**Influencing Skills**

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**The Art of Being a Master Communicator**



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# Excellence in Influencing Questionnaire

Influencing is a key business skill and like all skills it can be learned. To understand your current approach, use this questionnaire to establish a baseline.

|  |
| --- |
| Image result for Action symbol**Please complete this questionnaire as openly and honestly as you can.** **You will refer back to this later on in the programme.** |

## Instructions for completion

Please read and follow these instructions carefully.

The following statements describe behaviour commonly associated with effective influence. Please be as honest and as frank as possible when completing the questionnaire. Your answers will form part of your feedback and are only of value if they provide an accurate and objective description of your behaviour.

For each of the 42 statements mark your response in the range 0 to 4 **on the** questionnaire itself. This range represents the extent to which the behaviour is demonstrated by you. Please mark the appropriate number (0 – 4) in the box at the end of each question.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **0** | **Definitely disagree -** this behaviour is **never** demonstrated |
| **1** | **Disagree -** this behaviour is **rarely** demonstrated |
| **2** | **Tend to disagree -** this behaviour is **occasionally** demonstrated  |
| **3** | **Agree -** this behaviour is **often** demonstrated |
| **4** | **Definitely agree -** this behaviour is **always** demonstrated - |

* Once you have marked the scores for all 42 questions on the questionnaire, please move on to the scoring sheet and record your scores as shown on the sheet.
* Calculate the total overall scores at the bottom of each column on the scoring sheet**.**
* Once you have completed this transfer your scores on to the My Results page.

| INFULENCING SYLES QUESTIONNAIRE | **0 - 4** |
| --- | --- |
| 1. I pay attention when others are talking to me.  |  |
| 2. I tell others what they need to do differently in order to improve their performance. |  |
| 3. I like to probe into more detail when people are telling me something. |  |
| 4. I frequently tell others how much I value them. |  |
| 5. I am open with others about my feelings on various issues. |  |
| 6. I let people talk to me without interrupting or offering advice. |  |
| 7. When I like someone, I let them know by telling them or showing them that I value their company. |  |
| 8. I use factual data to convince others. |  |
| 9. When I have information that is helpful to someone else I share it with them. |  |
| 10. I state what I want in no uncertain terms so that others are in no doubt. |  |
| 11. I use the common interests that I have with others to build up positive relationships |  |
| 12. I give others feedback in a way that provides useful information for them. |  |
| 13. I explain to others what I am prepared to do for them if they do what I want. |  |
| 14. I give people a clear set of objectives to work against. |  |
| 15. I let others know I am listening by summarising the main points they have raised. |  |
| 16. I tell others explicitly how I feel about them. |  |
| 17. I am friendly to all or most of the people I work with. |  |
| 18. I persuade others with well presented facts and figures. |  |
| 19. I like to ask questions that elicit a lot of information. |  |
| 20. I am direct and forceful about what I want. |  |
| 21. I like to focus on areas of agreement in discussions. |  |
| 22. I like to make others feel good about themselves by expressing my thanks for their contribution. |  |
| 23. I present my thoughts clearly and in a logical order. |  |
| 24. I often discuss feelings about issues with my colleagues. |  |
| 25. I tell others when they upset or annoy me. |  |
| 26. I am always supportive of people I think highly of. |  |
| 27. I carry people along with my vision of what could be. |  |
| 28. I tend to base my opinions on facts rather than feelings. |  |
| 29. I let people know if there is some information that would help them to make a decision. |  |
| 30. I let others know how I feel about their behaviour. |  |
| 31. I have lunch, or go out after work with colleagues for whom I have high regard. |  |
| 32. I describe the future using images and metaphors. |  |
| 33. I carefully prepare my case based on factual information before I approach other people. |  |
| 34. I willingly share information that I have with others. |  |
| 35. I leave no room for misunderstandings when I tell people what I want. |  |
| 36. I give people constructive advice about how to be more effective. |  |
| 37. I make sure that others always know what they will lose if they do not do what I want. |  |
| 38. I am skilful at helping others to visualise a positive future. |  |
| 39. I back up my proposals with soundly reasoned views. |  |
| 40. I would rather ask than tell. |  |
| 41. If I have some facts that are relevant I disclose these to help others to move towards their goals. |  |
| 42. I try to develop a sense of common purpose in groups that I work with. |  |

**Scoring Sheet - Self Report.**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Name |  |  | Date |  |

**Enter the scores you have recorded on the questionnaire into the spaces provided below.**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 2 | 8 | 11 |
| 3 | 9 | 7 | 13 | 12 | 18 | 21 |
| 6 | 24 | 17 | 14 | 16 | 23 | 27 |
| 15 | 29 | 22 | 20 | 25 | 28 | 32 |
| 19 | 34 | 26 | 35 | 30 | 33 | 38 |
| 40 | 41 | 31 | 37 | 36 | 39 | 42 |
| **Total** | **Total** | **Total** | **Total** | **Total** | **Total** | **Total** |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| ***Active listening & questioning***  | ***Being Open*** | ***Giving Positive Support*** | ***Stating wants & Needs & outlining consequences*** | ***Giving Feedback*** | ***Suggesting & proposing ideas*** | ***Finding commonality & creating a compelling vision*** |

## Influencing Skills Questionnaire – My Results

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | 0 | 6 | 12 | 18 | 24 |
| **Relationship Building** | Active Listening & Questioning |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Being Open |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Giving Positive Support |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | 0 | 6 | 12 | 18 | 24 |
| **Asserting Outcomes** | Stating Wants & Consequences  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Giving Feedback |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
| Suggesting & Proposing Ideas |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | 0 | 6 | 12 | 18 | 24 |
| **Drawing Towards** | Finding Commonality & Creating a Compelling Vision |  |  |  |  |
|  |  |  |  |

Plot your scores for each element and join the points to make a graph line which shows your areas of strength and areas for consideration – see example on following page

## Influencing Skills Questionnaire – My Results - EXAMPLE

# Definition of Influencing

Effective Influence is the skill and ability to achieve results with and through other people, whilst maintaining effective working relationships.

Influencing is often regarded as “getting what you want” but that misses an essential element. Bullies get what they want – whilst productive influencing is all about maintaining effective relationships.

Getting what you want is ok for short-term relationships, e.g. in restaurants, shops, hotels, etc where the relationship is fleeting.

And of course, influencing is not solely about maintaining relationships. People who aim for this get summarised like this: “Yeah, really nice, but never gets anything done!”

So, it’s not just about getting what you want, and it’s not just about maintaining relationships, it’s both!

## Influence styles

Influence styles are sets of behaviours that have a positive and effective impact on the person we are trying to influence. To be effective we need to:

* Choose the right behaviour or behaviours for each influence situation.
* Develop the skill and flexibility to deliver each behaviour as we intend it.

**Please Note:** We make an assumption that only productive influence behaviours are appropriate for **long term, positive** influence relationships. However, we need to know how to avoid **unproductive** behaviours and how to handle them when others use them.

## Intention and Impact

Despite our best intentions sometimes our influencing approach fails to have the impact we desire. If we are lucky we find out, if we are not we go on believing, wrongly, that we have succeeded! The reason for this gap between intention and impact often lies in our non-verbal behaviour.



The arc of distortion shows itself when, for example, my intended happy smile somehow comes across as a cynical sneer.

Vocally, my (intended) forceful demand mistakenly gets interpreted as a vague and hopeful request.

The only way to close the gap between intention and impact is to improve congruence between the verbal and non-verbal element of my message.

## Influencing Role Model Exercise

|  |
| --- |
| **Think of a person who has had a strong positive influence on you during your career. Consider the specific things they did that made them influential.** **What observable behaviours did this person demonstrate that made them a great influencer? Focus on the positives – What did they actually do? How did they behave? What did you see and hear?** |
| **Image result for workbook images** |

# Non-Verbal Elements of Influence

## (Words, Music and Dance)

Ifwe think about people who have influenced us and why they have done so, it becomes clear that much of what they were communicating was not in the words, but in the voice (the music) and the way they used their bodies (the dance). How much of that is a very major part of influence is not always obvious to people.

Research has shown that over 90% of the message we receive is delivered by the music and the dance and less than 10% by the words. That comes as quite a shock when one thinks of how much effort we normally put into thinking about the words in an influence situation and how little in the music and dance.

So what is meant by “the words, the music and the dance” and how can we use this to become better influencers?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **The words** | the actual words, spoken or written |
| **The music** | the way that we use our voice - how loud or soft, intonation, variety, pitch, where we lay the emphasis and particularly the expression we put into the words we are speaking |
| **The dance** | the way that we use our bodies, - eyes particularly and angle of torso, plus movements of face, hand and body when we are delivering the message |

What happens is that if the music and the dance match the words then they have a major impact on the delivery. If however they are inconsistent (i.e. the voice is low when she is trying to convey an enthusiastic message) then it is the music and the dance that is picked up not the words.

It is therefore vital that the music and the dance are consistent with the words. Too often we are not aware of our “music and dance”; or of its importance.

Being aware of the impact of our words, music and dance and developing particularly our range of music and dance behaviours can have a major influence on the impact we have on other people.

## Matching Words, Music and Dance to the Receiver

**For assertive styles** - level of music and dance must be sufficient to carry **conviction** and have **impact**.

However, too high a level, e.g. overloud voice or staring eye contact and we are seen as aggressive.

**For responsive styles** - the key is to **match** your music and dance to that of your influence target to make them feel **comfortable** and develop **rapport.**

# The Concept of “Push” And “Pull”

Let’s have a look at the concept of PUSH and PULL. Research says we all have a preference.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **PUSH** | If my focus of attention is internal, on me, I am paying attention to:What I want, need, think, feel, expect. My focus is from me outward, I am on my agenda. I use a PUSH energy to try to get you to do (or think, or accept) something. When I use it well, I win, when I use it really well, I win/you win. The common language for this focus of attention is ASSERTIVE and people who use this style are referred to as ASSERTIVE. |
| **PULL** | If on the other hand my focus of attention is on you, i.e. external, then I will be paying attention to:What you want, need, think, feel, expect. My focus is on you and your needs; I am on your agenda. I use a PULL energy by helping you to focus on your thinking, and/or behaving. In doing so I help you to understand your own situation even better, possibly even take more responsibility for yourself - which often leads to increased commitment. In such a situation, the relationship benefits. People who take this approach are referred to as RESPONSIVE. |

The research on influence shows that most situations require us to use both push and pull. It also shows that it is **IMPACT**, not intention, that counts i.e. it is no use me thinking I am using Pull with you when what you actually experience is Push.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Image result for Action symbol | **Now, get yourself comfortable and watch the following ‘Little TED’ talks by Warren Scott (former Head of OWD) to understand more about PUSH and PULL.****It will take around 16 mins to watch the videos. Allow yourself some additional time for note taking and reflection.** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Image result for Action symbol | **First watch this 5.06 min video – Concept of Push & Pull**[Influencing Skills – Push and Pull Part 1 of 3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FW_rKqS2BaA) - In this NHSBT ‘Little TED’ talk, Warren Scott introduces the concepts of both ‘Push’ and ‘Pull’ influencing styles and how they might be effective in the workplace. |
| Image result for workbook images**Use this space to take note of your thoughts.** |
| **When would it be appropriate to use PUSH?** |
| **When would PULL be more appropriate?** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Image result for Action symbol | **Now watch this 4.20 min video – Using Push and Pull and Overuse or Misuse.**[Influencing Skills – Push and Pull Part 2 of 3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Jxbpg0eZuwg) - This short NHSBT 'Little TED' film continues from part one and explores how to use the 'push' and 'pull' energies when you are trying to influence others. It also explores the pitfalls of using too much of overusing either of the energies and the impact it can have. |
| Image result for workbook images**Use this space to take note of your thoughts.** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Image result for Action symbol | **Finally watch this 6.38 min video – Key Behaviours**[Influencing Skills – Push and Pull Part 3 of 3](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rTxnxpbDQlA) - In this final video with Warren Scott talking about the art of influencing, he discusses some of the practical applications of using both ‘Push and Pull’ energies and some of the benefits of using them too. Warren also poses some meaningful questions about how you might currently influence and what you could do to improve this beyond where you are now.  |
| Image result for workbook images**Use this space to take note of your thoughts.** |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Image result for Action symbol | **Refer back to your results from the Influencing Questionnaire.** |
| **Please bear in mind the following:*** This is just a snapshot of how you were feeling the day you filled it out.
* It about frequency - whether you do it sometimes, or never. It is not how well you do it but how many times you do it. Doesn’t mean that you can or can’t use that style.
* It is about behaviour not personality. Not a statement about you as a person, but your observable behaviours.
* Perception of others: This is about your perceptions, and reality.
 |
| **PREFERRED STYLES –** What do I use a lot? (Do I overuse any styles?)**LESS-USED STYLES –** What do I use less? (Do I under-use any styles?) |

|  |
| --- |
| Reflective Learning Space |
| **What is the style(s) I’m using at work and how is that helping or hindering me getting what I want to achieve?****Am I clear about what I want from people without being aggressive?****Am I able to use logic and data to make things clearer and back up my ideas?****Am I willing to give positive and negative feedback? All in a way that keeps the relationship intact.****Am I someone that has the real ability to listen properly? Does the other person feel that they have been really listened to?****Am I willing to be open and share my thoughts and ideas?****How often do I tell someone how good I think something is that they’ve done? Have I done that today?** |

|  |
| --- |
| My impact on others |
| **What conclusions can I make about my impact and influence? What insights do I have about myself and what I might do to be even more influential?****The THREE styles I want to focus on improving?** **How will this help me?** |

# Productive Influencing Styles

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| ASSERTIVE | RESPONSIVE |
| Stating Wants & NeedsTells others what want/need/expect from them in clear unambiguous terms. States standards required.Outlining ConsequencesStrengthens position after stating expectations when necessary. Tells others what the benefits of fulfilling the expectation would be or the negative consequences of not doing so, in order to gain compliance.Giving feedbackTells others what they need to continue to do or can do differently, using concrete examples, and expresses feelings to make it clear what impact their behaviour has.Suggesting & Proposing (Persuading Logically)Uses reasoning and facts to present arguments convincingly, and backs up own position with facts and data to present a counter argument to others when necessary. | Active ListeningListen to others without offering solutions so that they are able to talk through a problem or issue and explain their opinions and feelings. Listening is done actively to show understanding.Skilled QuestioningUsing questions skilfully to ensure that the necessary information, thought, and feelings are elicited.Giving positive SupportTells others that they are valued and appreciated and shows warmth and enthusiasm for others’ contributions and company. Seeks others out, and offers help when it is needed.Being Open Gives others information about the facts of a situation or feelings in a way that helps them to make decisions or operate more effectively and with all the necessary information.Finding CommonalityLooks for areas of interest or knowledge in common with others and draws attention to areas of agreement or mutual benefit.Creating a Compelling VisionGive others an exciting and positive image of the future and articulates the possibilities. Uses words and images to capture others imagination. |

# Unproductive Influencing Styles

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| AGGRESSIVE | PASSIVE |
| InterrogatingA hostile form of questioning that causes others to react defensively, being asked in either quick succession giving little time for proper responses, or to demonstrate that others are in the wrong.PatronisingTreats others in a condescending way, letting them know they are inferior and that their opinions, feelings and contribution are of limited value.Showing contemptA more extreme form of patronising, demonstrates a complete disregard for others tending to be scornful and demeaning, making it known that their views and values are of no importance.Attacking (physical or verbal)Overtly hostile behaviour which includes physically harassing or assaulting others or making personal remarks and statements, often with a raised voice, which is intended to wound or damage others. | Over accommodatingGiving up something that is really important or wanted, prematurely or unnecessarily in order to fit in with others needs or wants Self put-down’sMakes repeated remarks and declarations about self-incompetence or inability, that have little or no foundation in facts.Self-pitying Makes constant apologies for lack of competence / time / resource in a way which is self-demeaning and evokes pity in others.AvoidingTakes steps to avoid any form of confrontation and ignores problems or issues by simply withdrawing or being unavailable for discussion in the hope that the issue will resolve itself.  |

## Unproductive Influence Behaviours

#### These are behaviours which do not result in: *“The achievement of results with and through other people, whilst maintaining effective working relationships.”*

**Aggressive** behaviour is triggered by the **fight** response, a physical reaction designed by nature to help us survive by **attacking**.

**Submissive behaviour** is triggered by the flight response, a physical reaction designed to help us survive by **running away.**

Generally, the fight and flight responses both stem from fear and insecurity.

1. Usually the use of these behaviours is habitual and out of awareness. The first stage to us changing these behaviours is to become aware of how we use them.

2. The next stage of changing these behaviours is for us to accept that we do it and to want to change them.

## Unproductive V Productive Influence

Both aggressive and submissive behaviour have major drawbacks.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Aggressive behaviour on your part: | Submissive behaviour on your part: |
| * Can destroy others’ confidence and competence.
* Creates unnecessary resistance or results in mere compliance.
* Provokes retaliation, direct or covert which can easily escalate.
* Creates stress (often for the influencer as well as their target).
 | * Denies you the opportunity to contribute.
* Can lead to a steady decline in self-confidence and in some cases leads to depression.
* Usually prevents you from achieving your objectives.
 |

Note that using a very **unbalanced** influence style is often unproductive:

* Over use of assertive behaviour can lead you to be seen as aggressive.
* Over use of responsive behaviour can lead you to be seen as submissive.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | PRODUCTIVE | UNPRODUCTIVE |
| Push | Assertive (I win /you win)* Stating Wants & Needs
* Outlining Consequences
* Giving feedback
* Suggesting & Proposing Ideas
* Having Positive Impact & Presence
 | Aggressive (I win/You lose)* Interrogating
* Patronising
* Showing contempt
* Attacking
 |
| Pull | Responsive (You win/I win)* Positive Listening
* Skilled Questioning
* Giving positive Support
* Being Open
* Finding commonality
* Creating a compelling Vision
 | Passive (I lose/You win)* Over accommodating
* Self put-down’s
* Self pitying
* Avoiding
 |

## Dealing with Unproductive Behaviour in Others

### Aggressive Behaviour

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Strategy 1** | Assume the aggressive behaviour is because the other person is upset. Emphasise responsive behaviour to calm and reassure the other person so that they stop being aggressive |
| **Strategy 2** | Assume that the other person feels threatened in some way and as a consequence is intent on attacking you.Emphasise **assertive** behaviour to show the other person that their aggressive behaviour is unacceptable. |

### Submissive Behaviour

Submissive behaviour is often a result of **low self-confidence.**

Ifyou need to influence someone to behave less submissive, the answer is to use mainly responsive behaviour in combination with giving (positive) feedback.

## Push, Pull and Managing Change

Most change initiatives in organisations over rely on **PUSH**. Consequently, they fail to gain the **COMMITMENT** of those who need to implement or support the change. It is not surprising that a Harvard Business Review paper which studied change initiatives revealed that **over 80% failed** to achieve their objectives.

The final page of this paper shows some of the reactions you typically observe when trying to bring about change. If you need some level of **COMMITMENT** you will need to use enough **PULL** with the people who have to back the change. Otherwise, like pushing current down a wire, you will create **RESISTANCE**.

## How Do You Use Pull in Practice?

Using **PULL** is not rocket science to understand. It does however, require **Patience, Commitment and Skill** in order to be effective. Some guidelines for using it effectively are:

* Be in touch with people. Go to them or create informal opportunities for just hearing what they have to say.
* Structure communication sessions so that others have their say as a **primary** aim. (Not just a question and answer session after the management presentations).
* Make a point of understanding what matters to the people you need to influence. Try to meet these needs in the future state that you are trying to achieve.
* Make opportunities to check that you actually understand what is important to others.
* **Seek feedback**, including feedback on whether people feel pulled or pushed by you.
* Develop the skills of **active listening**.
* Be prepared to identify and question the assumptions that you make in a situation.

There are many pressures which create the need for change in organisations. Most of them necessitate an element of Push in bringing about change. (Not to mention your personal agenda). It is often the organisations which **generally use pull** who find least resistance and most commitment when the time for change arrives.

## Push components

### Asserting

Asserting is when you are working from your own agenda. You are attempting to get something achieved that you want.

Your prime concern here is achievement of the task. Building strong relationships is of secondary importance to you here, although if done well, the relationship will still be maintained . It is generally short term, gaining compliance rather than commitment

### Persuading

Persuading is when you are attempting to convince others about you and your ideas. Again, it is using Push energy as you are attempting to convince them of something you want.

It is not quite as strong Push as Asserting because you are trying to get people to make their own mind up about you and/or the issue. It is a medium-term approach, gaining some compliance and some commitment

## Pull components

### Relationship building

Relationship building is when you are primarily paying attention to the Influence relationship that you have. Your aim is to draw others out, to work on their agenda. To allow them to play a full part in the decision. By achieving good Influence relationships then you are much more likely to be able to influence on single issues as they arise. It is a long-term influence approach and therefore particularly useful in situations where you are having regular contact, or contact over a period of time.

### Drawing others towards

This approach is where people are drawn towards you or your ideas of their own volition. It is the style that is primarily used by leaders. When done well people are drawn into your ideas hopes and inspirations because it has ‘touched a nerve’ for them - it means something to them as well as you. It is therefore a Pull approach – drawing people towards you. It is a medium to long term approach.

## Moving away

A part of Influencing which is neither Push nor Pull is the ‘**moving away’** element.

When this is done well it is a conscious decision by the Influencer not to engage in the issue/influence situation. They may withdraw from the situation for example knowing that the person is not going to be influenced. They may postpone the influence situation knowing that for example it is not a suitable time for discussion.

When **Moving away** is not done well, it is usually habitual and done out of fear, or where someone refuses to engage.

The techniques in Influencing need discrimination in use. There is no point trying to use them where they cannot make any difference.

# The Wheel of Influence

Underneath push and pull styles there are key behaviours. Think back to the ‘role model’ exercise; it was behaviours that you were asked to write. These behaviours have been illustrated in the form of a wheel.

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| The right side of the wheel the PUSH styles of:* Stating wants & consequences
* Giving Feedback
* Suggesting and proposing ideas

The left side of the wheel the PULL styles:* Active listening and questioning
* Being open
* Giving positive support

And the bottom of the wheel DRAWING TOWARDS: * Finding commonality & visioning
* Having personal impact
 | Wheel of influence.png |

The following section will describe each style in more detail and will outline when and how to use it and give you some tips. Make note of how the words, music and dance differ for each style and have a practice.

Refer back to the non-verbal elements of influence and those people who have influenced you in the past (both positively and negatively) was it just ‘what’ they said that influenced you or was it ‘how’ they said what they said? Remember over 90% of the message we receive is delivered by the music and the dance and less than 10% by the words.

**Incongruent messages** - when the words, music and dance don’t match it increase the likelihood of people misinterpreting our communication.

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| These New Emojis Are A Win For The Wellness World | Emoji pictures,  Emoticon, Emoji**Consider the following:****When using EMAIL to influence**: We have got just 7% of the communication. We make up the rest. How many times have you misinterpreted an email because there’s no music or dance to guide you?**Using the PHONE:** We have the Words and Music. Does your dance make a difference on the phone? YES! It can be heard in your voice. The best radio actors move, gesture, pull faces….**The BEST INFLUENCERS use FACE TO FACE**If you’ve got to influence, it’s best to wait for face to face and use your words, music AND dance to their full potential.What does this mean for you in the ‘virtual’ world? |

# Stating Wants

### Definition:

*Telling others what you want / need / expect from them in clear and* unambiguous *terms.*

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| When you’d use it?* You may consider a compromise on your ‘ideal’ solution but there is a minimum beyond which you are not prepared to give.
* The impact is to leave the other person in no doubt about your intentions.
* When you are clear about what you want.
* When time is important.
* When task compliance is important.

How to use it?* The key to this style is to say clearly what you want, without trying to justify the fact that you want it.
* Use the words: *“I want / need / expect…”*
* Using the word “I” makes it clear that you feel real responsibility for making this happen.
* Examples of “I want” statements would be:

“I want you to achieve a revenue target of £3OO,OOO per annum“I need you to authorise six weeks holiday this year”. “I want you to deliver that report by 4 o’clock”.“I want you to be more open in your discussions with me”. | Tips for using this style:* Use of ‘I’.
* Be clear about what you want before you start talking.
* Use short sentences, don’t justify or give reasons.
* Positive expression of ‘want’ is more likely to get a positive result.
* Be clear about what must happen (bottom line).
* It is what you want them to do (not just let happen).
* Be clear about what you want people to do.
* Be clear that it is about something you want to happen – think about what you’ll experience – see, hear, observe.
* If it’s about a change in a direct reports performance, it must be observable – behaviour not attitude.
* The person must be able to work out what the difference will be.
* If it is too generalistic it won’t have the impact.
* What behaviour, by when and how!
 |

### Communication

**WORDS**: I want, need, expect.... Using "I would like..." has less impact.

**MUSIC**: Firm Voice, moderate loud volume, paced voice...

**DANCE:** Planted feet, upright, palms down, steady eye...

#### Increasing the Impact ‘Stating Wants’

* Use the technique of ‘broken record’ if you do not succeed on your first attempt. Repeat the “I want” statement three or even four times, having actively listened and reflected to the other person first to show you have heard their view.
* At times you may be open to compromise but keep in mind three levels of negotiation, ‘Mega win’, ‘Super Win’, and ‘Win’. In this situation your ‘win’ is a fixed bottom line below which you should not go.
* You can also increase the power of this style by varying volume, emphasis, tone and physical proximity.

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| Stating Wants - My reflections on using this style |
| **Examples of when I have stated my wants, needs or expectations.****How comfortable do I feel using this style?****A past situation when I could have used this style to have achieved a better outcome is…****Situations when I could and/or will use this style in the future.****The potential impact of using this style, for myself and others is…** |

# Outlining Consequences

### Definition:

Strengthens your position after ‘stating wants’. Tells others the benefits of fulfilling your expectations or the negative consequences of not doing so in order to gain compliance.

#### When?

* Use when the ‘stating wants’ style has failed to give you what you want.
* To be used (particularly in the case of ‘penalties’) when you are not willing to concede beyond a certain point.
* When it is imperative to you that you achieve what you want or need.
* The aim is to leave the other person in no doubt about your intention to achieve your want or need. The **reward** should be motivating and the penalty, if used, should create a feeling of pressure (without aggression).
* To escalate push so that ‘receiver’ knows, in no uncertain terms, the consequences of action/non-action.
* When task achievement is more important than building long term influence relationships.
* When you are not willing to concede past a certain point.
* Emergency or very urgent situations.

#### How?

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| Positive | Is about offering something that I know is important to you and which I am definitely able to offer and deliver on. It needs to be limited to the other person’s motivation, e.g. they are motivated by status, achievement, acceptance etc.“What I want is for you to deliver the report by 4 o’clock. If you do I will personally make sure the boss is aware of your contribution and I will put it in writing”. |
| Negative | Is to do with pointing out the negative consequences of not giving what you want. This should be something you know would matter to the other person and be in your power to deliver.Never move to ‘penalties’ without first offering ‘reward’ and if you do decide eventually to add in a penalty make sure you **repeat** the reward.“What I want is for you to deliver the report by 4 o’clock (expressing **want).** If you do I will personally make sure that the boss is aware of your contribution and I will put it in writing (rewards). If you do not I shall immediately withdraw my offer of help with your project B (penalties)”. |

**Language:** *I want ….., If you do that, I will be delighted to…. If you don’t I will have no alternative but to……*

### Tips

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| * Preceding style is always Stating Want.
* Use separately - rewards alone first.
* Penalty - last resort, therefore the order is:
* State Want
* State Want and Reward
 | * State Want and Reward and Penalty
* +Positive and Negative must be perceived as such.
* Must be appropriate to ‘want’ and circumstances.
* Must be within your power to deliver.
* You must be willing to deliver
 |
| Outlining Consequences - My reflections on using this style |
| **Examples of when I have outlined consequences.****How comfortable do I feel using this style?****A past situation when I could have used this style to have achieved a better outcome is...****Situations when I could and/or will use this style in the future.****The potential impact of using this style, for myself and others is…** |

# Giving Feedback

### Definition:

In this style feedback is given to others in an assertive way intended to encourage them to change in some way. Feedback must be delivered honestly and focus either on objective views or personal feelings.

#### When?

* Use this style when the influence target is receptive to the idea of change or has at least shown some willingness to listen to information about their behaviour.
* This style can be used to produce quick results when the feedback is accompanied by an explicit request for change, or used in a coaching relationship to change the other person over time.
* When you want them to change or continue in some way - your agenda.
* You are clear about the changes.
* For short term (performance) or long-term (coaching) situations.
* When you have explicit examples.

#### How?

**Language**: *“During that meeting earlier today, you interrupted / spoke over me / spoke too quietly to be heard, and what I want you to do in future is…………”*

The language in this style must be specific; you must give clear examples of the behaviour and be explicit about the changes you want.

### Tips.

* Be specific.
* Able to action the feedback.
* Helpful to them –constructive.
* No formula, just ensure over time that positives outweigh negatives.
* Different from Positive Regard – agenda.
* Often followed by Expressing Want or Logical Persuasion.
* Can be carried out objectively or using emotional content.

### Objective or Factual Feedback

What I like about what you have done is...

What I don’t like about what you have done is...

(Music and Dance as per Suggest & Propose).

#### Emotional Feedback

I feel (emotion)...

About (what you have done) ...

Because (effect on me) …

(Music and Dance to reflect expressed emotion).

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| Giving Feedback - My reflections on using this style |
| **Examples of when I have given feedback. What style(s) did I use?****How comfortable do I feel giving feedback?****Past situations when I could have used these styles of feedback to have achieved better outcomes are...****Situations when I could and/or will use these feedback styles in the future.****The potential impact of using these feedback styles, for myself and others are…** |

# Suggesting and Proposing Ideas

### Definition:

Using reasoning and facts to present arguments convincingly, without discouraging alternative views / evidence.

#### When?

* You want to get across a clear view you hold but on which you are still open to influence.
* You have evidence to support your view.
* You want to encourage an objective discussion of an issue.
* The issue in question can be resolved by reason and reference to evidence.
* You have facts or data to support your ideas.
* The topic lends itself to objective non-emotional discussion.
* You want to encourage objective analysis & discussion.
* You want to take the emotional content out of a situation.

#### How?

Language:

“I suggest, propose…” “In my view ………”

Give a clear precise statement of your view / proposal and support it with no more than three reasons. More than three takes you to your weakest reasons - which can be easily attacked.

Do not turn your view into a question, e.g.

“Wouldn’t it be a good idea if………….”

“I propose” is far more powerful and stands a greater chance of acceptance. The first invites the answer ‘no’ (as well as ‘yes’).

Make your proposals, views, etc. positive, - if you always offer negative opinions this is how you will come to be seen.

### Tips

* Put your idea / thought first.
* Give your reasons afterwards.
* Maximum three reasons.
* Strongest reason first.
* Give positive reasons to support.
* If unsure about a reason, then don’t put it in.
* Avoid turning your statements into questions.
* Flag proposals.
* Be concise.

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| Suggesting and Proposing Ideas - My reflections on using this style |
| **Examples of when I have suggested and/or proposed my ideas.****How comfortable do I feel using this style?****A past situation when I could have used this style to have achieved a better outcome is…****Situations when I could and/or will use this style in the future.****The potential impact of using this style, for myself and others is…** |

# Active Listening

### Definition:

Active listening is used to encourage others to share their feelings and opinions so that they are able to express themselves fully. Using this style will help you to understand the underlying issue or problem and should be used to deepen your awareness of facts and feelings that might otherwise not come to your attention.

#### When?

* Use this style when the other person has a problem or issue that cannot be solved with just a bit of advice.
* Active Listening is very helpful when you need to clarify the points being discussed or when misunderstandings might occur.
* It is particularly helpful if an apparent stalemate has been reached in a negotiation or an argument.
* This style often helps to calm someone who is feeling emotional, e.g. angry, upset, anxious.
* When you use this style you should want to create a climate of **mutual trust and openness** and demonstrate your willingness to listen andhelp the other person constructively.
* To gather data / facts / opinions / feelings.
* To get ‘below’ a presenting issue or problem.
* To understand a person’s views and experiences more fully.

#### How?

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| Language | “So can I just check that I have understood what you are saying….” “Tell me some more about that...”  “How were you feeling at that time?” “What more would you like to do about this?” |

### Tips:

* Nonverbal listening.
* Periodically paraphrasing what you have heard.
* May paraphrase on the content or feeling levels.
* Summarising at the end.
* Stay on other person’s agenda.
* Not trying to remember everything, just a few key points.
* One sentence paraphrase per paragraph.
* 2 / 3 sentence summary at the end.
* Paraphrasing and summarising is not copying.

**YOUR FOCUS:** The other person’s agenda. You have NEVER experienced their issue.

**BODY** **LANGUAGE:** Eye contact; Nodding; Open, interested facial expression. When there is high rapport matching of body position, nonverbal gesturing is natural.

**QUESTIONS:** Open – what, where, when, why, how. Tell me more, explain, describe…

**PARAPHRASING:** one sentence per paragraph – it isn’t a memory test.

**Summarise:** 2-3% of the whole. i.e. Very short summary – don’t repeat the story.

NB: Beware the Joining-In syndrome

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| Active Listening - My reflections on using this style |
| **Examples of when I have actively listened. What made this different to ‘just’ listening?****How comfortable do I feel using this style?****A past situation when I could have used this style to have achieved a better outcom is...****Situations when is could and/or will use this style in the future.****The potential impact of using this style, for myself and others is…** |

# Skilled Questioning

### Definition:

Being able to elicit the necessary information, thoughts, feelings necessary, in a way that the recipient feels listened to and understood.

#### When?

* When you need to fully understand another person’s views & opinions.
* When you want to foster a relationship of cooperation & openness.
* To gather all the information available.
* When you are open to influence according to the information forthcoming.
* To enable the other person to get things off their chest.
* When an impasse has been reached.
* When Push is failing to convince the other person.

#### How?

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| Open questions  | * To get the other person talking.
* To open up lots on the topic.
* To gather broad level information.
* To let the other person ‘offload’.
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| Probing Questions | * To find out more detail about something already mentioned.
* To show that you have heard what has been said.
 |
| Closed Questions | * To confirm your understanding of what has been said.
* To show that you have heard and understood.
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### Tips:

* Only ask questions in relation to the other person’s agenda.
* Use in conjunction with Active Listening.
* Remember you should be asking questions on the other person’s agenda
* Be aware of asking leading questions or proposing things within what seems like an open question.

Use funnelling methodology:

* Ask an open question.
* Probe to get nuggets of detail to funnel the responses into useful information (for them and on their agenda).
* Close by summarising and confirming.

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| Skilled Questioning - My reflections on using this style |
| **Examples of when I have asked skilled questions. What types of questions did I ask?****How comfortable do I feel using this style?****A past situation when I could have used a different type of question to have achieved a better outcome is…****Situations when I could and/or will use this style in the future. What types of question will I use?****The potential impact of using this style, for myself and others is…** |

# Giving Positive Support

### Definition:

Showing others that they are liked and supported is immensely valuable in building strong and fruitful alliances. In this style you will use a great deal of personal warmth and show actively a positive regard for others. However, this must be sincere and used appropriately, in which case you will find influencing others and understanding their issues relatively straightforward.

#### When?

* Use this style when you have identified enough in the situation to be genuine in your expression of liking and support.
* You should give positive feedback to others and tell others how much you value them when the circumstances are right.
* When you use this style you will want to help others to feel good about themselves and to know that they can rely on you for support when they need it.
* In using this style you want to create a climate of mutual liking and trust and demonstrate your positive regard for others.
* To build strong influence relationships.
* When you genuinely recognise something good.
* Long term collaborative situations.
* When you are on their agenda.
* You want others to know that they can rely on you for support.

#### How?

Language:

* The language in this style must be specific and honest, emphasising the other person’s positive qualities. When giving or offering support or help, you must be clear about what you can do for the other person and be non-evaluative about giving up your time.

### Tips:

* Must be genuine.
* Must be appropriate to the culture, and the situation.
* Ensure that what you regard as positive is the same as what they would regard as positive.
* Can be conditional or unconditional.
* Creates an air of helpfulness.
* Tends to be reciprocated.
* Not gushing.
* Helps to be specific.

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| Giving Positive Support - My reflections on using this style |
| **Examples of when have given positive support. What made this different to giving feedback?****How comfortable do I feel using this style?****A past situation when I could have used this style to have achieved a positive outcome is…****Situations when I could and/or will use this style in the future.****The potential impact of using this style, for myself and others is…** |

# Being Open

### Definition:

‘Being Open’ is used to build trust and openness in influence relationships. It improves communication. By being open and non-defensive yourself you reassure the other person and encourage them to do the same. It is a gradual process where you judge what particular work or personal information would be helpful for the other person at that time and share it with them.

#### When?

* Use this style when you want to create more trust or closeness in an influence relationship.
* Use it when communication is poor or misunderstandings occur.
* This style encourages people to examine issues collaboratively (dialogue) rather than competitively (debate).
* Using openness makes it more likely you will deal with real issues rather than unfounded assumptions.
* When you have info/thoughts/feelings that will help them.
* To build relationships of openness and trust.
* When communication is poor e.g. confusion or assumptions.
* To encourage collaboration.
* You are open to disclosure from them.

#### How?

Language:

“You might find it helpful to know...”

“Here’s some information you may find useful...”

“The assumptions that I have been making are...”

“I’m not sure how to tackle this….” “I feel uncertain…”

“How I really feel about the situation is...” “I find this hard to say...”

**N.B.** You may at times give feedback in this style. If so, it should differ in intention and impact, i.e. the other person should feel the feedback is given with no vested interest and is solely for their benefit. (Assertive feedback is delivered primarily to guide the person in the direction that you have chosen).

### Tips:

* When you have info / thoughts / feelings that will help them.
* To build relationships of openness and trust.
* When communication is poor e.g. confusion or assumptions.
* To encourage collaboration.
* You are open to disclosure from them.

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| Being Open - My reflections on using this style |
| **Examples of when you have used the style of being open.****How comfortable do I feel using this style?****A past situation when I could have used this style to have achieved a better outcome is…****Situations when I could and/or will use this style in the future.****The potential impact of using this style, for myself and others is…** |

# Finding Commonality

### Definition:

In this style you deliberately look for and draw attention to areas of genuine agreement between yourself and the other person. The aim is to create a sense of unity and co­operation. It also generates a climate of optimism and energy.

#### When?

* Use this style to change a negative or competitive climate.
* This style builds links with others for positive communication now and in the future.
* It is an excellent style for fostering a sense of team spirit and **collaboration.**
* This style can underpin a shared endeavour, objective or vision of the future.
* Common ground often starts at a superficial level (e.g. interests) and extends to deeper levels (e.g. values) over time.
* To change a negative or competitive climate.
* To build the foundations of a strong influence relationship.
* To build a team spirit.
* To underpin a vision or shared endeavour.

#### How?

Language:

“I agree with you.” “I see it that way too.”

“We have some common ground on...” “Something we share is...” “I really like...”

### Tips:

* Depth comes over time.
* Highlight positive areas of agreement rather than areas of disagreement

**N.B.** This style only works when the agreement is largely about positive views / feelings.

Strong agreement about mainly negative aspects often leaves people feeling depressed and powerless.

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| Finding Commonality - My reflections on using this style |
| **Examples of when I have found commonality with others. Thinking of a range of people and situations.****How comfortable do I feel using this style?****A past situation when I could have used this style to have achieved a better outcome is...****Situations when I could and/or will use this style in the future.****The potential impact of using this style, for myself and others is…** |

# Creating a Compelling Vision

### Definition:

This style takes commonality a stage further. It conjures up a compelling vision of the future that energises others. The vision can be brought alive by analogy, metaphor and appeal to the senses.

#### When?

* Use this style to create enthusiasm and optimism.
* A great style for freeing people from artificial constraints on their own thinking.
* A valuable style for leaders as the effects are very enduring.
* Essential that you find the common ground to build the vision on.
* To generate enthusiasm and energy.
* To free up people’s thinking.
* As a leader.

#### How?

Language:

“Imagine if…” “I bet we could” “Just think…” “Think of the possibilities…”

The content of the style is all about possibilities, best outcomes, etc. Remember the cue is always taken from the interests, goals, hopes and ambitions that you share with the other person. The language should be attractive and accessible to them.

Describing the future in tangible terms means appealing to the senses - what you can see, hear, touch, smell and taste in the positive future state.

### Tips:

* Use analogy, metaphor, to bring it alive.
* Try to appeal to all the senses.
* Vary your energy levels to gain interest.
* Language needs to be positive and attractive.
* Use emphasising type words e.g. wonderful, exciting

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| Creating a Compelling Vision - My reflections on using this style |
| **Examples of when I have created a compelling vision. How did I share this?****How comfortable do I feel using this style?****A past situation when I could have used this style to have achieved a better outcome is…****Situations when I could and/or will use this style in the future.****The potential impact of using this style, for myself and others is…** |

# Personal Impact

## The final style in the Wheel of Influence revolves around two aspects:

### 1) Presence:

Some people seem to have an aura about them when they walk into a room - they have a personal (or even powerful) presence.

Much of this derives from confidence – and is revealed by their words, music and dance working in harmony to project the message that they ‘know their stuff’.

They feel comfortable with the surroundings and in themselves – not fazed by a room full of strangers because, to use a colloquialism, they are ‘comfortable in their own skin.’

### 2) First Impressions:

There is much research in the area of ‘first impressions’ – how quickly people form an impression of someone. Some research puts this as quick as a mere 7-seconds – and though that won’t be true for all people in every situation, it has to be recognised that first impressions are developed very quickly.

Part of the process relates to the unconscious links to memories that form from our perceptions – what the person looks like (e.g. I was bullied at school by a red-head!), their music (e.g. their voice reminds me of my very affable music teacher) and their dance (e.g. they gesticulate wildly just like my dad did when he was angry with me when I was a youngster!).

So the leading questions is, how can we over-ride possible negative impressions?

The answer lies in ensuring the influencing styles you adopt are well-balanced, leading with pull styles if you’re interacting with someone new. And, perhaps most importantly, to ensure that your words, music and dance are suitably choreographed to indicate a wonderful congruity.

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| Personal Impact - My reflections |
| **What first impressions do I think I create and why?****How can I create a positive impression of myself? What are the benefits of doing this?****What are the consequences if I create a negative impression?****How can I over-ride possible negative impressions?****Am I making the impression that I want to make? If not, what do I need to do?** |

# Developing Positive Relationships for Influence

### Stage One - Laying Foundations

This stage is the crucial part of the influence process and should not be omitted or shortened in an effort to speed up the influence outcome. Developing the relationship and understanding the needs of the person or group you want to influence is essential to a positive outcome. There are three key foundations:

* **Rapport/Trust** - do we get on well enough to want to work together on the necessary issues?
* **Credibility** - does the other person see me as having something to offer on these issues?
* **Relevance** - does the other person see me as relevant to their current needs?

N.B. Active Listening is vital at this stage.

### Stage Two - Reaching True Agreement

In this stage, your objective will be to explore the situation in more depth and to gather the data about the perceptions and feelings of the other person. You will be using active listening to ensure that you have the information you need in order to be effective. At the end of this stage, you will have a common understanding about the process and be in full agreement about the next steps. True Agreement works at two levels:

**The Head** - we agree at an intellectual level about the issues and actions: clarity is the essence.

**The Heart** - we both see the issues as important to us and are committed to agreed actions.

### Stage Three Making Changes

By this stage you will be operating in a positive climate and should be concentrating on setting targets and bringing about whatever change you have planned. During this stage it is important that you continue to review the climate and ensure that you are in possession of the facts about the situation. You should also ensure that commitment is still shared. Key elements of this stage are:

1. Bring about the change you want
2. Review the climate and commitment to the process
3. Understand and recognise signs of resistance
4. Respond to resistance by making appropriate amendments
5. Agree next steps

### Stage Four - Monitoring and Consolidation

This is the final stage of the process and by now you may well have achieved a successful outcome. However, in monitoring the changes you have brought about you may decide it is appropriate to return to Stage Two to reaffirm your agreement to the process. Commitment on both sides is essential. If, however, you both feel that success has been achieved, you should review progress, continue to monitor the climate and reinforce the changes that have happened. Key elements of this stage are:

* Put aside time to review and discuss the outcomes
* Explore the climate and continuing commitment
* If problems or resistance arise, return to Stage Two
* Agree a process for monitoring the continued change
* Explore other opportunities for starting up the cycle again on a new issue

In an ongoing relationship the idea of this stage is to distil what you have learned about the issue, yourselves and the working relationship.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Image result for Action symbol | My Influence Situation |
| **Use the space below to identify a real situation and/or person you want to influence.** How will you plan your approach using what you’ve learnt so far?Please note: You will be asked to use this scenario and/or another during the practise sessions if you choose to attend the virtual masterclass. |
|  |

|  |
| --- |
| Reflection: **What have I learned about Influencing Skills?** |
| **Give yourself some time to think about what you have just experienced:** |
| **What have I learned?** |  |
| **What does this mean to me?** |  |
| **What am I going to do differently?** |  |
| **What impact will what I am going to do have?** |  |
| **How might others be impacted?** **Is that a good thing or bad thing?** |  |
| **Are the things I am expecting of myself and others reasonable?** |  |
| **What obstacles might I face and how will I get around them?** |  |
| **Do I need support?** **How will I get that support?** |  |
| **When will I start?** |  |
| **How will I know I have been successful?** |  |
| **So, what am I going to do now?** |
| Image result for Action symbol |

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Image result for Action symbol | ***Please complete the*** [***Evaluation Survey***](https://nhsbt.onlinesurveys.ac.uk/evaluation-survey-owd) ***to indicate that you have completed this element of the programme.*** |

# My Action Plan

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **Immediate Action** | **Description of action and outcome** |
| Short term (within 3 months) |  |
| Medium term (within 6 month) |  |
| Long term (6 months plus) |  |

# Appendix: Research for Understanding the True Realities of Influencing

## What do you need to do to be Influential?

#### Research by Oakwood Learning

### Background.

At Oakwood learning we have carried out our own extensive research on Influencing since 1995. This research is ongoing, but to date the results are outlined in this paper.

### Why is Influencing increasingly important?

Our perception is that the skills of influencing are increasingly in demand, and of ever greater importance, particularly among those with leadership or management responsibilities.

There are many reasons for that, including:

#### Organisational changes

The days of management based on command and control have all but gone. There is a demand for more involvement and participation in decisions by those closest to the work. Moreover, organisations are frequently moving away from vertical silo management, and getting managers to work across boundaries, in project teams and in matrix structures, where managers are required to get results without having direct authority.

#### Organisations increasingly valuing and assessing people by their interpersonal skills

Another trend which suggests influencing skills are of increasing importance is the growing frequency with which interpersonal skills are being assessed and valued by organisations. Job advertisements, for example, are tending more and more to demand high levels of influencing and negotiating skills for managerial positions. Internal promotion panels are going the same way, and modern appraisal systems seem increasingly weighted towards these skills.

Therefore, to be a successful person in an organisation, having excellent influencing skills is an essential not just a desirable. The information that follows shows you how the most powerful influencers weave their magic in organisations.

### The context of influence.

There are a number of strategic aspects in regard to influencing as outlined by J Conga (\*1). He says in order for persuasion to happen four conditions have to be in place. Firstly you have to have established credibility by either expertise or relationship. Secondly, both people need to see the goals for them both, the shared advantage. Thirdly the position has to be vividly reinforced with compelling data, examples which have an impact both logically and emotionally. Fourth, there has to be a connection in the relationship not just the facts.

There are also a number of contextual issues around the relationship that also impact on the influence as outlined by Robert Cialdini.(\*2). He outlines a number of items in relation to persuasion. People are more likely to be influenced by people who they like, and who like them. We all know this instinctively. Who would you rather go the extra mile for, someone who you like or someone you don’t?

People repay in kind, therefore give what you want to receive. The old saying ‘treat others as you would like them to treat you’ is very true in terms of influence.

We are social animals and people are influenced by the lead of others, especially in groups. Peer power is a great way to influence. Get the critical mass of a group persuaded and the whole group is likely to follow.

If people commit to an idea, they are likely to follow through positively, especially if the commitment comes from the persons value set.

People value expertise if they can see how it will help them in their goals. We all have some form of expertise. Finally, people value scarcity, exclusive information for example is more likely to influence.

## Our research – The 11 principles of Influencing

In our research, organisational managers, leaders and employees were asked this question:

‘From your experiences, how do people influence you?’

They were asked to focus on behaviours that they had observed in people that they found positively influential. Over a 10 year period the answers from over 1200 people were collated to discover the trends. The people asked were all from medium to large scale organisations. They were from a mix of managerial, professional and technical disciplines.

The results from our research are complementary to the contextual and strategic findings above. They take the more contextual issues and add a layer of behavioural skills.

There are 24 behavioural categories from our research, categorised into **11 principles of influencing.** We have summarised them and presented them in order of how often they were mentioned by people in the research.

### The principle of ATTENDING to others. (Total 20% of answers)

By far the single biggest influential behaviour, is the skill of ATTENDING to others (19% of all comments referred to this). People who do this, have the ability to genuinely pay attention to the other person and demonstrate that they are listening. It involves having a focus on their ideas, needs, feelings and thoughts, and PUTTING OTHERS at the CENTRE of YOUR FOCUS. On the receiving end of this, people feel like you are wholly paying FULL ATTENTION to them, not distracted by other things going on, not just paying lip service to listening, not waiting for the chance to put your own agenda in focus again. ACTIVE LISTENING, QUESTIONING and summarising are part (but not all) of using the behaviours of attending. This has the effect of the influencer being seen as approachable, empathetic, OPEN to INFLUENCE, encouraging, and friendly. Many of our respondents attributed strength and confidence to someone who has the ability to ask and listen rather than just tell. The research suggests therefore that if you only pick one thing to work on in your influencing, it should be this – really ensuring you give the other person your full attention and listening actively.

### The principle of SUPPORT & TRUST (total 18% of answers)

Over 14.5% of all comments referred to being SUPPORTED by the influential person. This support took many forms. On the one hand it takes the form, as you would expect, of giving help & advice. However, a number of other elements were attributed to this skill such as DEMONSTRATING BELIEF in someone, CARING about the progress they are making, PLACING CONFIDENCE in the other person, and ENCOURAGING them. On the receiving end of this skill the influencer was viewed as friendly, empowering, and constructive. PRAISE was seen as a positive form of recognition which as we know, is a basic human need. Mentioned a number of times was the fact that good influencers were APPRECIATIVE of the efforts of others and GENUINELY offered thanks and praise to that person.

This support took the form of face to face support, but interestingly, respondents in our research noted that they knew they would be supported even if they were not in attendance at the time.

Another 2.5% of all answers also specifically mentioned TRUST as a key influential behaviour This takes the form of trusting others judgement, experience, views. Having enough faith in their abilities to leave them to get on with something which is important. People feel trusted if they are given important work to do, and given the freedom to own and carry out the work (backed up by support when needed). On the receiving end of SUPPORT and TRUST people will go the extra mile for you.

### The principle of IMPACT & PRESENCE (total 13% of all answers).

The levels of ENERGY in influencers seemed to be figural in their impact as a presenter (7% of all comments referred to this). However, there were two broadly different views on the type of energy. Some found an influencer who was energetic, dynamic, passionate, to be influential. Others found an influencer who was calm, relaxed, thoughtful, and reflective to be most impactful as an influencer. Interestingly, there were no comments at all about any levels of energy in-between these two polarities.

PHYSICAL IMPACT seemed to be important within the research experience. Over 6% of comments related to how influencers used their non-verbal behaviour. Eye contact seemingly the most frequently mentioned aspect of this, followed closely by a number of comments related to using open and positive body language. We know from work done that non verbal aspects play a large part in the overall impact of an influencer. It seems however that CONGRUANCE between what is said, how it is said and the physical non-verbal behaviour is a key to influencing.

### The principle of CLARITY (10% of all answers)

Effective influencers need to be able to portray their wants and ideas with conviction. (5% of comments in the research referred to this). Good influencers are able to be ASSERTIVE with their wants. They also have crystal CLARITY when outlining these. They are able to make the receiver understand the CONSEQUENCES of what they are suggesting. However, they are never aggressive (which the research suggests can kill the long term influence immediately). As a result of being clear, they are attributed with being decisive, determined, committed, and RESILIANT. People will follow them as they seem so clear about the way forward. Influencers are FOCUSSED on achievement (1% of answers mentioned this), and are

PERSISTANT in following their wants.

Influencers who were good at this were described as CHALLENGING (2% of answers mentioned this), both of themselves and others. They felt stretched by these people in a positive way. This would be done either directly using DIRECT FEEDBACK (mentioned in 2% of all answers) or by the use of SKILLED PROBING QUESTIONS.

### The principle of LOGICAL PRESENTATION. (Total of 9% of answers).

We noticed prior to our research, that being logical was many people’s ‘default’ position when it came to influencing. We therefore wondered how this would emerge from the results. It did come out as important (although far less important than the skills mentioned above). However, it was mentioned in particular forms. People felt influenced by information that was presented in an ORGANISED way, that seemed logical and rational (6% of responses mentioned this). When information was well prepared and included reasoning leading to conclusions, people were often persuaded, particularly if all the facts had been taken into consideration. They saw the influencer as professional and as a voice of reason.

2% of all answers referred to the amount of KNOWLEDGE held by the influencer as important. If they had expertise and used their knowledge well, they will influence others. Overall they were seen as ARTICULATE COMMUNICATORS, and eloquent in talking to others (1% of answers mentioned this).

### The principle of TRANSPARENCY (total 8% of all answers)

One of the most frequently mentioned skills and attributes of effective influencers in our research was that of TRANSPARENCY (over 8% of all answers referred to this). A number of aspects are key to be an effective influencer. Good influencers are open with knowledge, reasons for decisions and their thinking (In fact they often seem to ‘think out loud’!). They are seen as honest by others due to this. BEING OPEN seems to be a key skill in sharing experiences, knowledge, and information. Influencers who are transparent in their dealings engender trust. They are seen as transcending the petty political struggles of the everyday workplace. So, Knowledge is power – but only if you share it freely with others!

### The principle of being RELATIONAL (6% of all answers).

Where do effective influencers focus their efforts and attention when they are influencing others? The evidence suggests that rather than focus on the content of the work or the task, it is the type of relationship they set up. 4% of responses said that they we are influenced by people who are PERSONABLE. These influencers allow for HUMOUR in the relationship. They have a PEOPLE ORIENTATION. They are POLITE. These influencers focus on finding COMMONALITY that is drawing attention to areas of agreement between themselves and others.

They are seen as being APPROACHABLE and easy to talk to. A number of people also mentioned that the powerful influencers manage to be NON-JUDGEMENTAL in the relationship. They did not feel assessed or judged as a person by the influencer.

### The principle of FUTURE FOCUS (5% of all answers).

Good Influencers are able to explain and give direction in terms of a VISION of the future. These may be short or long term visions, but they have CLARITY, and are able to articulate this in a way which engages others. They are able to have a ‘helicopter’ view and describe how the work being done leads into the future aims. They are good at BRIDGING the practicalities of the principle of logical presentation with a broader future direction. They are able to outline what success will look like, and REASONS WHY they are going in this direction.

Respondents also named the ability of the influencer to portray the future direction using STORY, METAPHOR & ANALOGY which resulted in a greater understanding of the desired goal.

### The principle of CONFIDENCE (4% of all answers).

People who display CONFIDENCE have the ability to persuade others along with them without always having lots of rational arguments. There is something about their presence which attracts others to follow. 4% of the research answers mentioned confidence in two aspects. Firstly, CONFIDENCE IN THEMSELVES. This largely seems to be a combination of non-verbal behaviour, presentation of information and presence/energy. However they have the ability to do this without being seen as arrogant. Secondly, they show confidence in others. Good influencers display CONFIDENCE IN OTHERS abilities. They work to a premise of *‘I’m OK – You’re OK’*. As a result of these behaviours, they are often seen as strong and committed, with a lot of self belief.

### The principle of MODELLING (4% of all answers).

It seems that many of us look to our influence role models to display the behaviours that they are asking of us or that we admire. People reported their good influencers as LEADING BY EXAMPLE and DEMONSTRATING key behaviours. The behaviours they were demonstrating were many and varied from commitment to following up on promises through to being self motivated. The result reported was that people felt inspired by these influencers to go the extra mile for them and carry out what they were asking.

### The principle of being POSITIVE (3% of all answers).

Powerful influencers have a positive outlook. They are OPTIMISTS and see the good chances why something will work and be beneficial. If things do not go to plan, they are likely to notice a silver lining. They are seen as ENTHUSIASTIC and OPTIMISTIC by others, and are described as ‘FOCUSSED ON THE SOLUTION not the problems’. Much research carried out about the benefits of being positive about self others and situations, now they can add ‘effective influencer’ to that list of benefits!

### Other skills of influence.

A number of other aspects about these powerful influencers were mentioned in our research. One particular paradox was mentioned was that many people (2% of all answers) found CONSISTANCY an important aspect of influence. People felt that they knew what to expect from these influencers in terms of behaviour. However, another 2% named ADAPTABILITY to be a key aspect for them.

The results had many predicable elements to them from our own experience of influential people in organisations. However, of particular surprise were the amount of comments related to certain behaviours and elements of influence.

It became clear through the research that there are no ‘magic formulas’ for influencing. Situation, relationship and context are of paramount importance. It also became clear that there is not one ‘right’ way of influencing. The evidence suggests that two people may be influencing using very different behaviours, but be equally effective.

The research also made one thing clear, that one of these skills alone does not make a person influential. Exceptional influencers utilise a number of these skills with ease as well as moving freely between one skill and another.

Our research outlines clearly the ‘what’ of influencing based on real life practical observations from people within organisations. The next stage for anyone reading this has to be ‘How can I develop these skills to become a powerful influencer’? If you would like to learn how, please contact us.

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\*1 The Necessary Art of Persuasion’ by Jay Conga in Harvard Business Review May 1998 product no 4258

\*2 ‘Harnessing the science of Persuasion’ by Robert Cialdini in Harvard Business Review Oct 2001. Product no 9715