

The Useful Idiot
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The Useful Idiot is a derogatory title for “a person, suggesting that the person thinks they are fighting for a cause without fully comprehending the consequences of their actions, and who does not realize they are being manipulated by the cause's leaders or by other political players” [1] in order “to advance a cause or political agenda”. [2]

Thought to be originated by Vladimir Lenin to describe influential people such as actors, authors, academicians and such, largely ignorant of politics or position used to influence and/or persuade others by means of a person’s status, expertise, or credentials. [3]

To put more succinctly, Useful Idiots are influential people used, either knowingly or unknowingly, alone or in a group setting; i.e. panel, to provide false or misleading validation of a position or to influence others by means of the person’s status, expertise, or credentials.

Best used when business, political leaders or others need to advance a particularly unpopular position, agenda, or decision without looking authoritarian. A technique used to normalize propaganda, launder misinformation, or shield operations or decisions from scrutiny.

References:

- [1] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Useful_idiot
- [2] <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/useful%20idiot>
- [3] <https://matiane.wordpress.com/2010/08/06/useful-idiots/>