Use stories: either use a story that has a moral that fits your discussion or a story that tells of a similar situation.

### **Rapport - relationships you establish with someone**

Sometimes you want to call someone to Islam or give a Muslim advice but because this is your first time meeting the person, you feel that it might be too abrupt. This is a time when rapport could come in handy. Rapport is establishing a relationship or connection with an individual, especially one that is harmonious or sympathetic. Emotional Mirroring: show the same emotions as the person you are talking to.

How would you feel if you were conveying exciting news to a friend and they responded to you in a bored tone? Or what if you are telling them about something bad that happened and they respond with a happy tone? Most likely you would feel that they are not connecting with you or not being sympathetic. When someone reacts accordingly, that is known as emotional mirroring.

Commonality – birds of feather flock together

Finding something in common with a person through shared interests, dislikes or situations to build acceptance.

When using rapport, remember the following points:

1. Rapport is only a suggested da'wah method that might be suited for some situations. Some people respond better to straightforward advice, or perhaps you may not get a chance to see the person again in which case rapport would not be a good method.
2. Don't make your da'wah just rapport in the sense that all you do is talk about the weather in anticipation for a day ( which never comes) when you finally start to give da'wah

Bear in mind that some cultures do not receive straightforward speech very well if it's not preceded by an allusion or an introduction to the topic. One way to get this to work is to simply announce to them that you are going to be very straightforward with them. This prepares them mentally, so they are less likely to be offended or turned off by you.

Keep being direct and you might be surprised that as your conversation progresses, they might end up reciprocating and speaking just like you!.

## Changing Behavior, Changing Minds

### Changing Someone's Mind:

1. Give additional information before you ask someone to reconsider.
2. Change his/her physical position. Many times if the body is fixed then the mind is fixed.
3. Reciprocal persuasion: if you allow them to change their mind, they will allow you to change theirs.
4. Let them be responsible for the idea
5. Start from common points.

They say if there are 99 differences between you and someone and only one thing you have in common, you start with the one thing you have in common. This works on a religious and a worldly level.

Have you ever become friends with a complete stranger in a matter of minutes because of a shared interest? It could be sports, fishing, or cars that bring two people to start talking as if they've known each other for years. You can use common interests in worldly affairs to establish rapport or use the same concept as a starting point in religious discussion.

Contemplate the following ayah:

“And do not argue with the People of the Scripture except in a way that is best, except for those who commit injustice among them, and say, 'we believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you. And our God and your God is one and we are Muslims in submission to Him.” (Qur'an, 29:46)

Notice how the verse acknowledges what was revealed to them as well as our shared belief in Allah. Some people are so amazed to discover that Muslims, Christians and Jews believe in the same God, have the same names of prophets, angels and even geographical locations. Don't assume that everyone knows this information!

If we start from a point we agree upon, it will make it easier to move forward and possibly remove the debate element from our conversation.

### **The Tools and Techniques to Change People**

The following are psychological strategies (tools) to get people to change their behavior.

Think highly of the individual(s) and respect their intelligence,

Re-adjust their goals.

Make them feel that the problem is easy to fix and the change is easy to achieve.

Start with a simple change and use it to get the person moving in the right direction.

Allow them to set their own goals, objectives or solutions.

Ask them to advise or assist someone with a problem similar to theirs.

Get them to feel that the new way is a continuation of their thinking and not a departure from it ( humans have a need for order and consistency).

Show enthusiasm (it's contagious)

### **Case Study:**

A divorced woman is starting to become depressed. One possible way to stop her from the downward spiral is to ask for her help with an issue or get her to do something for you ( or for someone else) e.g. distribute food for the needy, help out a family with an issue, etc., what this will do for her is:

1. Make her feel trusted
2. Give her a chance to contribute and feel self- reliant
3. Giving to others make her feel independent and important
4. You take the focus off her problems
5. She will spend less time consumed with herself so less energy is left for negativity.

### **Channelling Thoughts**

When inviting someone to Islam, your main talking point is tawhid. If people don't know about Allah and the rights He has upon us, they will find it difficult to understand the finer points in Islam. This was also the advice of the Prophet (ﷺ) to Muadh b. Jabal (رضي الله عنه) when he sent him to Yemen he advised:

“Let the first thing that you call them to be the testimony that none has the right to be worshipped but Allah and I am Allah’s Messenger, and if they obey you in that, then teach them that Allah has enjoined on them five prayers in every day and night, and if they obey you in that ,the teach them that Allah has made it obligatory for them to pay the zakah from their property and it is to be taken from the wealthy among them and given to the poor.”

The other benefit of beginning with tawhid is that it is the gateway to processing other information.

Consider memorizing the following bunch of words:

Effort, al Duri, the, Abdul ghaffur, recitation, great, put, Qur'an, into, in, of and memorizing.

To memorize or even understand these words will take much more effort than if you arrange them in an organized and logical manner, consider the same words now:



'Abdul Ghaffur put great effort into memorizing Qur'an in the recitation of AlDuri.

The same happens when you are inviting someone to Islam; many people think the idea is to throw lots of information at people and hopefully some of it will stick. Wrong! The idea is to get them to see the logic, wisdoms, benefits and reasons why they should obey Allah. Look at how belief in Allah is the first foundation that you build upon.

You approach a total stranger in the street, where do you begin? (ask close ended questions, otherwise you will get nowhere) The first thing is to find out if he believes in a Creator or not. If he doesn't believe in a Creator, you can't move forward, your only task is to prove the existence of Allah.

If he does believe in a Creator, then you can move on to the next step: the Prophets, the logical connection is this:

1. If there is a Creator, he must have announced His presence to mankind.
2. It logically follows that He would choose humans to convey the message to other humans and not any other created being.
3. It also follows that since this Creator is fair and just, he will not punish people without sending them a prophet who will inform them about Allah and teach them right from wrong.

Another method is to agree on a premise from which your discussion will begin and/or the method you will use. Suppose you are about to sit down with an atheist prove to him that there is a God. Many atheists, especially those who grew up in predominantly Christian societies, will ask you if your proof will rely on 'faith'. By this, they are asking if they will just have to blindly believe or if you will show them something to make them believe.

## **Explain the concept / logic**

The gap between what is logically possible and what you believe to be the truth is smaller you think. If someone is willing to accept that it is logically possible that God sent the Prophet then it is probable that

Have you ever had a discussion with someone and every time you explain your point they repeat their same argument to you over and over again?

What they are really telling you is, 'I don't think you understood my point.' That's why they keep repeating it to you. One way to get them to stop repeating themselves is to let them know that you have understood. How do you do that? Rephrase their argument and say it back to them! They will now feel relieved that you have heard them, and they will stop repeating that argument.

When you use the phrase "logically possible," you are drawing the gap between you and the other person. Another beauty of this phrase is that you are not asking, "is this what you believe?" and you are not asking them to believe in it (at least not yet).

One more beauty of this phrase: it is almost impossible to respond to with a "NO"! Why? Because if Allah wanted, he could have sent Jesus as His messenger and not His son, and He could have sent Muhammad after Jesus if He wanted. There is nothing to stop Him from doing it!

## **Thinking outside the Box: fixing the Mindset - unbiased look**

Why would someone believe in transmigration?

Why would an intelligent person believe in three gods that are one?

How can someone worship a god that they built with their own hands?

Unless someone steps outside of their box they will not see what is wrong with their belief system. Your task is to get them to step out of their box and take an analytical and unbiased look at their religion or beliefs.

This was a method used by the Prophet Ibrahim (peace be upon him) in the following verse:

“They said, ‘have you done this to our gods, O Abraham?’ he said, ‘rather, this – the largest of them – did it, so ask them, if they should [be able to speak].’ So they returned to [blaming] themselves (step outside the box) and said [to each other], ‘indeed you are the wrongdoers.’ Then they reversed themselves, [saying] ‘you have already known that these do not speak!’ he said, “then do you worship instead of Allah that which does not benefit you at all or harm you? Uff to you and to what you worship instead of Allah. Then will you not use reason?” they said. ‘burn him and support your fods – if you are to act.” [Qur’an, 21:62-68].

### **Learn to Quantify!**

You can’t tackle a statement if you can’t quantify it. Someone refuses to accept Islam and tells you ‘I’m satisfied with being a Christian.’ You can’t tackle the fact that he’s satisfied, so get them to quantify what makes them satisfied. Ask:

What is it about Christianity that makes you pleased or satisfied?

If they say, “the fact that I am without sins! Because Jesus died for our sins!”

Now that they have quantified what makes them ,satisfied,’ you can pick it apart.

Your point of discussion now is if Jesus really died for their sins.

### **Low Point / High Point**

Have you ever been approached by a missionary or someone who wanted to call you to his/her faith while at the same time you wanted to call them to Islam? What factors will determine who gives the da’wah? One way is to present them with a difficult question or ask about a concept that they can’t explain. When they are temporarily quieted down, present them with Islam.

He is trying to call you to his faith, so in his mind he is the inviter and you are the 'invited'. When he asks if you have heard of their church, ask about their belief in God. They believe that God used to be a human that lived on earth and then went to heaven and became a God, and they will go to heaven to become Gods as well. Their 'prophet' Joseph Smith said this about God:

“God himself was once as we are now, and is an exalted Man,.. it is the first principle of the gospel to know for a certainty the character of God and to know.. that he was once a man like us.. and you have got to learn how to become Gods yourselves.. God himself, the father of us all dwelt on an earth the same as Jesus Christ.” ( Teachings of the Prophet Joseph Smith, 342-345)

The same approach can be used with the Trinity. After asking some difficult questions they will have to admit that no one truly understands the concept. At this point you come in with the simpler more digestible concept of Tawhid.

The analogy used for trinity “water/ice/vapor” is wrong since this shows the concept of one in three forms whereas the Christians believe that there are three different entities who are coequal in Lordship(divinity). Similarly the analogy of egg white/yolk/shell = is also false since individually none of them can be identified as egg; when they're separate they're separate.

### **STRONG POINTS...**

If you don't know anything about your prospect's religion, just talk about Islam. If someone has sand in their hand and you attack it, they hold on to it and defend it, but if you don't mention the sand and show them a diamond that you have in your hand they will slowly put their hand behind their back and let the sand fall to the ground!

## **The Golden Rules**

Although we said there are no hard and fast rules in da'wah, there are two golden rules that are essential when calling a non-Muslim to Islam. These two rules might be the difference between your success and failure.

### **The First Golden Rule: GO FOR THE GOLD!**

'Going for the gold' means asking for the shahadah. When?

- 1) After you have explained all of the fundamentals of Islam and the person has no objection to any of them,
- 2) The next rational point is to ask them to become a Muslim. It would make no sense to get someone to agree with the most important points in Islam and not ask them to become a Muslim.

Can you think of one instance where the Prophet went to call people to Islam and then spoke to them but didn't call them to enter Islam? NEVER.

Calling someone to Islam without inviting them to accept Islam is paradoxical!

People generally like to keep their old ways. If you don't motivate them and ask them to change, chances are they won't.

- What are the benefits of going for the gold even if you're sure the person won't accept Islam right now? The result may not be instantaneous, maybe there is a time lag. We put our best effort and leave the results upon Allah. There is difference between effective da'wah and successful da'wah.

### **The Second Golden Rule : CREATE THE SENSE OF URGENCY!**

Used for both Muslims and non-Muslims.

This is not equivalent to pressuring/deceiving/manipulating.

Why is creating an urgency important?

People are busy in life and many things are competing for their attention. If you don't get them to take some form of action, you may never see them again. Shaytan plays tricks on them.

Many people think they have forever to think their decision over and consider Islam, but the truth is, if there is no urgency to make the decision right away, they will probably forget about it or die before they look into it; hence the importance of creating the urgency.

This was the method the Prophet used with Abu Sufyan ( in the tent at the time of conquest of Mecca, he was given amnesty by Ibn Abbas, before he met the Prophet (ﷺ), and the Prophet gave protection to those who enter his house, thus there was no pressure on him) 'Uqbah b. Abi Mu'it (the Prophet refused to eat till he takes shahadah but later went back on it and spit on the face of the prophet) and Thumamah ibn Uthal, Umar ibn al Khattab, Abu Taalib, and many others.

Urgency is:

Why now? If you are convinced with the important beliefs and pillars of Islam then don't waste time. Since death is ever near to all.

What happens if not now? May never get another chance.

What are the reasons people hesitate or need more time? – fear of unknown, family, social peer pressure.

Perhaps they:

Need to think about it some more.  
Need to do more reading.  
Just like to take their time.  
Don't feel the need to change.  
Still have issues/ misconceptions.  
Need approval of a family member.

Find out what the obstacle is by asking questions.

“Are there any issues causing you discomfort?”  
“What is stopping you from becoming a Muslim right now?”

Finally, tell the person to not procrastinate and possibly set some kind of date or deadline.

Then go for the gold again!

### **Walking away**

When do I walk away?

In general, it is not good to give up quickly when giving da'wah. We have seen people who, within the same da'wah talk, went from ridiculing the message in the beginning to accepting Islam a few minutes later, if those du'at had given up and left their prospects, the message wouldn't have reached them.

However, there are clear indications as to when you should probably walk away. For instance, when the person you are calling is drunk or intoxicated or if they are insane. Another scenario might be if the person doesn't want to listen to you and is only there to argue. In this case, it might make sense to leave, but do attempt to change their argumentative attitude before you give up.

There is no limit to the number of times you can give a person advice; you can keep reminding the person until they respond positively.



### **Questions for critical reflection**

1. When giving da'wah you are ultimately calling the person to his/her Creator and Sustainer. You want the person to enter Paradise and have a successful life. Your high purpose should be demonstrated in your speech and actions.
2. Reflect on the da'wah of the Prophets and you will realise the importance of prayer and asking Allah for help and assistance. Whilst implementing all the different techniques, don't forget ultimately it is Allah who we should turn to.
3. Shaytan hates it when you give da'wah. If he cannot prevent you from giving da'wah, then he will look at ways to corrupt your intention, or divide your team.

### **Summary**

- ✓ You must have a clear goal in your da'wah.
- ✓ Rapport is important when giving da'wah.
- ✓ Don't lose heart if you don't see instant result.