

Scenario: The Jury

A local politician has been charged with corruption for attempting to bribe another local official in order to get his name on the mayoral ballot for the upcoming election. His attorney is concerned that jurors will not be very sympathetic to his client because they may view his behavior as a betrayal of the public trust. Therefore, the attorney has reached out to you, an applied social psychology expert, to educate him on what he should know about groups and the factors that affect their behaviors and decisions.

Based on your readings this week, please discuss the following: What is the most important thing you think the attorney needs to know about group dynamics? Define and discuss group polarization, groupthink, and social influence? How might these processes affect jury deliberations (e.g., jury decision making)? Think back to your readings on processing persuasive messages. What would you suggest to the attorney in terms of persuading the jury that his client is a trustworthy and honest person?