IDEAS INTO ACTION GUIDEBOOKS

FOR THE PRACTICING MANAGER

Influence

Gaining Commitment, Getting Results

Second Edition

Harold Scharlatt and Roland Smith

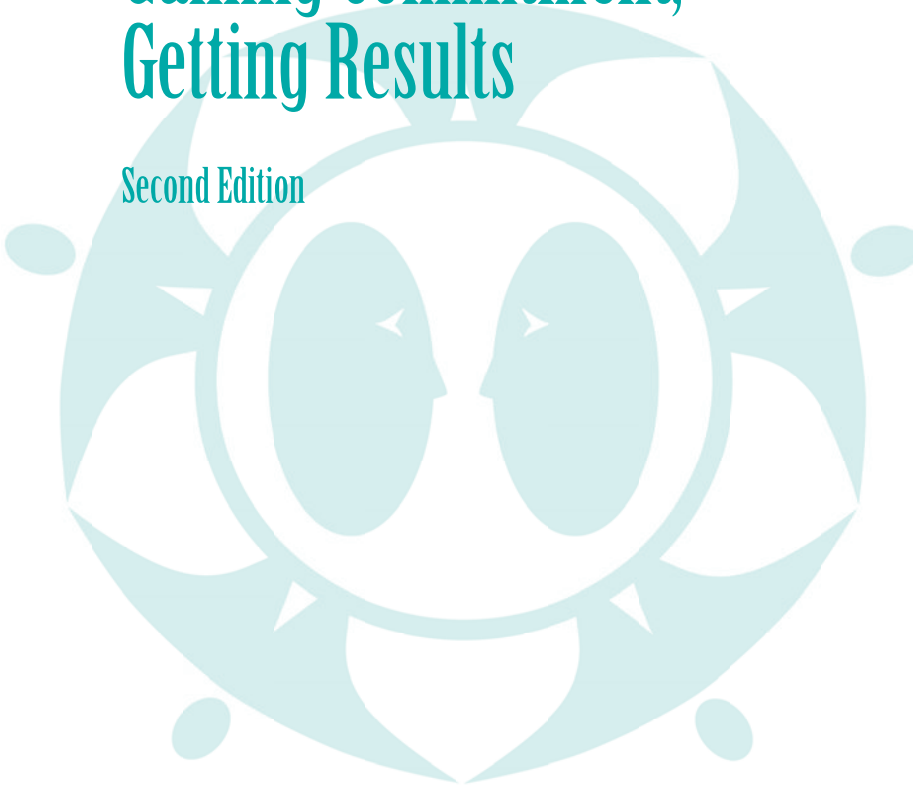
Center for Creative Leadership

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Ideas Into Action Guidebooks

Aimed at managers and executives who are concerned with their own and others' development, each guidebook in this series gives specific advice on how to complete a developmental task or solve a leadership problem.

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The Ideas Into Action Guidebook Series

This series of guidebooks draws on the practical knowledge that the Center for Creative Leadership (CCL®) has generated, since its inception in 1970, through its research and educational activity conducted in partnership with hundreds of thousands of managers and executives. Much of this knowledge is shared—in a way that is distinct from the typical university department, professional association, or consultancy. CCL is not simply a collection of individual experts, although the individual credentials of its staff are impressive; rather it is a community, with its members holding certain principles in common and working together to understand and generate practical responses to today's leadership and organizational challenges.

The purpose of the series is to provide managers with specific advice on how to complete a developmental task or solve a leadership challenge. In doing that, the series carries out CCL's mission to advance the understanding, practice, and development of leadership for the benefit of society worldwide. We think you will find the Ideas Into Action Guidebooks an important addition to your leadership toolkit.

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Executive Brief

Influence is an essential component of leadership. Your position in an organization and the power it gives you aren't always enough to motivate people to do what you ask. You may negotiate with or persuade people to make short-term behavioral change, but to create sustained change, you will need to influence them, which includes negotiation, persuasion, and other methods. Developing your skill at using different influence tactics can help you achieve results when you use those tactics to get support from direct reports, peers, bosses, and even clients and vendors.

The tactics of influence take many forms (see Table 1). After reading this guidebook, you will be familiar with different influence tactics that leaders use. You will also get a sense of the tactics you tend to use most often so that you can decide whether or not you could be more effective by using alternative approaches with different people or in different circumstances. Different combinations of tactics can be more or less effective for achieving change and increasing trust, while other combinations may bring short-term adjustments but damage long-term relationships. You will see how different organizational roles and different situations affect your use of influence tactics, and you will know what to do before, during, and after an encounter in which you try to influence another person. When you treat every attempt you make to influence as a learning experience, then you can continue to enhance your skill at using this crucial leadership capability.

Why Influence?

Influence is the power and the ability to personally affect others' actions, decisions, opinions, or thinking. As such, influence is an essential component of leadership. Most leaders want to have more of it, but may be unaware that a tactical approach can increase their personal influence. Leaders need it to sell ideas and to motivate people to support and implement decisions—sometimes your ideas and decisions, and sometimes those of others that you represent.

Your position in an organization and the power (the capacity or potential to exert influence) it gives you may not be enough to persuade and engage people. Many contemporary organizations have adopted flexible, matrix structures that rely less on hierarchy and more on a leader's ability to influence and win commitment.

> Positional power does not equal personal power.

Influence is important because it achieves desirable outcomes. You can use your influence to communicate your personal or your team's or your organization's vision. Skillful influencing can align the efforts of others in the organization, build commitment to the work, and expand the organization's capacity to meet its challenges.

Leaders who effectively use their influence skills can achieve their goals and objectives more successfully than leaders who simply order people to do things. But what does it mean to effectively use your influence skills? To answer that question, you need to know that the use of influence tactics can produce three distinctly different outcomes: resistance, compliance, and commitment. In *Leadership in Organizations*, Gary Yukl describes the differences between them.

Resistance

The least desirable outcome is resistance to the request you are making. People may directly oppose what you're asking for or use

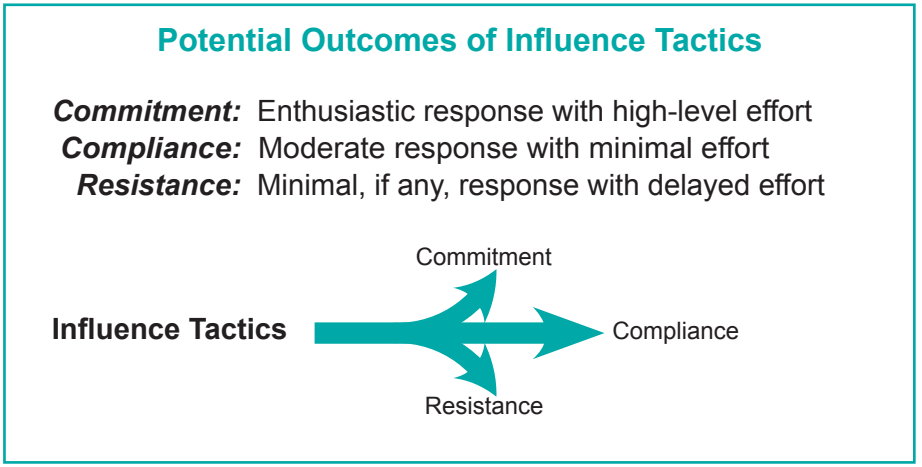


Figure 1. Potential Influence Outcomes

a stealthy resistance, perhaps sabotaging your efforts to influence in subtle ways. For example, they may initially agree with your request, but then put roadblocks in the way of its completion or make excuses about why it cannot be accomplished.

Compliance

Compliance is better than resistance, and it is often the level of response you need to ensure that another person takes action in a required way; for example, that he or she follows rules, accepts procedures, and so on. Compliance is sufficient when your request is simple and routine and doesn't require the other person to exert much additional energy or effort to accomplish it. You can settle for compliance in such situations because your request isn't optional but required by the organization, by the unit, or by the team you lead.

Commitment

When your influence efforts result in commitment, you have succeeded in presenting sufficient reasons to secure voluntary

endorsement and support for carrying out a task. This is an important distinction, and it's vital if what you are asking requires other people to take on jobs that may not be simple, quick, or without cost to their personal time or work schedules. When you are able to influence someone to the level of commitment, you receive several advantages:

- There is less need to monitor progress toward your goals or fight resistance to them.
- There is greater sustained effort, which is particularly important when the tasks involved are complex or difficult and require a concentrated effort over a long period of time.
- Because committed people endorse your objectives, they tend to be more efficient, creative, resilient, and focused toward your shared goal.
- Working relationships improve.

An Inspirational Appeal

On May 25, 1961, U.S. President John F. Kennedy addressed the Congress on what he called an "extraordinary challenge." Four years earlier, the U.S.S.R. had launched Sputnik I, a 184-pound aluminum ball that emitted radio beeps as it orbited the earth. Kennedy wanted support from lawmakers, the scientific community, and U.S. citizens to help the United States to catch up. "We possess all the resources and talents necessary. But we have never specified long-range goals on an urgent time schedule, or managed our resources and our time so as to insure their fulfillment," Kennedy said. The president framed his call to action as exploration and discovery—values held in common by many Americans at the time. "I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the moon and returning him safely to the earth," Kennedy said. In 1969, the United States achieved that goal.

Whom Do You Influence?

In the past, as you have tried to influence your peers, your direct reports, and your bosses—selling them on a new idea, for example, suggesting a process change, requesting resources—you have probably noticed that you use different approaches for each. One of the first steps to take toward more successful influencing is to consider individual personalities, goals and objectives, and organizational roles.

Organizational leaders, managers, and different work units often describe various stakeholder groups as critical to their success. Each stakeholder has some particular interest in the outcome of decisions, the performance of work teams, a relationship to the organization, or any number of matters. Stakeholders often have their own agendas, perspectives, and priorities.

It's not unusual for any of us to experience an ongoing struggle in learning how to influence different stakeholders. Sometimes you have to influence your boss, who occupies a more powerful position than you, or you have to influence a client whose main interest is its own satisfactory result. Sometimes you have to build partnerships with peers across organizational boundaries. And there is always the challenge of motivating direct reports. Providing specific rules for how to influence each of these groups is impossible because each leader's situation is different. Some organizations create a collegial atmosphere with open communication and broad collaboration, while other organizations maintain a rigid hierarchy and focus on individual star performers. Does your boss give you the latitude to design and control your team's work and schedule, or does your boss exert direct control? Do you and your peers work together on projects and share overlapping responsibilities, or do you interact indirectly and not often? Some of your direct reports may ask for guidance and detailed directions, while others prefer to work more independently.

Because of these shifting contexts and constituents, it's important that you understand that influence works relationally. Your locus

Says Who?

A manager we know supervises a team of four people. One weekend, he came into the office and moved everyone's desk into a format that he thought would be more efficient. When his team came to work Monday morning, all four were really upset—so upset that he allowed them to move everything back to where it had been. Then he had them get together and give him a recommendation on how the office could be redone to make it more efficient. Interestingly enough, they came up with the same plan! So they moved the furniture back to where their supervisor had placed it. This time they felt comfortable with the change because it had been "their idea" and not a prescription from the boss.

of influence ebbs and flows because as you influence others, your actions return to you and may influence your next action. If you use influence tactics as only transactional actions, you may be successful in expanding the borders of your function beyond where the organization has set them. But those borders will remain fragile without capitalizing on the trust born of relational encounters. When you base influence on mutuality and reciprocity, trust increases and can lead to sustainable change. Instead of simply increasing the scope of your managerial function, you increase the scope of your leadership role. That is the kind of increase that potentially leads to expanded organizational capacity by gaining commitment from others.

In addition to considering stakeholder interests, you should consider the kind of power relationship you have with those you are attempting to influence. Two types of power relationships are especially relevant: personal power and positional power. *Personal power* refers to the level of trust, respect, and relational commitment you share with a particular stakeholder (think of the difference between a peer and a client relationship). *Positional power* refers to the organizational

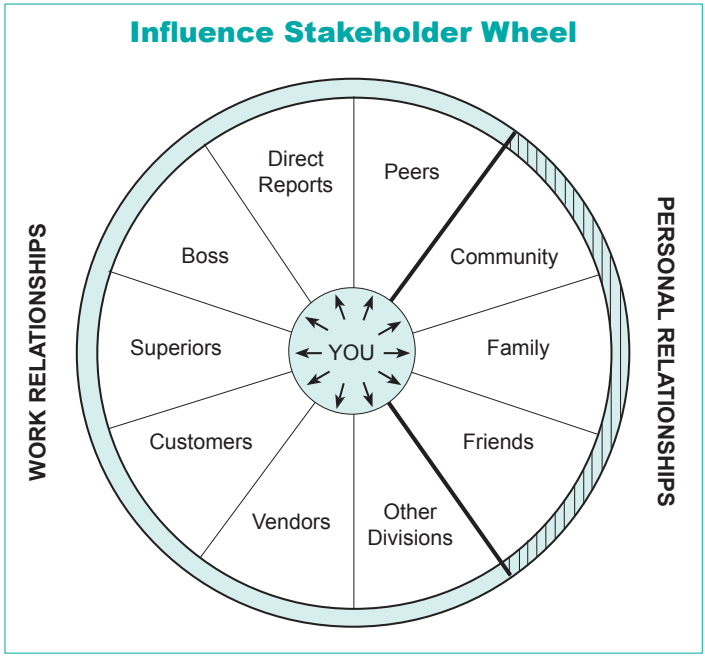
power given through title or specific responsibility (as noted above about influencing bosses).

The Influence Stakeholder Wheel on the next page can help you think about how your use of influence tactics can change, depending on the relationship, the agenda, and other factors among people you want to influence. As you examine the wheel, consider this question: How does your choice and use of influence tactics change around this wheel? The blank wheel lets you generate your own set of stakeholders.

Influence Tactics

Most of the time, when you make a simple request, people are likely to carry it out provided that it does not negatively affect them. If your request is clearly legitimate, relevant to their work, and something they know how to do, resistance will probably be minimal. Selecting and developing a broader set of influence tactics becomes more important when your request is perceived as unpleasant, inconvenient, or inconsistent with the other person's goals, values, or intentions. If it is not immediately obvious to other people that complying with your request is necessary, it can be particularly difficult to influence their actions toward that end.

Table 1 (page 14) lists eleven influence tactics that research has identified as effective in different situations and with different people. In *Leadership in Organizations*, Gary Yukl divides the eleven tactics into two groups: four core tactics that research suggests are most effective and most widely used, and seven supplementary tactics that leaders often use in conjunction with the core tactics. In the table, the core tactics are marked with an asterisk.


Influence Stakeholder Wheel
WORK RELATIONSHIPS
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS
Direct Reports
Peers
Boss
Community
Superiors
YOU
Family
Customers
Friends
Vendors
Other Divisions

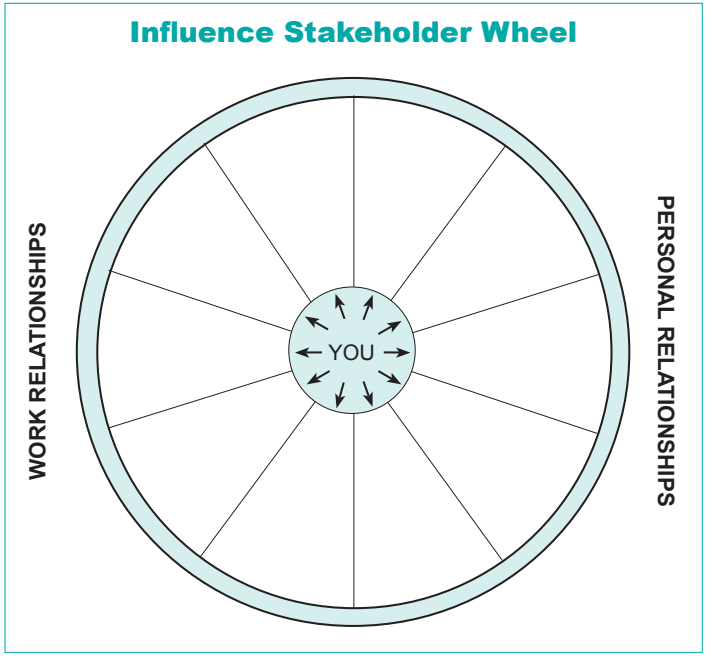

Influence Stakeholder Wheel
WORK RELATIONSHIPS
PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS
YOU

Table 1. Definition of the Proactive Influence Tactics

*Rational persuasion	You use logical arguments and factual evidence to show that a request or proposal is feasible and relevant for attaining important task objectives.
*Consultation	You ask the person to suggest improvements or help plan a proposed activity or change for which the person's support is desired.
*Inspirational appeals	You appeal to the person's values and ideals or seek to arouse the person's emotions to gain commitment for a request or proposal.
*Collaboration	You offer to provide assistance or necessary resources if the person will carry out a request or approve a proposed change.
Apprising	You explain how carrying out a request or supporting a proposal will benefit the person or help to advance his/her career.
Ingratiation	You use praise and flattery before or during an attempt to influence the target person to carry out a request or support a proposal.
Exchange	You offer something the person wants, or offer to reciprocate at a later time, if the person will do what you ask.
Personal appeals	You ask the person to carry out a request or support a proposal as a personal favor based on friendship or the person's kindness.
Legitimating	You seek to establish the legitimacy of a request or to verify that you have the authority to make it.
Pressure	You use demands, threats, frequent checking, or persistent reminders to influence the person to do something.
Coalition	You enlist the support of others to help you in influencing the person, or you use their endorsement of your request or proposal in your influence attempt.

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Which Influence Tactics Do You Use?

You may not have paid careful attention to which of the influence tactics in Table 1 you use most often and which you seldom use. If that's the case, you might be relying too much on a few tactics that do not work as well as others when you're faced with different people or different situations. Likewise, you may seldom use tactics that might easily give you the results you want. Given that you cannot predict with absolute certainty the situation in which you will call on your influence skills, think of how more experience with a broader set of tactics creates a developmental opportunity for boosting your ability to lead changes, rally support, or simply keep individuals and your team headed in the right direction.

If you'll notice in Figure 2 (page 16), the influence tactics that research reveals as the most effective for creating commitment lie at the true north position. Chances are that if you set your heading by these marks you will be successful in influencing others.

To assess the influence tactics you currently use, complete the worksheet on pages 17–20. There are two parts to the worksheet. Part 1 helps you identify and measure the most common ways you influence others. In Part 2 you will plot your responses on a graph to show which influence tactics you can develop to be more versatile and become a more effective influencer. Granted, this simple self-assessment is not a rigorous, empirical examination of your use of influence tactics or how influence is practiced in your organization. But if you round out your self-assessment by asking others for their impressions and observations of how you influence, you can use all of that information to get a practical sense of what tactics you can use more often and which ones you can rein in.

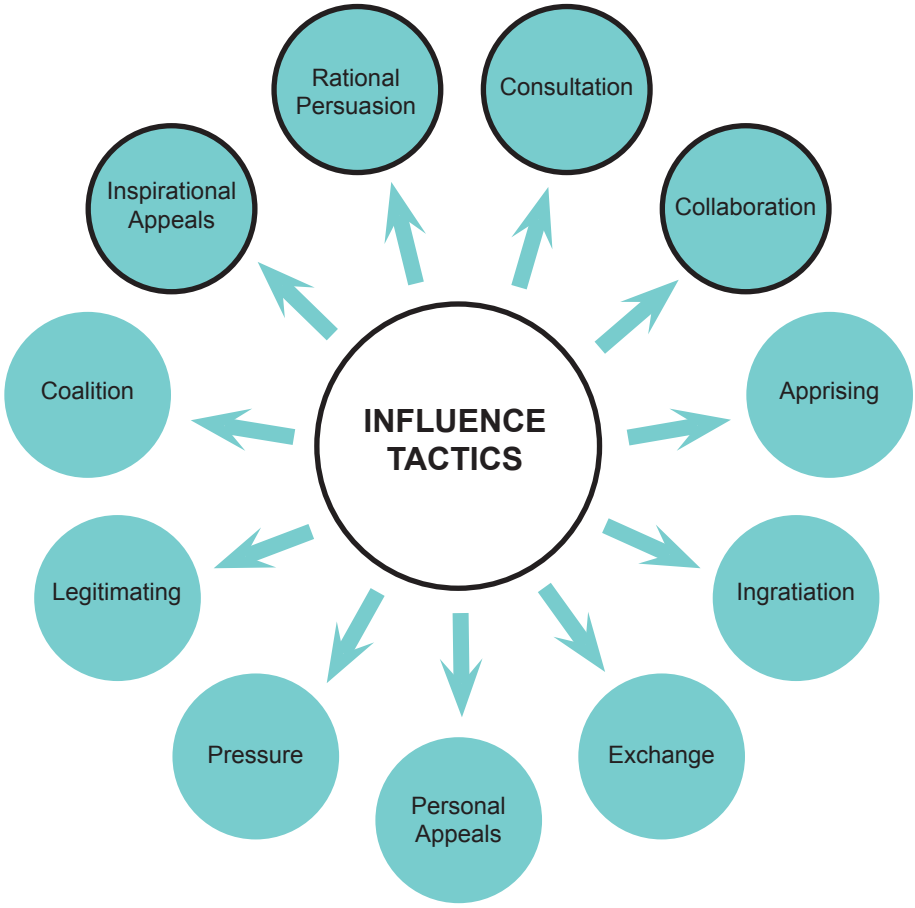


Figure 2. The true north of influence comprises four primary tactics.

How Situation Affects Influence

We speak above about tailoring your influence strategy to the particular person from whom you seek support. We also speak about how you can broaden your tactical choices by assessing which tactics you tend to use more than others. If you try to influence someone to take a different course of action—lend you resources that leave his or

Your Use of Influence Tactics: A Self-Guided Worksheet

Part 1

Respond to the statements below, which describe typical actions taken to influence another person to take an action or perform a task. As you respond to the statements, don't be too concerned at this point about whether the person is a direct report, peer, boss, or other key stakeholder. Although your choice of influence tactics can depend on who, why, where, and when you influence, in this exercise you are only reporting how often you use certain tactics.

Using the scale below, please rate each statement by darkening the appropriate number.

1 = Almost never
2 = Seldom
3 = Sometimes
4 = Often
5 = Almost always

Q1 I logically explain to the person the reason for the requested action. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Q2 I explain how my request, which may require additional work from another person, can have long-term benefits to the person's career. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Q3 I show the person how the requested action meets his or her individual goals and values. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Q4 I provide the necessary resources (time, staff, materials, and technical support, for example) the person needs to accomplish the task. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Q5 I link my request to the organization's strategic intent. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Q6 I offer factual and detailed evidence that the proposal is feasible. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Q7	I present my request in terms of a favor, which I promise to repay.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q8	I describe the task with enthusiasm and express confidence in the person's ability to accomplish it.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q9	I reduce the difficulty of carrying out the request by removing barriers to success.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q10	I ask the person for ideas about how to carry out the requested action and incorporate those ideas into the process.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q11	I tell the person that without his or her help, I will have to appeal to his or her boss.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q12	I provide opportunities for the person to learn new skills that will be beneficial.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q13	I link my request to a clear and appealing vision the person can fully support.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q14	I agree to assist the person with one of his or her future projects.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q15	I thoughtfully respond to the person's concerns and suggestions.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q16	I involve credible people to help me influence the person.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q17	I explain that my position in the organization makes me responsible for making the request.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q18	I check in often with the person to make sure he or she is carrying out my request.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q19	I appeal to the person's self-image.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤
Q20	I offer to help the person with his or her regular work.	① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Q21 I depend on my working relationships with the person to support my request. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Q22 I develop strategic alliances by networking with key stakeholders who will help me in developing my influence strategy. ① ② ③ ④ ⑤

Part 2

Add up the points for all your responses using the formulas below. The score for each scale will be from 2 to 10 points.

Q1 + Q6 = _____ This is your *rational persuasion* score.

Q10 + Q15 = ____ This is your *consultation* score.

Q3 + Q13 = _____ This is your *inspirational appeals* score.

Q4 + Q9 = _____ This is your *collaboration* score.

Q2 + Q12 = _____ This is your *apprising* score.

Q8 + Q19 = _____ This is your *ingratiation* score.

Q14 + Q20 = ____ This is your *exchange* score.

Q7 + Q21 = _____ This is your *personal appeals* score.

Q17 + Q5 = _____ This is your *legitimating* score.

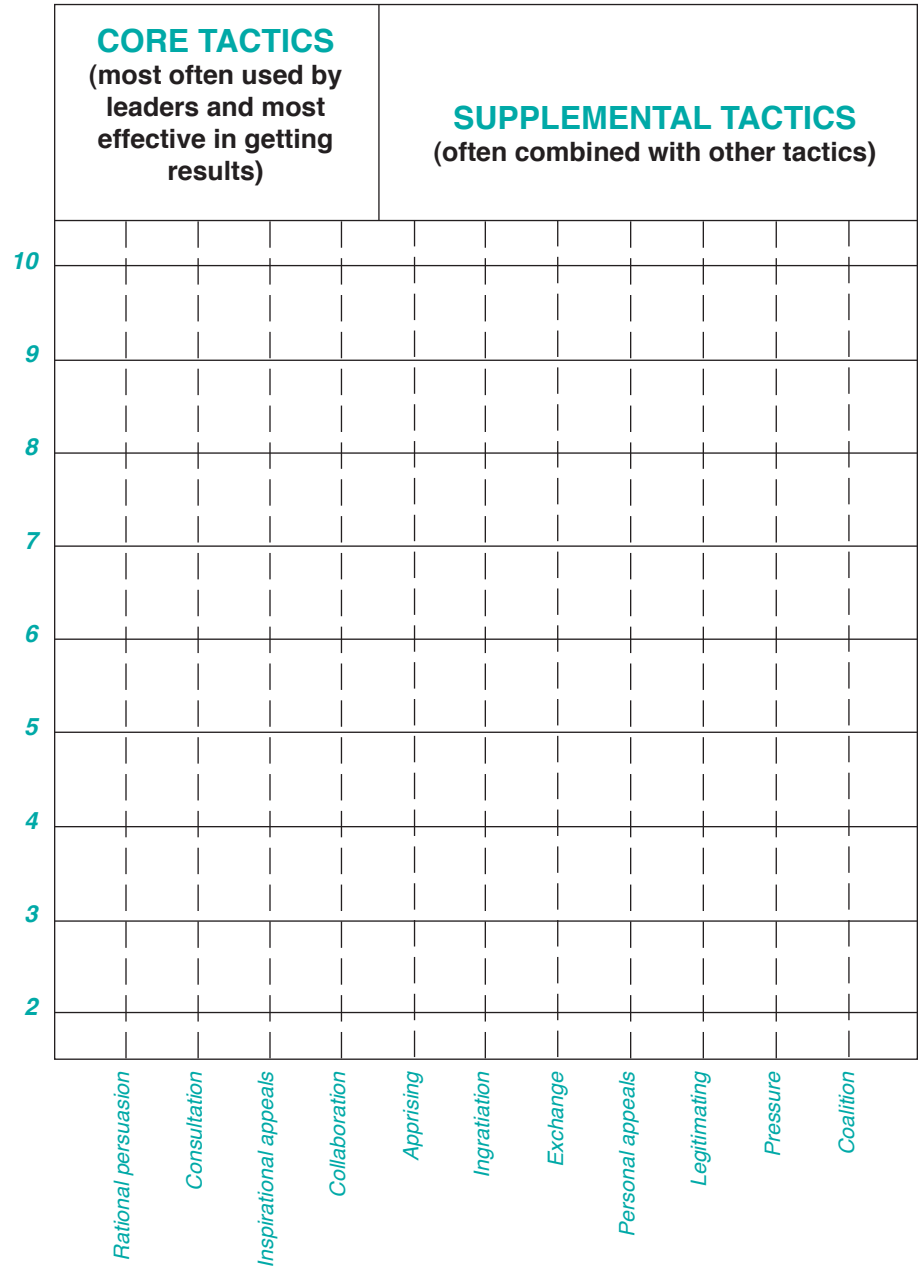
Q18 + Q11 = ____ This is your *pressure* score.

Q16 + Q22 = ____ This is your *coalition* score.

Part 3

Plot each of your scores on the following graph and then connect the dots. This will show which influence tactics you can develop or use more often, either alone or in combination with other tactics.

If you prefer, or if you want an additional graph to mark your progress in using different influence tactics, you can download a copy at www.ccl.org/influence.


CORE TACTICS
(most often used by leaders and most effective in getting results)
SUPPLEMENTAL TACTICS
(often combined with other tactics)
10
9
8
7
6
5
4
3
2
Rational persuasion
Consultation
Inspirational appeals
Collaboration
Apprising
Ingratiation
Exchange
Personal appeals
Legitimating
Pressure
Coalition

her own team shorthanded for a time so that you can meet a critical client deadline, for example—and your appeal does not produce the result you need, there is another aspect of influence you may need to account for. Influence can be highly situational, and you need to read that situation, see how the other person fits in it, and then decide which tactic will serve you best. The ancient Greeks called this *kairos*, which translates loosely to "the right moment."

One way you can seize the right moment to influence someone is to carefully plan each situation in which you plan to solicit the support of others. Clearly, you cannot plan for every contingency, and sometimes the opportunity to exercise influence can arise unexpectedly. But planning will help you think through different contingencies, develop responses to how others might receive your influence, and imagine alternative tactics so you can switch to one that in the moment may be more effective.

Create your plan in the form of a script in which you describe what you are trying to accomplish and assess the stakeholders from whom you seek endorsement and support. You can also review the influence tactics you tend to favor and those you often avoid using. Imagine the situation and anticipate what kind of reaction you are likely to get. After developing such a plan, you can then map the details of a meeting with the person you need to influence. Using the information in the following sections, think through the actions you will take before and during an influence session. After the session, review your actions and the responses of the person you were trying to influence. Reflect on your efforts so that you can learn from your experience and use what you learn to shape future encounters.

Setting Your Goals

You are more likely to have success influencing others if you establish clear goals, assess your audience, identify appropriate influence tactics, and practice using them. Answering all or some of the following

questions can help you work out your thoughts on whom you need to influence and what you want or need to accomplish.

- Who is the person you are attempting to influence, and what position does that person occupy relative to yours (boss, peer, direct report, customer, vendor)?
- What is the situation? Why has your organization assigned you this task? How much support do you need?
- Why did you choose to initiate your request? Why do you need this person's support for your idea?
- What do you want the outcome of your influence session to be?
- What benefits do you and the person you want to influence receive if you handle the situation well? What will it cost you and the person you want to influence to deal effectively with the situation?
- Assess the differences and similarities of personal and/or positional power between yourself and the person you want to influence. How can you leverage this power to increase your influence?
- What influence tactics should you choose to drive, accelerate, and implement change in your organization?
- Which tactics do you need to start using or use more of?
- Which tactics do you need to use less or stop using?

Identifying Benefits and Challenges

Each influence effort you make includes things that make it easier and things that make it more difficult. For example, you may have had a negative confrontation in the past with the person you are now hoping to influence. How will you deal with the residual effect of that confrontation? On the positive side, perhaps you have some expertise in a particular area that the organization has recognized and the person you want to influence wants to gain some expertise in that

area as well. By identifying these kinds of benefits and challenges, you can capitalize on positive aspects associated with the influence session and address its challenges. You can also increase your chances of successfully influencing the person. The worksheet on page 24 will help you determine the obstacles or challenges that exist in influencing the person. Use it also to highlight benefits or other positive aspects that you can use to increase your chances of success. We have highlighted three broad areas that often connect with benefits and challenges: relationship, politics and power, and skills and knowledge. You may think of other areas in which benefits and challenges exist.

Developing Your Influence Session Script

Given what you know about the person you want to influence and the situation in which you will try to influence that person, describe in detail how a conversation with that person might go. Successfully influencing another person involves more than just making a request. To gain the person's commitment, you want to engage at a more substantial level—communicating your goal, explaining the benefits of joining your effort, and securing the person's endorsement.

One place to start when describing your planned scenario is with the influence tactics that are likely to work best given what you know. Review Table 1 on page 14 to choose tactics you think would be the most effective. Then turn to your assessment of your influence tactics skills. Review how you scored yourself on the worksheet on pages 17–20. Pay particular attention to the tactics that you use less frequently, and think about how you can develop them before your influence session to increase your chance of success.

It does not necessarily take a lot of work to develop tactics that you rarely use. For example, you may be skilled with using logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade someone or to make a request. Perhaps the person you want to influence is known for being generous or creative more than analytical. In that case, you can look at your proposal in terms of how it inspires or arouses enthusiasm by appealing to values and ideals.

Analyzing Benefits and Challenges Worksheet

	Benefits *(positive factors)*	**Challenges** *(negative factors)*
Relationship What kind of working relationship do you have with the person you want to influence? What level of trust and respect exists between the two of you? Have you worked cooperatively in the past? Was that work successful? What made it successful? Have you had or do you have a conflict with this person? What situation led to the conflict? Was it resolved? Are there lingering repercussions?		
Politics and Power Does the person you want to influence occupy a higher or lower position than you in the organization? How might that difference affect your influence strategy? Does this person have an informal kind of power in the organization based on interpersonal skills, for example, or a network of peers? How can you use those skills or that network to influence the person? What challenges do they pose for you as you attempt to influence?		
Skills and Knowledge Does the person you want to influence possess necessary technical skills and knowledge that would help accomplish your task or contribute to your proposal? Would your project gain the person recognition for the skills or knowledge? Does your project encroach on a technical area that the person regards as his or her domain?		
Based on your analysis, is your attempt to influence this person in this situation likely to result in a positive outcome?		

Another way to develop your underused influence tactics is to evaluate the benefits you have identified and think about how you can use them to shore up seldom-used tactics. For example, if you are skilled at collaborating but find creating a logical rationale a challenge, perhaps you can reach out to others to help you develop a logical argument. Developing some tactics to the level you need to be an effective influencer may require more practice, coaching, or research. Your goal before starting an influence session is to have confidence in and comfort with the tactics you have chosen to use. The worksheet on page 26 will help you work through your plan.

Conducting an Influence Session

After you have assessed your influence-tactics preferences, described your goals, described the person you are trying to influence, and sketched the groundwork for your influencing session, you are ready to meet with the person you need to influence. Use the ideas you develop with the Influence Session Worksheet to help you stay focused on your goal during the conversation. Interpersonal and communication skills are critical at this stage, so set the stage for your request and establish a rapport with the other person.

Set the stage. Pick the right time and place for your influence session. Find a setting where there will be minimal distractions. Pick a neutral site to minimize personal and positional power differences. Create an atmosphere that encourages openness, optimism, and connection with the person you are attempting to influence.

Establish rapport. Describe the situation. Check to see that the other person understands what you are saying by asking clarifying questions to clear up any confusion, to define problems, to uncover gaps in information, and to encourage accuracy and precision. Be mindful of the impact of your nonverbal communication—body language and tone of voice. Make sure to establish eye contact, smile, and let the person know that you appreciate his or her listening to what you have to say. Watch the person's reactions to you, and build on points of agreement to create momentum toward the outcome you want.

Influence Session Worksheet

Which influence tactics are likely to be most effective?	What specifically will you say and do to use these tactics?

Anticipate possible responses. What might the person feel or think after your attempt to influence? What might the person say?

Create your counterargument. Plan how you are going to use additional influence tactics to reply, if necessary, to the person's response.

Identify potential points of mutual agreement and use them to move toward your desired outcome. Secure agreement on your desired outcome. Establish clear steps that both of you will take to accomplish your agreed-upon goals.

End on a positive note. Express your appreciation and communicate your willingness to meet again to check on the progress being made toward the goal.

Reflecting on Your Influence Session

To increase your skill with any leadership practice, it is important to learn from your experiences. Each time you attempt to influence someone, even just to make a small request, take the opportunity to think back over the encounter and how you adjusted your techniques and tactics or chose other tactics altogether. The following questions can guide your learning from experience:

- What went well during the session? Describe the situation and the person's response.
- What did not go well? Describe the situation and the person's response.
- Did you get the outcome you wanted? Describe any compromises or modifications to your intended goal.
- What steps did you and the other person agree to take next?
- What did you learn about yourself and your ability to influence others?
- What would you do differently next time?
- What additional support can you find to develop your influence skills?

Conclusion

Influencing others is not easy, especially if you do not have direct authority to back up your request. Even if you do, as with direct reports, gaining commitment takes more skill than getting compliance. As you take on different roles in your organization, change jobs, or accept positions in your community, you will draw on your skills as an influencer again and again. Your ability to influence others depends not just on your learning and practicing different tactics. The thoughtful use of tactics is just part of what can be a complex interaction that plays out differently at different levels of the organization and among

different people. Achieving results by influencing others can also include the following factors:

- a reputation of trust, credibility, and flexibility
- communication and relationship skills
- a focus on creating broad, shared benefits
- an ability to identify with the interests of others
- avoiding a perception of manipulation or selfishness
- the ability to read situational cues such as body language or the setting you are in (a formal office or over lunch, for example)

Influencing someone to endorse your agenda or to commit to your desired goals may not happen immediately. Each individual you attempt to influence has to carefully consider the costs and benefits involved with agreeing to your position. This guidebook touches on but one aspect of influence—tactics. Leaders at every organizational level should be well versed in these tactics and their use. On a broader scale, influence emerges as a multifaceted, relational, power-shifting, and collaborative enterprise. Differences—in culture, age, and gender, for example—can complicate your role as a leader and how you influence others. In all of its aspects, influence frames direction, alignment, and commitment among individuals, teams, and organizations. It stakes out significant ground in strategy, transformation, and innovation, among other spaces (see Figure 3).

The response you get to your influence efforts will test your flexibility and adaptability as a leader, and will shape your expectations for future encounters. Learning how to get results through others is a long-term, ongoing process—just like many other aspects of leadership practice.

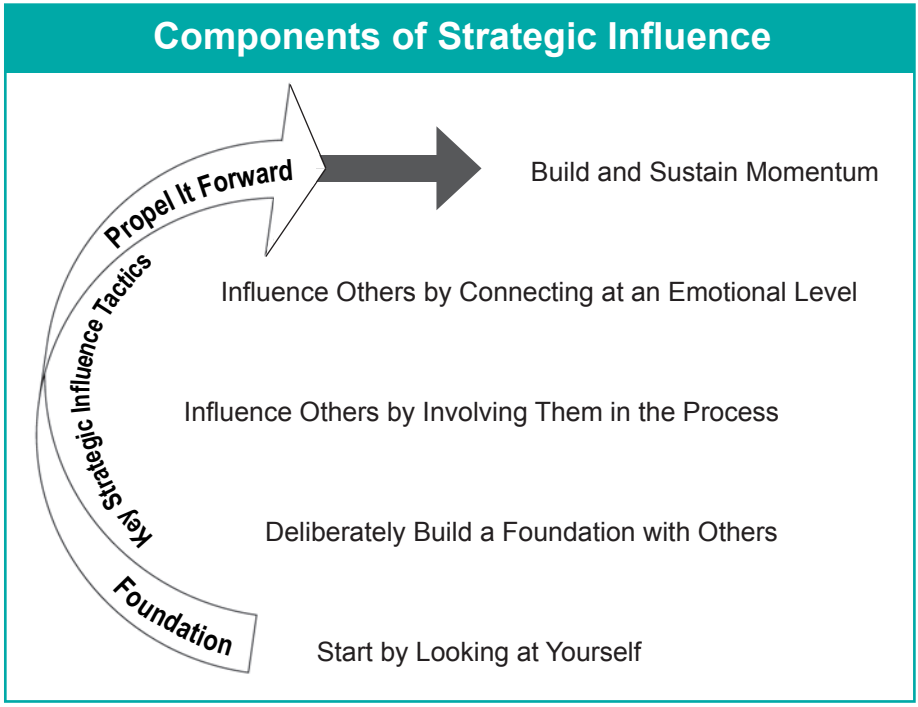


Figure 3. Influence creates strategic space and momentum for transformation.

Suggested Readings

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Background

Research about how managers use influence has a long history and has led to the understanding that leaders can use multiple tactics to build commitment and get results from peers, direct reports, and bosses.

CCL identifies influence as one of four fundamental leader competencies (ranked with self-awareness, learning agility, and communication). Influence emerges in different ways in many of CCL's programs: in assessment instruments, in videotaped role-plays, and in scripted vignettes. Influence also plays a supporting role in several of CCL's Ideas Into Action Guidebooks, reinforcing ideas such as networking among leaders; broaching new ideas in organizations; sharing the accomplishments of your team and yourself; and communicating a vision to groups, teams, and organizations.

A last word: CCL acknowledges the key contributions of David Baldwin and Curt Grayson, who brought the idea of a guidebook about influence tactics to CCL's publishing program. The first edition of this guidebook, for which David and Curt served as lead contributors, has been one of CCL's most popular publications. Since the release of the first edition in 2004, CCL has continued to develop notions about influence and move beyond tactics. Even so, the subject of influence tactics—what they are, which ones are effective, which ones are most used—remains important to leaders. This revised, second edition puts the idea of influence tactics in a shared space with other aspects of influence. CCL believes that the practices discussed in this edition constitute one important point in a constellation of its knowledge about influence. It plans to publish more on that topic in order to articulate for its clients and the public a range of influence practices that emerge at different levels of leadership responsibility. It is, then, fitting that CCL look back to thank David and Curt for the collaboration, negotiation, and practical approach that got the ball rolling.

Key Point Summary

Influence is an essential component of leadership. Your position in an organization and the power it gives you aren't always enough to motivate people to do what you ask. Developing your influence skills can help you gain commitment from people at all levels: direct reports, peers, and bosses.

Leaders are often challenged in learning how to influence different stakeholders. A leader with highly developed influence skills almost always has some sense of individual personalities, the goals and objectives that people are responsible for, and the organizational roles that people play. That knowledge alone can't strengthen influence skill, but it reminds leaders that positive results often depend on using a variety of influence tactics.

To increase the range of influence tactics available to you, it's helpful to note which ones you rely on heavily and which ones you tend to avoid. Then, by considering whom you want to influence, you can settle on a tactic that is likely to produce the best result. Reviewing the outcome of those episodes creates an opportunity to learn from your experience and to become a more influential leader and a more powerful contributor to your organization's ongoing success.

Ordering Information

To get more information, to order other Ideas Into Action Guidebooks, or to find out about bulk-order discounts, please contact us by phone at 336-545-2810 or visit our online bookstore at www.ccl.org/guidebooks.

FOR THE PRACTICING MANAGER

Influence

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The Center for Creative Leadership is an international, nonprofit educational institution whose mission is to advance the understanding, practice, and development of leadership for the benefit of society worldwide. We conduct research, produce publications, and provide a broad variety of educational programs and products to leaders and organizations in public, corporate, and nonprofit sectors.

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