



The Secret to Influencing Others

February 2017



Picture this:

You're in a meeting with a room full of people and you begin brainstorming ideas. One vocal individual dominates the conversation and pretty soon, everyone is nodding and agreeing with that individual's assertions. They might be saying something completely wrong or outlandish, but they're saying it with such confidence that no one dares challenge them.

Have you ever experienced something like this? I have. It's incredible how one or two people can influence the entire mood of a room, or sway others' opinions.

**How can you be that influential individual?
How can you make your thoughts and ideas heard?**



**We should never let
our experience
influence
what we think
about our potential.**

-Zig Ziglar

Speaking Up in the Face of Controversy



**Speaking up has not
been a scary thing for
me as I know it is for
others.**

What I have learned,
however, from speaking



1. Be assertive

Many of us carry a naysaying voice in the back of our minds that tells us we aren't good enough or smart enough. Get rid of that voice! Next time you feel a lack of confidence, **give yourself a positive affirmation.** Try something like, "I am a smart and worthwhile person" or "I have the ability to do anything."

These confidence-building exercises will aid you in being assertive in the conference room. After all, if you doubt your own abilities, who will want to follow your lead?

2. Build your influence outside of the conference room

If you think you can simply walk into a company meeting, influence others with your thoughts and opinions, and go back to being a loner in your office, think again! Building influence can take time and it often begins around the water cooler.



Talk to others; spread your ideas and encourage the ideas of others. Be open, candid, and confident. This influence will carry into the conference room and you'll find that you have a built-in support team when you need it.

3. Support others

Part of being an excellent leader involves building others up, rather than tearing them down. Don't think of your co-workers as your competition. Instead, think of yourselves as members of the same

up and sharing an opposing view, particularly when there is a lot resting on a group decision, is that I have created safety for others.

Often when I have taken on the responsibility to speak out, not only has it given others the courage to stand up and share their thoughts as well, but many people have come to me after the meeting and thanked me and told me that I said what they had been thinking but didn't have the courage to say.

When we know there is another side, another opinion, another viewpoint, we do a team, a group, an organization an injustice if we allow a decision to move forward without consideration of alternative views.

When done in a respectful way, I have seen the decisions of groups change course because one person had the courage to speak up.

Remember, if you don't agree or you have another opinion, chances are other do to!

team.

If someone in your team has an idea that you like or needs some direction with a project, voice your support.

Alternatively, if you haven't heard from a particular co-worker in a while, take the initiative to call upon them for their thoughts. Say something like, "Amy, what do you think about this proposal? I know it directly affects your department."



4. Know your stuff and KNOW you know your stuff

Next time you hear someone in a meeting or casual interaction disseminating false information, have the courage to step forward and correct them. If you know you are correct, then you have nothing to fear. Gently point out the error and give evidence to back up your claim.

For example, if you are in sales and someone asserts that "you should always be in the driver's seat and never let the client do the talking," you could offer a gentle, but firm retort such as: "I have found that it is best to listen closely to a customer's needs. For example..."



Becoming an influencer takes time and practice, especially if you're not a naturally confident individual. **At the very root of influencing others is the solid belief that you are worthy and that your opinions matter.** I'm here to tell you that they do! Work on building up your self-esteem and blocking out your saboteur that whispers negativity in your ear.

The Key to Successful Leadership today is influence not authority
-Kenneth Blanchard

Upcoming Newsletters

March

How to Offer Feedback Constructively

April

How do YOU Handle Others' Mistakes and Failures?

May

Productivity Doesn't Need to Go on Vacation - Just You and Your Colleagues

The People Who Influence You Are The People Who Believe In You
-Henry Drummond

And once you build up your influence? Be cautious. It is wonderful to use your influence to spark creativity and drive positive change, but it is easy to slip into manipulation or intimidation.

Be sure to use your newfound power for good!

Good Luck,



Want to sharpen your communication skills to influence others? Contact me!



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