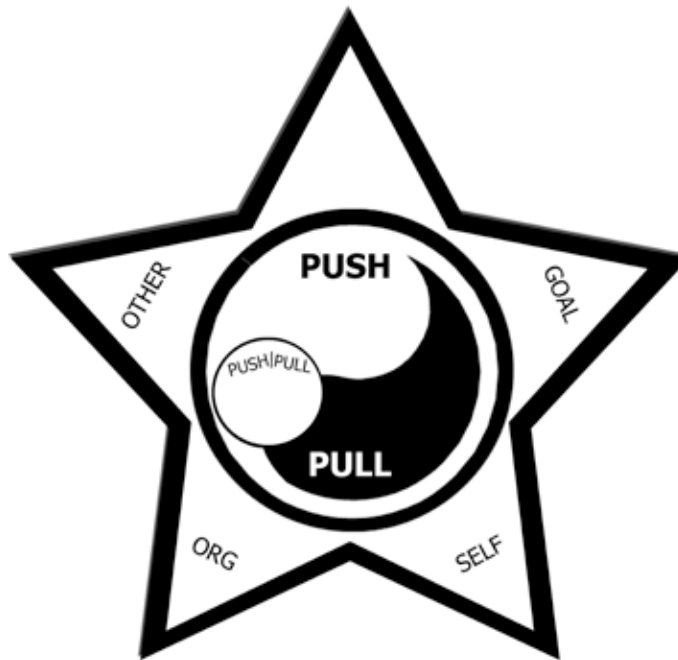




**LEVERAGING THE INFLUENCE EDGE™  
TO GET WHAT YOU WANT**



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### The Influence Edge™

Good influencers are effective communicators. They understand that not everyone responds in the same way to information presented to them. Savvy influencers realize that how they present information is as important as what they present. They adapt their communication to suit what is most comfortable and natural for the person they are trying to influence. Learning to be flexible in your influence approach and tailoring it to the style of the other party is an important factor in becoming an effective, successful influencer.

Today's complex work environment requires us to work closely with others to accomplish our objectives. It means developing influence skills that allow us to deal more effectively with people we work with, report to and who report to us. The same skills help us work with clients, referral sources, vendors and even competitors. To be successful, the ability to influence others over whom you have no control is a must. Learning effective influence skills to gain the willing commitment of others will give you the edge to accomplish your results and build productive business relationships.

Some benefits of improving your influence skills are:

- Getting work done more efficiently
- Reducing conflict
- Building relationships
- Meeting your goals
- Relieving stress
- Being a better negotiator

Research suggests people are hired for their technical skills and derail their careers because of their lack of effective interpersonal skills. It is critical to your success to get others to work with you to accomplish your goals. Influence skills let you accomplish this in a way that values, supports and nurtures positive relationships with others.

People don't want to feel manipulated. The difference between effective influence and manipulation is simple. Effective influence focuses on improving and supporting the relationship while accomplishing your goal(s). Manipulation, on the other hand, uses the relationship to accomplish what we want with little or no consideration of the impact on the other person.

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**INFLUENCERS YOU KNOW**

**Poor Influencers**

Think of people who were very ineffective at influencing others, maybe individuals you have worked with or worked for. What are the characteristics that describe poor influencers?

***What they did:***

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**Great Influencers**

Think of some people whom you believe are effective influencers, maybe individuals you have worked with or worked for. What are the characteristics that describe great influencers?

***What they did:***

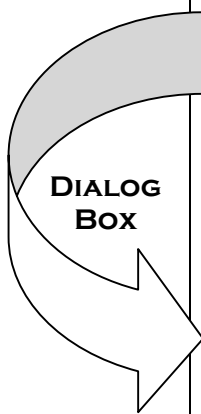
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## NETWORKING AND INFLUENCE

Networking is the process of building relationships through a wide range of personal and professional contacts within and outside your organization. Through networks, you increase your access to the informal workings of your and your clients' organizations, gain information and understanding and begin to build reciprocal relationships where helping others provides future assistance.

Networking requires an honest attempt to build a relationship based on trust and reciprocity. Reciprocity is about creating an exchange by offering others in your network those things that make you valuable to them. You may have access to someone whom they do not, you may have particular skills or knowledge they need or you can provide mentoring or coaching. They, in return, have particular things you need. Savvy influencers have built strong networks of colleagues to call on at any time.

**Networks tend to be made up of groups of people with similar interests, values and objectives.**

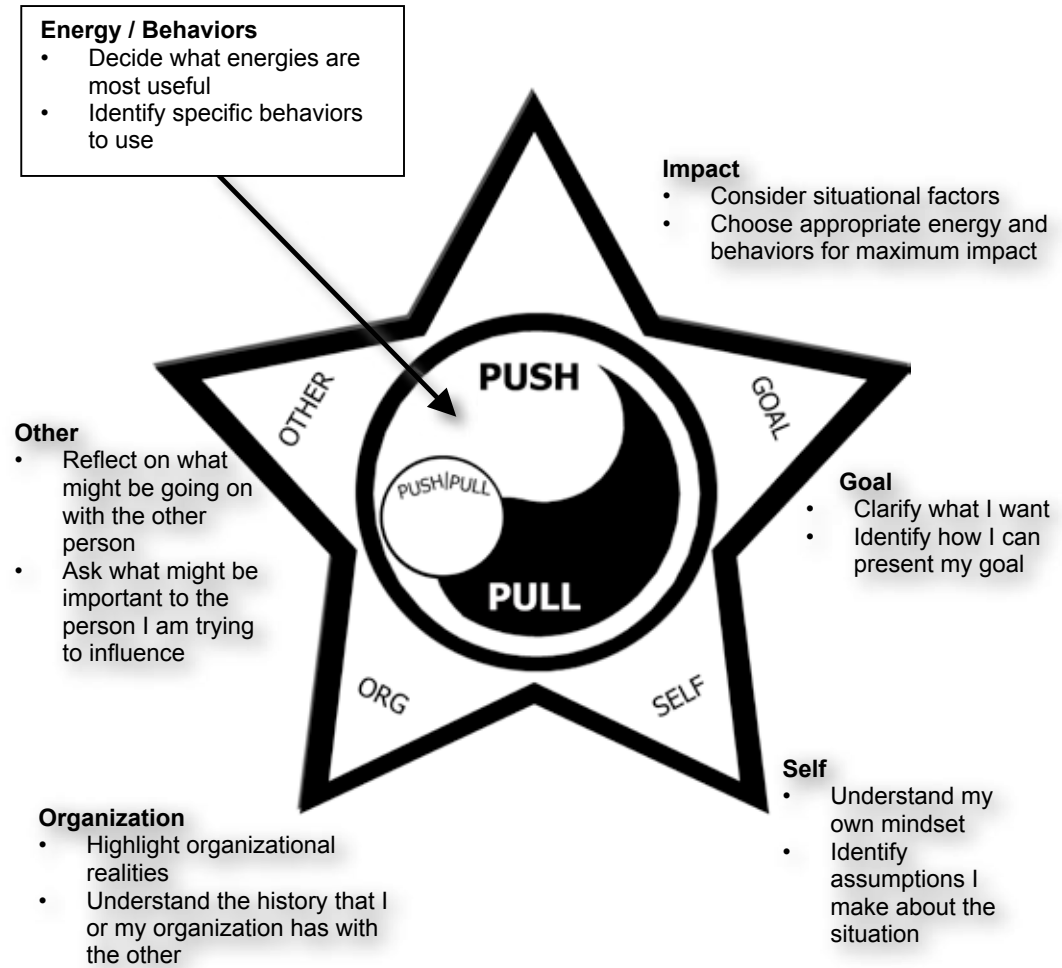
What do you know or do that might be of interest to others (skills, knowledge, access)?

How do you want to build your reputation as an influencer?

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The Influence Edge provides a model to use in any influence situations.



Effective influencers know that they have two aspects to consider. First, they must scan the **situation**, and secondly, they select appropriate **behaviors**. Once they consider situational factors, they begin **planning** their effective choice of **behaviors**. Having a variety of behaviors to choose from gives them the flexibility they need to have the greatest impact.

### ANALYZE THE SITUATION

To be an effective influencer in any situation, you must take a look at the environment and plan your strategy. By breaking the situation down into the following four areas: Goal, Self, Other and Organization, you will most likely be able to anticipate the reaction of your influence subject and sort out how best to proceed.

When analyzing the situation, you are taking some time to think about yourself in relation to the other person and the other person's situation. It is an opportunity to put yourself in the other person's shoes and think about your relationship. We know that effective influencers realize that influence is two way. They know they must take the other person's views into consideration. After all, influence happens in the other person.

There are four factors in a situation.

**Goal**            What do I want?  
                      What will make it clear to the other person?

**Self**             What assumptions am I making?  
                      What is my mindset?

**Other**            What is their mindset?  
                      What is important to them?

**Organization** What is going on in their organization?  
                      What is the history?

#### Goal

- Think about whom you want to influence.
- Give yourself a timeframe to communicate your need to the other person.
- State the goal in positive terms.

#### Self

- Look at the situation as objectively as possible.
- Consider what you might do to improve your relationship with the person.
- Increase your power in the situation by focusing on what the other person needs.

#### Other

- Think about what you could do to make it easier for the other person to go along with you and agree on your goal.
- Put yourself in the other's shoes: how would you respond to being influenced in this situation?
- Try to get a sense from others about the other person's mindset.

#### Organization

- Try to uncover where the organization is heading in the coming months.
- Look for others in the organization that can be used as leverage.
- Seek out others within the person's organization who could be allies and help support your influence goal.

**ANALYZE THE SITUATION**

Examples of influence situations include:

- You need someone to provide you with necessary information so that you can accomplish your goal. Giving you the information is not the other person's highest priority.
- You need leadership support for a project or initiative. The support could be in the form of money or head count.
- You need to complete an engagement and know someone who has an expertise in an area you lack. You would like the person to help you, but you know the person is very busy.
- You are on the board of a nonprofit organization and will be contacting a business colleague to be a sponsor for your major fund-raising casino night event. You know companies are cutting back expenses due to the economy.
- You would like to get a prospective client to consider your firm.

**Identify an influence situation.**

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**INFLUENCE SITUATION WORKSHEET EXAMPLE**

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>SELF</b>
<p><b>What do I want?</b> <i>Have Leslie get my approval when she sends e-mails/communication to Jim at ABC Client</i></p>	<p><b>What assumptions am I making?</b> <i>She's trying to take over; wants to look good</i></p>
<p><b>How will I know when I get it?</b> <i>She will come to me for approval</i></p>	<p><b>What is my mindset?</b> <i>The relationship with her at this point is poor; little trust</i></p>
<p><b>By when?</b> <i>Immediately</i></p>	<p><b>How do I see the other person?</b> <i>Insecure, protected by the relationship partner</i></p>
<p><b>What will make it clear to the other person?</b> <i>No communications go out without me knowing about them</i></p>	<p><b>How is my relationship with that person?</b> <i>Not good</i></p>

<b>OTHER</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>
<p><b>How might the other person think of me in relation to the situation? His/her mindset?</b> <i>Controlling, authoritarian</i></p>	<p><b>What are the goals of the other person's organization?</b> <i>Need to increase client service with ABC</i></p>
<p><b>What does this person think of our situation?</b> <i>Wants to have more say in how we service clients and also thinks our relationship is poor</i></p>	<p><b>What is currently happening in the other person's organization?</b> <i>Leslie's practice area has lost two people recently</i></p>
<p><b>What is important to the other person?</b> <i>She wants to feel that her work and contribution are valued</i></p>	<p><b>What organizational politics do I need to be aware of? How can I learn about them?</b> <i>Leslie is seen as a rising star</i></p>
<p><b>What can I do to make it easier for the other person to agree?</b> <i>Show some flexibility about all communications that go out; there may be some I don't need to see</i></p>	<p><b>What is the history between me or my organization and the other person?</b> <i>They tend to protect "their own"; has lunch with the relationship partner</i></p>

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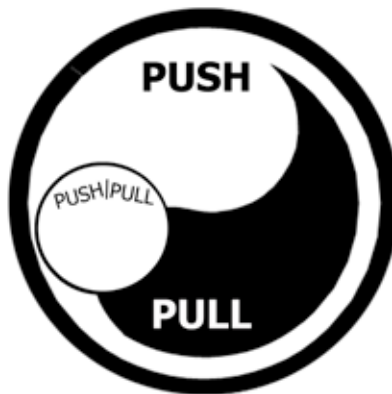
**INFLUENCE SITUATION WORKSHEET**

<b>GOAL</b>	<b>SELF</b>
<p>What do I want?</p>	<p>What assumptions am I making?</p>
<p>How will I know when I get it?</p>	<p>What is my mindset?</p>
<p>By when?</p>	<p>How do I see the other person?</p>
<p>What will make it clear to the other person?</p>	<p>How is my relationship with that person?</p>

<b>OTHER</b>	<b>ORGANIZATION</b>
<p>How might the other person think of me in relation to the situation? His/her mindset?</p>	<p>What are the goals of the other person's organization?</p>
<p>What does this person think of our situation?</p>	<p>What is currently happening in the other person's organization?</p>
<p>What is important to the other person?</p>	<p>What organizational politics do I need to be aware of? How can I learn about them?</p>
<p>What can I do to make it easier for the other person to agree?</p>	<p>What is the history between me or my organization and the other person?</p>

### INFLUENCE ENERGY

When we are engaged in an influence situation, we generally are giving or getting information through making statements and asking questions. Our communications have a certain energy to them. Have you ever felt the heat when you walked into the middle of an argument? Have you ever had someone help you see a point differently by drawing you out? The Influence Model is built around a system of communication that uses energy to achieve results. The model shows the dynamic interplay of each type of energy.



**Push energy** is direct, assertive, and persuasive; it is evident when people make assertive statements or offer specific suggestions. This form of energy moves against the other person's inclination to get him/her to change course or initiate action. Although others may push back, resist or even withdraw from Push energy, when used effectively, it can get results quickly.

**Pull energy** is inclusive and involving; it is evident when people listen attentively and ask questions to draw others out and engage them. Pull energy moves with the other person to help him/her see alternatives and encourages his/her engagement as the influencer gains a greater understanding of his/her issues and needs. Pull energy may seem "soft" at times, but its effective use can help gain commitment, reduce resistance and create and support strong relationships between people.

**Push/Pull energy** is a blend of both push and pull. There are times when it is appropriate to be not only direct and assertive but also inclusive and thoughtful of the other person. Push/Pull can have a dual impact. For example, when pushing a particular vision, the influencer also pulls the other person into that vision.

**Which energy do you believe you have a natural tendency to lean toward?**

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**ELEVEN INFLUENCE BEHAVIORS**

	<b>YOUR SITUATION</b>	<b>BEHAVIOR</b>	<b>DESCRIPTION</b>
<b>P U S H</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You want to be seen as in charge</li> <li>The other person appears open to suggestion</li> </ul>	Assert	State clearly and directly what you want
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A softer, more reasonable approach is needed</li> <li>The other person appears open to suggestion</li> </ul>	Suggest	Make clear suggestions that are relevant to the situation
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You have established your credibility</li> <li>You need to build a strong case</li> </ul>	Provide rationale	Provide reasons and benefits that interest the other person
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The other person does not fully understand the repercussions</li> <li>It is important that the other person recognize the consequences</li> </ul>	Identify consequences	Clearly state the negative actions that will result if the other person does not do what you are asking
<b>P U L L</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You want as much information as possible</li> <li>You want to be seen as open</li> </ul>	Ask open-ended questions	Ask open-ended questions to gather information and find out what the other person is thinking
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You want the other person to identify options or incentives</li> </ul>	Ask focused questions	Ask questions that help the other person focus on alternatives
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The other person needs evidence that you have understood</li> <li>The other person is upset or angry</li> </ul>	Summarize	Repeat what the other person has said to clarify issues and show your understanding
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Perceptions of openness and honesty need to be reinforced</li> <li>You want to build trust</li> </ul>	Disclose	Give information that helps build rapport and trust
<b>P U S H &amp; P U L L</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The other person needs a clear picture of success</li> <li>You want to motivate a team or group</li> </ul>	Create a vision	Create a positive picture of what might happen if the other person does what you want
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The other person needs to know what or how he/she will benefit</li> <li>You want to close a negotiation</li> </ul>	Offer incentives	Offer incentives to make it easier for the other person to do what you are asking
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You want to form an alliance</li> <li>You want to be seen as fair in appraising the situation</li> </ul>	Highlight commonalities and differences	Find common ground on goals, values, positions; highlight differences

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**PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

**The influence situation I will address is:**

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**Some assumptions I am making about the situation and/or person are:**

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**What the other person might think of me and the situation is:**

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**Things happening in the other person's organization are:**

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**Two influence behaviors I will use and how I will use them are:**

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**How will I open the conversation?**

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**DEBRIEF YOUR INFLUENCE SITUATION**

This checklist can be used to prepare for and debrief an influence situation. Use this checklist to list the influence behaviors you used during your conversation.

**PUSH Behaviors**

- Assert State clearly and directly what I want
- Suggest Make clear suggestions that are relevant to the situation
- Provide rationale Provide reasons or benefits that interest the other person
- Identify consequences Identify consequences of what might happen if the other person does not do what I am asking

**PULL Behaviors**

- Ask open-ended questions Ask open-ended questions to gather information and find out what the other person is thinking
- Ask focused questions Ask questions to help the other person focus on alternatives
- Summarize Summarize what the other person has said so that I can clarify issues and demonstrate understanding
- Disclose Disclose information that helps build trust

**PUSH/PULL Behaviors**

- Create a vision Create a positive vision of what might happen if the other person does what I want
- Offer incentives Offer incentives to make it easier for the other person to do what I am asking
- Highlight commonalities and differences Highlight goals, values, positions that are similar and those that are different

### SUMMARY

Influence is a topic of intrigue and interest. Influence is often focused on marketing and sales. How do you get someone to buy something and why did they buy from you versus someone else? Today, influence has a broader reach – getting things done when you may not have authority is a skill everyone in business needs.

Good influencers are good communicators. They understand that not everyone responds in the same way to information that is presented to them. They adapt their communication to suit what is most comfortable and natural for the person they are trying to influence.

While influence behaviors will increase your effectiveness in any situation, it's the planning and strategizing that happens even before the initial contact that can make the difference between getting what you need and leaving empty-handed. The four factors of a situation – goal, me, other and organization – allow you to fully plan and position yourself strategically.

Knowing how to influence others, in any situation, will give you the edge you need to accomplish your goals.



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