



INFLUENCE

How to get it.
Use it.

And get what you want.

Want to be taken more seriously at work? Gunning for a raise or promotion? This eBook is packed with practical ways to increase and leverage your influence – and get ahead:

The most influential people in the world can seem like they have some gift the rest of us don't. But the truth is, they're humans. They're just humans who have learned to use specific skills in effective ways.

In this eBook, we'll show you how to use those skills, too. Here, you'll find:

- a breakdown of the characteristics of influential people;
- how to adopt those characteristics to expand your own sphere of influence;
- ways to strengthen your relationship with your boss;
- ways to strengthen your relationship with their boss; and
- how to skip office drama and spend your time building alliances instead.

**How do influential people do it?
You're about to find out – and become one.**

Several Habits of Highly Influential People

Some of the most influential people in the world – from Bill Gates to the Pope – are also some of the most polarizing. But no matter what they stand for, they achieve their influence by adopting similar habits.

Here are four habits of highly influential people you can start practicing today:

- 1. Draw your own conclusions.** Influential people don't wait to be told what to think – they tell others what they think. Use facts and evidence to draw conclusions, and talk about how you decided, not just what you think.
- 2. Examine and respond to body language.** Influential people rely on nonverbal cues to provide insight into a person's thoughts and feelings. Combine these clues with a person's words to get at the "heart" of an issue or dispute.
- 3. When you believe in someone, tell them.** Influential people empower others to do their best work by expressing their confidence in the people that surround them. When you do the same, you lift others up as well.
- 4. Be willing to face conflict.** Influential people embrace disagreement, because they know it can lead to solving problems and greater creativity. Make it your goal to get a better end result – not merely to be "right."

Get Noticed at Work

To build your sphere of influence at work:

Get past small talk. Be willing to talk about your goals, passions or background. Show you're willing to connect with others and you care about what they think, too.

Be reliable. Build a reputation for turning in good work on time, every time. You'll become the "go-to" person on the team, then the department, then the company.

Keep your cool. When the unexpected happens, take a deep breath. Keeping your head increases your influence by making you the person others can rely on in a crisis.

Stand up. Assertiveness will help you ensure you are heard and you and your team get what you need to succeed.

Listen effectively. Active listening earns you the respect of others. It also gains you the information you need to make better decisions.

... and Outside of Work

Influence on the job is great, but strong careers are built on a sphere of influence that extends past your office walls. To build your influence outside the office:

Love your network. Your personal and professional contacts aren't just for the job search. Schedule a coffee, email or meetup with folks in your network at least once a month.

Build your credentials. Investing in your skills and education demonstrates that you've put time and effort into your professional growth. Continuous learning also helps expand your network.

Build a Connection With Your Manager

Your boss can be your best mentor and ally – if you build a good relationship. Here's how.

- 1. Learn about your boss's background.** How did they decide to enter this line of work? How did they earn their current title? What lessons did they learn along the way? Talking about these questions – and sharing your own perspective – helps build rapport without crossing professional lines.
- 2. Understand your boss's goals.** What are they trying to achieve? How do they do their best work? What's their "big picture" view? Find out, and adapt your work so it harmonizes with theirs.
- 3. Ask.** Ask, "How can I help?" Then provide the support your boss needs. For instance, you might take on lower-priority tasks if your boss has a big deadline coming up, or offer to help prepare for a high-profile meeting.

Get to Know Your Boss's Boss

Getting your own boss on your side is a good move. Getting your boss's boss on your side can brighten your career prospects more than you imagine. Here's how to build that connection without undermining your current manager:

- 1. Demonstrate your enthusiasm.** Know what's going on so you can ask relevant, information-based questions. If you have the chance to talk outside a formal meeting, take it.
- 2. Ask both bosses for advice.** When you talk to your own manager about your career, end the conversation by asking, "Do you think your boss would have any additional ideas?" This positions both of them to help you, and eliminates the appearance you went over your boss's head.
- 3. Find out what you have in common.** Did you go to the same college as your boss's boss? Do you both like travel, or fishing, or the arts? Look for common interests to discuss.

Rise Above Office Politics

The office gossip has the power to derail everyone's morning – but rarely do they have any real influence. Take back power over your own morning and demonstrate real influence by rising above office politics.

- 1. Pay attention to them.** You ignore office politics at your peril. Instead, keep an ear open. Know what's going on, but resist the urge to play in the drama.
- 2. State where you stand.** State your opinion and stance clearly, and then focus on work. This lets others know where you stand, and it demonstrates you're not going to play games.
- 3. Take a good-faith position.** Give others the benefit of the doubt, and strive to work with them instead of against them.
- 4. Ask questions and state your case.** Silence can be read as agreement. Ask questions about how you can support the team's efforts and how a task fits into the "big picture." If you have reservations, state them.

Build Allies Within the Culture

From the moment you step into a new job, you have the chance to build influence. But you can start the process anytime. Here's a quick-start guide to building allies within your company's culture:

Pay attention. How do other people on the team and in the department interact? How do they dress? How are workspaces decorated? How are emails addressed and deadlines handled?

Think "yes, and ..." When you're asked to contribute, make a good-faith effort to do what's requested, and think of ways to connect it to the bigger picture – whether it's the team's whole project or the company's overall goals.

Seek mentors, sponsors and advocates. Mentors work with you one on one; sponsors can connect you to others; advocates believe in what you do and fight on your behalf. You'll need all three in order to expand your sphere of influence.

*Having trouble “meshing”
with the culture?*

*Struggling to build
your influence?*

Talk to a recruiter.

*Your recruiter can help you
find ways to connect –
or look for a position
with a company whose
culture fits you.*