

THE INFLUENCING POCKETBOOK

2nd Edition

By Richard Storey

Drawings by Phil Hailstone

“Influence is the unseen lubricant in the engine of business; a management skill more vital than understanding finance and equally important for a business’s balance sheet. Richard Storey is an expert in this field. His comprehensive coverage provides managers with the most complete quick reference guide available today.”

Ed Lee, Training and Development Manager, BT Consulting & Systems Integration

“Provides extremely comprehensive guidance on a subject which many managers have difficulty with. It is well laid out so that it can be used as an introduction to influencing and for quick reference purposes prior to that difficult meeting.”

Steve Ravenhill, Director of Human Resources, SunGard Availability Services (UK) Ltd

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PLANNING TO INFLUENCE

WHAT IS INFLUENCING?



Influencing is:

Getting your own way, especially unobtrusively.

Most managers do it, most of the time.

- You can influence others simply by being *you* (notice how easily children are influenced by the behaviour of those around them)
- You can influence covertly, behind the scenes
- You can use more open strategies and tactics

Great influencers manage to get other people to go along with their ideas while maintaining the relationship. If people feel manipulated, relationships will be damaged. It is important to understand the different strategies available to you and to plan your approach.

PLANNING TO INFLUENCE

MASTERING THE ART



Increasingly, today's managers are measured by their ability to influence others at work. Being able to get people to do what you want has a direct effect on:

- The well-being of your staff
- The prosperity of your company
- And, ultimately, your own destiny

You are probably already successful at influencing others – some of the time. How can you become consistently successful? If you can identify your strengths and weaknesses and make a few changes, nothing can hold you back.

*What is the
number one need for success in business today?
To persuade others of my value and the value of my ideas.*

American Management Association
(from a survey of 2800 executives)

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PLANNING TO INFLUENCE

TYPICAL AREAS OF *OPEN* INFLUENCE



A lot of the time, especially in business, influencing is necessary and we accept it as part of human communication. It operates openly and usually follows a recognised process. Open influence can be seen in:

- Meetings
- Presentations
- Sales conversations
- Debates and discussions
- Change management
- Reports
- Proposals
- Negotiations
- Performance management
- Process management



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TYPICAL AREAS OF *HIDDEN* INFLUENCE



Influence can also operate in a less open and direct manner. Your behaviour will be noticed by others, even though you are not necessarily trying to influence them. Your words will always be interpreted, however subtle or oblique. In short – whether we mean to influence or not – we are constantly beaming out influential messages to the world.

Hidden influence, which is often delicate, slow and on-going, works well in the following areas:

- Changing someone's image
- Altering attitudes or behaviours
- Setting an example
- Communicating non-verbally
- Developing and maintaining rapport
- Nurturing relationships
- Counselling others
- Acting as a mentor
- Maintaining customer relations
- Using metaphor and analogy

PLANNING TO INFLUENCE

SIX FUNDAMENTALS



In his book *Influence*, Robert Cialdini, one of the leading social scientists in the field of influence, laid out six core principles proven to create positive change within individuals, groups and organisations:

1. People buy other people. If others like you they are more likely to say 'yes'. Don't ingratiate yourself – build bonds by exploring what you have in common with others. People respond powerfully to shared values.
2. People will want to help you if they feel that they owe you for something you have done for them. One favour deserves another. Be the first to help others, with support, advice, pastoral care. Offer no-strings-attached value to people in your network.
3. People copy what similar people do; they want to conform to the norm. Called 'social proof', we watch what other like-minded people and our peers are doing and, for the most part, follow suit. People can be strongly influenced by their peers (eg Twitter, Facebook, TripAdvisor, Yelp, etc.)

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SIX FUNDAMENTALS



4. People are more likely to follow through if they have already expressed agreement, especially if that agreement is in writing. Get firm commitment to your proposals whenever possible.
5. People tend to defer to experts and those in authority. Authority includes power, title, clothing and trappings, such as office, car, house. You don't need to have authority to influence, simply look and sound authoritative.
6. Scarcity and/ or limited time is a powerful influencer. People value more highly the things they perceive to be scarce or exclusive.

PLANNING TO INFLUENCE

WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN?



Preparation is the cornerstone of successful formal influencing scenarios. Before you commence planning your strategy ask yourself these questions:

- Who am I meeting? Do they have the authority to agree to my proposals? Is there anyone else whose counsel they rely upon? Should I convince them first?
- What specifically are we both likely to gain from the conversation?
- Where will we meet? At work, or outside? In my office or theirs, or in a neutral meeting room?
- When is the most productive time to meet? Early morning? Before or after lunch break? Early or late afternoon, or outside hours?

About the Author

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Richard worked in the newspaper industry before moving into training and development. He is an internationally known communication consultant with over 25 years' experience. He has published *The Art of Persuasive Communication* (Gower 1997) *Perfect Persuasion* (Random House 2009) and *The Mount Athos Diet* (Vermilion 2014) as well as a number of management and professional workbooks. He is the former editor of the Royal West of England Academy quarterly magazine, ART. In addition to teaching a range of communication skills seminars, he is also a regular conference speaker.



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