

Ten Ways to Influence with Integrity



Many people in corporate life tell me they would like to have a stronger influence – particularly at a more senior level.

This is a skill that we can all develop – here are my top ten tips for making a start!

- 1. Be interested more than ‘interesting’.** ‘Receive’ more than you ‘transmit’. Listening is the most under-rated communication skill and yet the most powerful skill we possess if we want to influence other people. How to get better at it? Practise, practise, practise. There’s no magic bullet. And a clutter-free mind helps.
- 2. It is said that emotion (and story-telling) drives many of the decisions we make.** So however much ‘logic’ you might present, I might not be influenced. If you work on the first skill above, you’ll be much clearer on whether I’m being influenced by emotion or logic – or both!
- 3. Do I want all the detail or just the headlines?** Find out. Don’t assume!
- 4. Ask me questions.** And **REALLY** listen to the answers. What’s important to me? What keeps me awake at night? What do I dream of? If I think you ‘get’ me, I’m much more likely to be persuaded. Understand my fears, hopes, challenges and opportunities. Then ask how you can help me.
- 5. Get feedback on your influencing skills.** Keep it simple. ‘What can I do to improve my influence in the meeting/the presentation?’ and so on. We’ve all got blind spots and we can only improve if we know about them!
- 6. Look the part.** Show your authority (without being authoritarian) and dress like you mean business (and that is contextual).
- 7. We can all learn to improve our gravitas.** Think about the first impression you make when you walk into a room. Does it create the impression you want to create? Do you scuttle in like a frightened rabbit, avoid eye contact and shrink into your chair? Or do you march in, take over and dominate? Neither leads to positive influence.
- 8. Reciprocity works.**
- 9. Forget ‘networking’.** Build relationships instead. These take time.
- 10. People are influenced by people they know, like and trust.** Are you that person?