

Speaking So Law Firm Managing Partners Hear You



Leveraging Your Influence to Get What You Need

Participant Guide

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Benefits of Improving Your Influence Skills

Effective leaders are good communicators who develop trusted advisor relationships with others across an organization, regardless of their level within the organization. They understand that not everyone responds in the same way to information presented to them. Savvy leaders use their relationships and stature to influence others. These individuals 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. In fact, they understand what motivates people differently and how to walk people through their goals and motivators to arrive at good decisions. These leaders find the “win-win” whenever possible. Learning to be flexible in your approach and tailoring it to the style of the other party is an important factor in becoming an effective, successful influencer.

Today’s complex law firm 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 at work, whether we report to them or they report to us. It also requires that we use a custom approach for influencing each attorney whom we work with. The same skills help us work with firm clients and vendors. To be successful, the ability to influence others over whom you have no control is a must. If you can develop and use your ability to influence others, you will bring credibility to your role and be able to meet your own goals more independently.

Some benefits of improving your influence skills and expanding your sphere of influence are:

- Reducing conflict without needing to go to your own managers
- Building relationships
- Meeting your goals and getting daily work done more efficiently
- Being a better negotiator
- Bringing positive visibility to your role

Research suggests people are hired for their technical skills and hinder or even derail their careers because of their lack of effective interpersonal skills. Recruiting others to help accomplish your goals is critical to your success. 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 shared goal(s), doing everything possible to minimize any negative impact on individuals. In addition, it involves understanding and leveraging the benefit, *to the person being influenced*, of the result you are trying to achieve. 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.

Influencers You Know

Poor Influencers

Think of people who were not effective at influencing others, maybe individuals you have worked with or worked for. What are the characteristics that describe poor influencers? They may be seen as managers who “rule” without consensus or leaders who proceed without true followers.

What they did:

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:

Networking and Influence

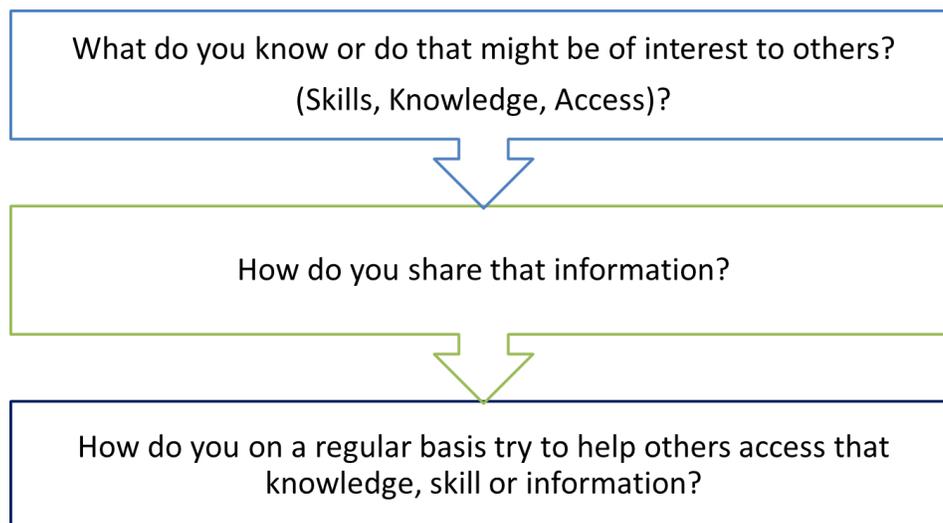
Networks are relationships built and maintained through a wide range of personal and professional contacts within and outside your organization. Through networks, you increase your access to resources within your and your clients' organizations. Building reciprocal relationships provides a foundation for mutual assistance in the future.

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 things that make you valuable to them. You may have access to a contact that they do not, you may have particular skills or knowledge they need or you may be able to provide mentoring or coaching. The other person may have something you need. Even if you don't have an immediate need from them, chances are you will down the road. Savvy influencers build 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.

New research shows that organizations with a helping culture are those that use their networks effectively, even when the best networkers are not necessarily the most knowledgeable experts. The most respected people in the organization are those that are most interested in helping others. They are helpers and connectors within the organization.

Helping Culture



The Sphere of Influence

The Sphere of Influence provides a model to use in any difficult conversation where the ability to influence is critical to obtaining agreement or action.



PREP: IMPACT	DISCUSSION: GOAL	DISCUSSION: OTHER	DISCUSSION: ORGANIZATION	DISCUSSION: OTHER
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider situational factors Consider how your desired outcome will directly impact this individual Understand your own assumptions Decide what outcome(s) would be acceptable Identify how you will motivate the other to obtain agreements Identify specific words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Either explain your goal Ask individual for his or her goal Repeat the individual's goal to ensure you understand his or her purpose 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> State the other's Point of View, even guessing at some aspects to show empathy Confirm that this is a reasonable reaction/expectation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Highlight organizational realities and needs Understand the history that the individual has with the others involved or my organization has with the other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Reflect on what might be going on with the other person Ask what might be important to the person you are trying to influence Ask for their leadership to join you in meeting larger goals of the firm

Keep in mind that understanding different drivers and then having a variety of behaviors to choose from gives the flexibility needed 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 determine 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 analyze your relationship. We know that effective influencers realize that influence is a two-way street. 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.

FACTORS	ASK YOURSELF	ACTION STEPS
Goal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What do I want? ▪ What will make it clear to the other person? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Think about your desired outcome. ▪ Give yourself a timeframe to communicate your need to the other person. ▪ State the goal in positive terms.
Impact	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What assumptions am I making? ▪ What is my mindset? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Look at the situation as objectively as possible. Consider your own assumptions. ▪ Consider the natural and immediate reactions you might face.
Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is going on in their organization? ▪ What is the history? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Communicate how the individual can be a positive influence on the organization and how his or her action or agreement is a positive for GT.
Other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ What is their mindset? ▪ What is important to them? ▪ Are their goals and needs met? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Consider what you might do to improve your relationship with the person. ▪ Increase your influence in the situation by focusing on what the other person needs. ▪ Think about what you could do to make it easier for the other person to agree on your goal. How can this be a "win" for the other?

Common Mistakes

1. We fall into a combat mentality
2. We try to oversimplify the problem
3. We complicate the problem
4. We overthink the problem
5. We don't bring enough respect to the conversation
6. We lash out – or shut down
7. We react to thwarting ploys
8. We get "hooked"
9. We rehearse and forget to listen
10. We make assumptions about our counterpart's intentions
11. We lose sight of the goal

Analyze the Situation

Examples of influence situations include:

1. You need someone from the finance team to provide you with necessary information to accomplish your goal of making a presentation at an upcoming partners retreat. Providing the information is not the other person's highest priority, and the finance team has competing deadlines. You should have asked for the data a couple of weeks ago.
2. A significant practice group head asks you to start searching for a lateral associate. You know hours are down and nobody has left. You want to be part of the strategy, which means finding out more information first and possibly telling a rainmaker, "No."
3. You have seen a check request from a shareholder for a significant sponsorship being put through your department. Five years ago, this would not have been an issue, but you are under a directive to cut unnecessary or mis-categorized spending. The partner's book of business is less than one million, declining over several years.
4. You need the help of a corporate partner to design a new, higher level, corporate mock deal. You asked the head of the practice group for a recommendation, and she selected someone in another office. That partner is terrific, but he hasn't delivered on any of the deadlines or needs. You either need him to step up or you need someone else. You are sitting down with the practice group head to give an update and ask for help.
5. You should have consulted with another department before setting a date for an event. Now you have two competing events scheduled for the same evening at the office. One is external and one is internal. Yours is internal and involves summer associates, but the invitations have already gone out.
6. You are working on the firm's diversity initiative for the millionth year in a row. To date, you haven't seen much improvement in the data trends. You are introducing training around sourcing and hiring diverse attorneys in the first quarter. But you now realize that you need to introduce culture and sensitivity workshops to ensure those hired actually stay and build their careers at the firm. You have to sell two partners on the executive committee on this idea as well as a \$150,000 bill. You already know they feel the firm is "throwing too much" at the attorneys at once even though they support the diversity initiative. You also know they are disinclined to approve it until they see higher numbers of diverse attorneys hired.

Summary

Influence is a nuanced topic of self-awareness and understanding the motivations of others. Influence can have a broad reach – getting things done when you may not have authority is a skill we all need in business today, especially in large organizations like Greenberg Traurig.

Good influencers are good communicators and empathizers. They understand that not everyone responds to information in the same way. 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, Impact, 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.