CHAPTER SEVEN

some people but not others. Research on self-monitoring and persuasion illustrates the value of varying message content according to the intended audience. As discussed in Chapter 5, high self-monitors are attuned to the social appropriateness of their behavior and strive to cultivate a desirable public identity in social settings. Low self-monitors, in contrast, regard themselves as highly principled people who strive to remain true to themselves in social situations (see M. Snyder, 1979, 1987, for reviews).

M. Snyder and DeBono (1985) examined how these differences influence people’s reactions to persuasive appeals. In one of their studies, participants heard one of two descriptions of a shampoo. An image-oriented description emphasized that the shampoo makes your hair look great; a quality-oriented description emphasized that the shampoo excels at cleaning your hair. The participants then indicated how interested they were in using the shampoo. Because high self-monitors are highly concerned with their social image, Snyder and DeBono hypothesized that they would be more influenced by the image-laden description than by the quality-oriented ad. The reverse pattern was predicted for low self-monitors, who value substance over style. Figure 7.3 reveals strong support for these predictions. High self-monitors were more willing to try the shampoo when they believed it would leave their hair looking great, but low self-monitors were more willing to try the shampoo when they believed it would leave their hair healthy and clean (see also DeBono, 1987; DeBono & Harnish, 1988; DeBono & Packer, 1991).

Culture and Message Content. The effectiveness of a message also depends on the cultural context. In one study, Han and Shavitt (1994) analyzed magazine ads in America (an individualist culture) and Korea (a collectivistic culture). As expected,

![Figure 7.3](image)

**FIGURE 7.3**
Self-Monitoring, Message Content, and Persuasibility

Participants heard one of two advertisements for a shampoo. One of the advertisements was very image-oriented (”Using this shampoo will leave your hair looking great”), and the other emphasized the shampoo’s quality (”Using this shampoo will give you healthy hair”). As expected, image-conscious high self-monitors were more influenced by the image-oriented advertisement, but value-conscious low self-monitors were more influenced by the advertisement that focused on the product’s quality.

Source: M. Snyder and DeBono (1985).