**INFLUENCE WITHOUT AUTHORITY**

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**INFLUENCE WITH OUT AUTHORITY**

**What is Influence?**

Influence is the power to get your work done. You need to influence those in other departments and divisions, that is, people you can’t order and control to succeed in the organization.

**Why is it required in organizations?**

Those who keep their heads down and only work within their immediate areas will slowly become extinct. Whatever your job, you are expected to join your colleagues in doing important work, which will lead you to influence and be influenced. You will need to know how to sell important projects, persuade colleagues to provide needed resources, create satisfactory working relationships with them and their managers, insist that your boss respond to issues that may not appear important to him or her, and, in turn, give thoughtful responses to requests associates make of you. The person asking something of you today may be the very one you’ll need next week. With so much interdependence required, wielding influence becomes a test of skill.

When we already know how to get needed cooperation, we just do it. But if when we are stuck, or frustrated, or want to be sure how best to approach someone, then the book, Influence without Authority, has a universal model that can be applied in any organization, to any person or group, in any direction, to get results.

**Why we have to use an Influential Model?**

People already know a lot more about influence than they realize. Some of the time, they can just ask for what they need, and if the other person or group can respond, they will. Sometimes they have to work a little harder to figure out how to get what they want. They may not think about it, but They instinctively understand that when someone helps Them, they are expected sooner or later to somehow pay other person back, in some reasonable way.

This kind of give and take—formally called exchange—is a core part of all human interaction. Although the concept of give and take is in many ways simple and straightforward, the process of exchange is more complicated.

When we already have a good relationship, we don’t need conscious diagnosis, careful planning of our approach, or subtlety of implementation. But when

•The other person or group is known to be resistant.   
• You don’t know the other people and are asking something that might be costly to them.   
• You have a poor relationship (or are part of a group that has a poor relationship with the group the other person belongs to).  
 • You are asking for something that could be a big burden to give.   
 • You might not get another chance.

Then the Influential Model is necessary

**Barriers to Influence:**

Some of what blocks influence is external to us, for example:

* Too great a power differential between us and the person or group we want to influence.
* The people we want to influence have different goals and objectives from us, leading to different priorities.
* The people we want to influence have incompatible performance measures and rewards.
* The people we want to influence are rivals, or feel competitive and don’t want us to succeed.

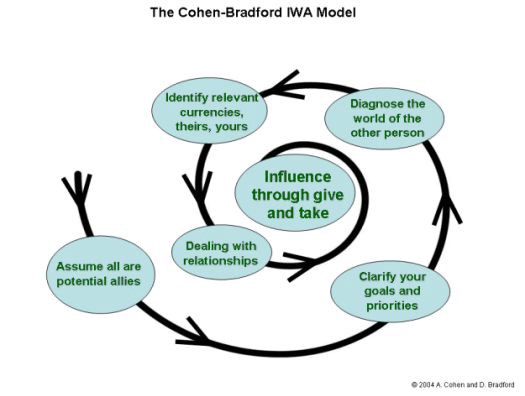
Some of what blocks influence is internal to us, for example:

* Lack of knowledge of how to go about influencing when there are objective difficulties.
* Attitudes that blind us to important objective information that would help us.
* Fear of the other person or group and how they might react.
* Inability to focus on what you need and how the other person could benefit from that.

The Influential model helps in overcoming these Barriers

**The Influential Model:**

The objective of the influential model is to influence people who are resistant to your initial influence. This model is the foundation of enforcing influence, it is mainly used in work places and businesses.



Although the concept of exchange in many ways is simple and straightforward, the process of exchange is more complicated.

When we already have a good relationship with another person, there is no need for such conscious diagnosis of the situation and thinking through the appropriate approach. We just ask, and if the colleague can respond, they will.

This doesn’t mean that the Influential model doesn’t apply. It does; it just means we are instinctively using it. But there are other times when it is not so easy to influence the other person, and a more deliberate and conscious approach is needed. That is why this influence model—a careful diagnosis of the other’s interests, assessment of what resources we possess, and attention to the relationship— can be so valuable.

**Assume All-the Other Person or Group-Are Potential Allies**

One of the greatest challenges to influence is trying to influence someone who isn’t cooperating. Rather than writing that person off prematurely assume that everyone we want to influence could be a potential ally if we work at it.

When we need something from someone who has no formal obligation to cooperate, begin by assessing whether you could form an alliance by discovering where there might be overlapping interests.

**Clarify Your Goals and Priorities**

Knowing what you want from the potential ally isn’t always easy. You need to think hard about your core objectives, so you won’t get side tracked into pursuing secondary goals.

**Diagnose the Ally’s World: Organizational Forces Likely to Shape Goals, Concerns, and Needs**

The challenge here is to determine the organizational situation of the potential ally that drives much of what he or she cares about.

These forces usually play an even greater role in shaping what is important to them than their personality. If for any reason we can’t ask that person directly, examine the organizational forces that might shape goals, concerns, or needs.

For example, how a person is measured and rewarded, the manager’s and peer’s expectations, where the person is in his or her career, and so on, have a powerful effect on what the person might want in exchange for cooperation, and what the costs would be for giving what we want.

**Identify Relevant Currencies:**

We have named the things that people care about “currencies,” because that equates something of value we have that we can trade for something valuable they have. Most people care about more than one thing (e.g , prestige, money, being liked). If you can identify several applicable currencies, you will have a wider range of possibilities to offer in exchange.

**Assess Your Resources Relative to the Ally’s Wants.**

It is not unlikely that our ally wants some things that we can’t offer. Therefore, it is important to know what resources we command or have access to, so that we can use a currency that fits. Because many people underestimate the resources they can muster, they jump to the conclusion that they are powerless. But a careful look at the many things we can do without a budget or formal permission—the alternative currencies we command—can reveal potential bargaining chips.

**Dealing with Relationships**

This has two aspects:

(1) What is the nature of your relationship with that person—positive, neutral, or negative?

(2) How does that person want to be related to?

We might have a prior relationship, and if it is a good one, then it will be easier to ask for what we want without having to prove our good intentions. If, however, the relationship has a history of mistrust—whether for personal reasons or because we represent departments in conflict—or there has been no prior contact, it is better to proceed with caution. We will need to pay attention to building the requisite trust and credibility.

**Determine Your Trading Approach: Make Exchanges**

Once we have determined what goods or services can be exchanged, then we are ready to offer what we have, in return for what we want.

our approach will be shaped by:

• The attractiveness of our resources.   
• The ally’s needs for what we have.  
• our desire for what the ally has   
• our organization’s unwritten rules about how explicitly people can express what they want and need   
• our prior relationship with the potential ally, as well as the preferred style of interaction   
• our willingness to take chances to pursue what we want

**Exchanges Can Be Positive or Negative**

There are Two forms of negative exchange :

(1) implicit or explicit threat of what you might do, or what might happen as a consequence of the other person’s responses; and

(2) negative retaliation, in which both sides end up losing.

Negative payback can feel unpleasant for both the sender and the receiver, but it can be necessary if positive exchanges are eventually to occur. Lose-lose retaliatory exchanges are the least desirable, to be used only as a last resort.

**Self-Created Barriers to Influencing**

1. Not Assuming the Other Person Is at Least a Potential Ally
2. Not Clarifying Your Goals and Priorities.
3. Not Diagnosing Ally’s World—Organizational Forces Likely to Shape Goals, Concerns, and Needs.
4. Not Determining the Ally’s Currencies.
5. Not Accepting the Ally’s Currencies.
6. Not Assessing Your Resources Relative to the Ally’s Wants
7. Not Diagnosing Your Relationship with the Potential Ally (and Fixing It If Necessary).
8. Not Figuring Out How You Want to Make Trades—And Making Them.

**Relationship Matters**

It’s not difficult to build relationships with those we know well and with whom we share similar goals, values, and tastes. Their assumptions and ways of viewing the world are familiar. Their behavior, even when disagreeable, is predictable, and they can be influenced by known methods. But organizations are filled with people who are “strangers,” who view the world differently because they work for differing functions and managers; are a different sex, age, race, ethnicity, country of origin; or have different training and experiences—all resulting from the requirement to bring diverse expertise to bear on complex organizational problems.

In any circumstances, good, open, and trusting relationships have several benefits:

• Communication is more complete, so you are more likely to know the needs and currencies of the other person.   
• The other person is more likely to take your word and to be open to being influenced.   
• You can pay back later in a wider range of currencies and less exactly.   
• Personal currencies where there is connection become more important, which broadens the kinds of currencies you can pay in.

Although transactions occasionally can be so clearly beneficial to both parties that the relationship between them is irrelevant, most of the time there are many ways in which a poor relationship affects the likelihood of influence. For example, a poor relationship:

• Decreases the other person’s desire to be influenced.   
• Distortsaccuracyofperceptionsofeachother’scurrenciesandintentions.   
• Increases burden of proof on: —The other person’s performance. —Delivery of promises. —The value of what is offered to you for exchange. —Expected timing of repayment.   
• Decreases tolerance for the ambiguity inherent in valuing different goods and services for exchange.

**Adapt To The Preferred Work Style Of The Other Person Or Group**

One of the most accessible areas for building relationships is work style. All people have a certain work style—a way of solving problems, dealing with others, and getting their jobs done. Some people prefer careful analysis before action; others like to blast through and patch up any holes later. Some managers want subordinates to come to them only with solutions, while others want employees to seek help when the problem is still developing. In building a working relationship, some people like to get to know a colleague first before dealing with the task, while others feel they cannot consider closeness until there has been some successful work interaction.

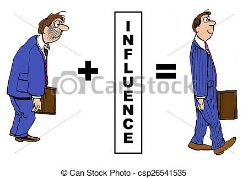
Not being fully aware of your style can keep you from considering other possible approaches and unnecessarily limit your ability to connect.

**How to Influence your Boss**

Your boss’s effectiveness is part of your job. It starts with you. You are, in part, responsible for helping your boss be a more effective manager and a better boss to you.

It would be lovely if every boss knew exactly what you needed and provided it without your asking, but that is not likely. Your boss is not a mind reader. You are the one who knows best how you can be managed to achieve your potential.

You have expertise about how well your manager’s intentions in managing you are being achieved. He or she might want to provide clear direction, but only you know how clear it is to you. In other words, your boss needs you.



**Approach:**

To get the kind of influence with your boss that will pay off, there are four main things to do:

**1.** See the boss as a potential ally (a partner).

**2.** Make sure you really understand the boss’s world.

**3.** Be aware of the resources (currencies) you already have or can acquire.

**4.** Pay attention to how the other wants to be *related to.*

**Influence Strategy:**

There’s no guarantee that this way of talking would definitely work with your boss, but it has a chance because it follows three central principles:

1. We are showing your boss how it is in his or her interest to change his or her behavior. Notice the difference between saying that we want our boss to help develop us because it will make us happy, and wanting development because it emphasizes the return on the boss’s investment, which he or she cares a lot about.
2. We are showing our boss that it is in his or her interest for us to be successful and satisfied because it will get the best work from us. We are acknowledging our interests, but connecting it right back to what our boss (almost certainly) wants.
3. We are delivering our preference in a compatible style that is preferred by our boss. We have used a tough, no-nonsense tone, asserting that we can take anything he or she dishes out, but we will be more productive if our boss bothers to think about our learning.

The idea is to always be on the side of your boss, not an antagonist who is just a critic.



**Typical Issues with Bosses:**

***Problem 1: My Boss Resists My Ideas for How to Improve Things in Our***

***Area.*** “I often have new ideas for how things could be done better around here. Yet, when I raise these ideas with my manager, he resists them and often lists all the reasons that an idea won’t work or isn’t worth the trouble. I find it very discouraging, especially since my boss is always saying that he wants us to take initiative.”

***Answer.*** There could be several issues at play here: 

• How well thought out are your ideas?

• How are you presenting them? Do they speak to your manager’s concerns?

• Is his response a ref lection more of his style than the quality of your ideas? Is he really rejecting your ideas, or is that his way of checking out the quality of your suggestions?

• Does your boss really believe that you are on his side? Are you presenting ideas only in ways that help your area, or do they also speak to your boss’s concerns?

• Have you understood your boss’s world, the forces acting on him that might be inducing resistance? Is your boss already feeling overloaded and out of control, as many are in current conditions? (That may well be why your boss is asking for initiative but not responding well to it.)

If your idea would mean more work for your boss, even just for a while, he may be reacting to that, not the idea itself.

• What about the pressures your boss is under? Has he been recently burned with an idea (from somebody else) that went wrong? Or is your boss faced with the same sort of negative challenge from his boss and needs to have all the bases covered?

If your boss is overloaded, what can you do to help? Are there things you could do to ease his burdens, rather than add to them? Can you do more of the homework on your idea, so you can show how it is already fully worked out and how you are prepared to take on more burden to make it easier to implement?

Another way to lighten your boss’s load is to find a part of his current job that you could help with—an aspect that would be easier for you to do than for him to do because of your skills—or a part that you would like to learn about. That adds to the currencies you have to offer.

***Problem 2: My Boss Doesn’t Do His or Her Job Well Enough but Won’t***

***Take Help.*** “My boss doesn’t do the team building and scheduling management that is her job, and she doesn’t like my direct attempts at influencing what she does. I have raised the problem with her and tried to use all that you talk about in terms of not seeing her in negative terms, and I have talked with her about how her refusal costs her and harms the department, but she is still unwilling to change. In fact, she gets very uncomfortable when I directly try to talk about these interpersonal matters.”

***Answer.*** There are two issues here. One is that your boss has weaknesses but doesn’t appear to want help. The second is that she doesn’t want to talk about it.

Let’s deal with the latter first. When the issues can get directly raised, successful resolution is more likely because each party tends to have different, but relevant, information. Only when all the facts and feelings can be put on the table is it likely that a quality solution can be discovered.

However, an open discussion is less likely when:

• Your boss sees you as a critic or even a rival rather than as a junior partner.

• Your boss feels that you really don’t understand her world and that you aren’t speaking to her concerns.

• There is something in your history or style that makes taking help from you uncomfortable.

• Your boss has a heroic model of leadership, in which she has to know all the answers to avoid looking weak.

• You are approaching your boss in a way that reflects your style but isn’t an approach she is comfortable with.

***Problem 3: My Boss Is Distant and Unfriendly.*** “My boss is unapproachable and negative; I think she is threatened by me. When I get recognition outside the organization (because of my past accomplishments serving on civic task forces), she yells at me for not informing her in advance of my contacts and tries to put me down. When I send her e-mails to inform her, she never responds. She is a recent political appointment, with a great track record in her profession but no managerial experience. She is so impossible; I plan to just lay low and wait her out.”

***Answer.*** First, she comes into a high-visibility job without managerial experience, so she probably feels under great pressure to produce. It is also likely that she is holding a heroic mind-set that says, “I should know and have the answers.” Since it is contacts that got her the job, she may worry what that means. She doesn’t know if you will be loyal or try to undermine her and talk about her managerial weaknesses to important people on the outside. Unfortunately, your boss doesn’t appear to have the confidence to openly discuss the situation. That is a level of vulnerability that most managers won’t show—even if it is the very thing that would likely draw you to her. In addition, she is probably overloaded with work, feels alone, and is trying to do it all herself.

These kinds of pressures can make anyone behave in an inconsiderate, controlling, and distant way.

But this doesn’t mean that there is nothing you can do. In fact, you hold many currencies that your boss might need, including:

• Support, understanding, and acceptance (that she is not inadequate just because she lacks the knowledge you have)

• Loyalty and the fact that you are on her side

• Advance information, heads-up about what is coming

• Introductions to key people that you know

***Problem 4: My Boss Doesn’t Want a Partnership.*** “I have tried to use your suggestion of being a junior partner to my boss, but he doesn’t seem to want this. In fact, he seems quite annoyed and defensive, as if he thinks I am criticizing him. He even said once, ‘You were hired to do your job; I can do mine quite well, thank you.’ Should I just give up?”

***Answer.*** The idea that the job of the subordinate is to stay in place and let the boss be the boss is a very old one, created when work was simple, subordinates weren’t highly educated, and they needed to be told what to do. It is possible that this boss isn’t movable and that you will have to lump it or leave the position. It could come to that. But don’t leap to that conclusion without exploring two other choices:

Option 1: Is there a chance that you could persuade your boss that his model of leader and follower is outmoded and misses opportunities to get help from below and/or increase overall performance by making better use of your resources?

Option 2: Are there opportunities within your role (or a reasonable expansion of your role) that would be helpful and would make you more valuable in the boss’s eyes?

Let’s take each of these in turn:

1. How your boss defines leadership. Many leaders act heroically because they don’t have any other model of how to act. They also believe that this style is the only way to gain respect from their subordinates. You can tell your boss that this isn’t true for you. Or your boss may be more open to the published word.

Another possibility is to develop a list of good ideas, specific knowledge, and skills available from you and other subordinates and show your boss what he is missing by insisting that everyone know their place and stick to it.

2. New opportunities. If you don’t think that a direct discussion will work, then look for ways you can contribute within the role as your boss conceives it. Are there things you can do that the boss doesn’t like to do or avoids (e.g., memo writing, speeches, organizing meetings, drafting follow-up notes, checking on milestones of projects).

**All Influence is About Making Change**

Whether you are in charge of a new product development process, a change in organization structure, the implementation of a new compensation system— or have a great idea for a new and different business or a change such as altering your supply chain to save millions—there will be many people and groups to influence. But there are some special aspects to leading a major change effort or to initiating one on behalf of a goal you care about.

Because influence requires giving something of value in return for what you need, there are key challenges in acquiring the needed influence to make a major change happen. You will have to influence people above or to the side of you in the hierarchy, getting them to provide resources, information, support, or approval. You will have to cope with and master organizational politics. You will have to assemble a working team that believes in what you are trying to do. And you will need an incredible combination of patience and persistence, drive, and flexibility to keep your ultimate goal in mind while adjusting along the way.

**The Importance of Vision:**

*Develop a clear vision of what the change is to accomplish, in terms of its effect on customers and clients of the change.* Vision is an important currency for attracting support for your change. Many people will respond more favorably if they can see how what you are pushing will make a difference— to the company, customers, or the public. It isn’t the only currency you can use, but it is a good starter, and it appeals to many different people. If they can see the eventual good that will come from implementing the change, they are more likely to want to help, be more forgiving of mistakes, and be more inventive at thinking how they can support the effort.

A powerful vision paints a graphic picture of how its successful accomplishment changes the lives of some important group(s). It isn’t just *what* will occur, but *why* it’s important. It usually won’t be as effective if all youcan say is that it will make or save a lot of money, although for some high level managers that might be an initial attention grabber (in all cases, adjust the currencies offered to the audience). At best, vision can help people see important meaning to their work—the sense that what they do matters to people. It grabs them and appeals to their best instincts, paying them in these good feelings.

This means you have to develop a good story (not a fictional one!) that you can tell at a moment’s notice. Venture capital experts talk about “rocket pitches” or “elevator speeches” for entrepreneurs—the condensed, potent version of their business plan that they can complete in an elevator ride. They need to be able to differentiate their plan from others and quickly capture attention. You may not always have so little time to tell someone whose cooperation you need what your change is about, but important people are likely to be busy, so be prepared. If you have a compelling vision, but no good idea of how to make it happen, the vision won’t be much help, but you can’t execute a terrific plan if you can’t get anyone’s attention long enough to believe in it. And remember that vision is basically about passion. So it has to be something that you feel passionate about.

