

PAPER 1

INFLUENCING OTHER PEOPLE - INTRODUCTION

The ability to influence others depends in part on your technical competence, training, experience and possibly also on your age and even your sex. The most important factor, however, is how skilfully you behave with other people. This is why, when we talk about influencing other people we talk of "influence skills". This programme will be giving you the opportunity to practise and develop these influence skills.

But first, what do we mean by "influence"? Here we are simply trying to get the other person to move from her or his present position to a new position, and to stay in the new position. The change in the other person may be in attitudes, behaviour or concrete action, but if you have brought about that change, then you have influenced them.

THE NEED FOR INFLUENCE SKILLS

We need to develop influential ways of behaving in order to make an impact on other people. Those of us who are too weak, shy, quiet spoken on the one hand, or too aggressive on the other hand may find we cannot get other people to budge, even if we are right!

WHAT ARE INFLUENCE SKILLS?

We are going to attend to four aspects of influencing behaviour on this workshop.

1. The first meeting with the other person. How to make a good first impression so that she or he is pleased to continue to talk to you, listen to you or work with you.
2. How to use skilful questions with the other person so that you gain enough accurate information to be able to assess the situation and plan your strategy.
3. Assertiveness and confrontation. How to judge when these behaviours are necessary and to use them effectively.
4. Influencing groups. How to make a favourable impact on a meeting.

THE NEED FOR FLEXIBILITY OF STYLE

The main theme running through the practical exercises on influencing is the need to be flexible with your style of influence. Sometimes you need to be charming and persuasive,

at other times you will get nowhere unless you are assertive. The skilled person is always listening to and watching the other person so that she can make judgements about the influence style she needs to use.

INFLUENCE SKILLS

1. The first meeting
2. Asking questions
3. Asserting and confronting
4. Influencing groups

LEARN TO BE FLEXIBLE!

PAPER 2

THE FIRST MEETING WITH THE OTHER PERSON (GAINING ENTRY)

In order to influence someone you must make a favourable impact at the first meeting so that they are willing to continue to listen to and to work with you. This is called "gaining entry" and is the first stage in successful influencing.

BUILDING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP

Gaining entry means dealing with the other person's initial concerns and making a start on building a good working relationship. This depends on:

1. Establishing Rapport. Listen actively. This means observe closely as well as listen and reflect back what you hear them say. Also empathise and encourage so that they feel you are genuinely interested and concerned. Try to smile a lot!
2. Dealing with Anxiety. The other person may have anxiety about your purposes, why you are approaching her/him, whether you will be able to help or be a nuisance, what effects your presence will have and so on. You may also be feeling anxious about being credible and able to influence.

Obviously little can be done about anxiety over the eventual outcome at this early stage. What you can do is to provide some structure for the meeting.

- set a clear agenda
- explain clearly who you are, what your organisation does and what are your objectives (this might include what you have to offer).
- identify the other person's objectives and concerns.
- be explicit about time required for the meeting.

Anxiety is sometimes manifested as hostility. In this case you will have to deal with the hostility before it will become possible to make any progress with your other objectives.

3. Building Trust and Confidence. The other person needs to trust you before she/he will do what you ask, particularly if this involves taking risks. Ultimately your own motives, willingness to help and actual behaviour will determine the level of trust. You can however begin to build trust at an early stage by doing the following things:

- show genuine interest
- show empathy with her/his view of the situation
- share control of the meeting by agreeing an agenda
- display integrity with information
- encourage openness by being open yourself

4. Establishing your credibility. You may need to display your knowledge and experience in relevant areas. The way you behave in the meeting can help to establish your credibility. You need to manage the meeting well and cope with the other person's anxieties. Being visibly anxious yourself and making an elaborate presentation of your qualifications is likely to arouse anxiety and distrust.

DEALING WITH ANGER AND HOSTILITY

Often the other person's insecurity, anxiety, lack of trust, etc., will express itself as anger or hostility directed at you. If you are trying to influence that person you need to deal with the anger before you can proceed to meet your objectives.

SIGNS OF ANGER

Watch the other person carefully as their body language will often betray their anger even if they are not shouting or raving at you. Anger is accompanied by increased blood pressure and muscle tightness. People speak faster, less coherently, louder, at a higher pitch and use aggressive language. Posture tends to be leaning forward (if sitting) accompanied by vigorous gestures.

COPING WITH ANGER

It is helpful to distinguish two kinds of coping behaviour, internal and external.

Internally : The secret seems to be to distance yourself psychologically from the anger. Try to work out what is happening instead of becoming emotionally involved. In this way you can avoid being paralysed by the anger and can instead concentrate on reacting appropriately.

Externally :

1. Let the other person express their feelings - attempting to disallow anger will only increase its intensity. Listen actively to what the other person is saying.
2. Clarify and diagnose why the other person is angry - by reflecting, asking questions and summarising. You need to do this neutrally, in a way that is neither condescending nor judgemental.
3. Don't argue back. You can express your own feelings but don't surrender to them.
4. Do what you can to reduce the threat you pose to the other person. Agree to behave differently, give explanations, apologise, etc.

PREVENTION

Better than coping is to avoid making the other person angry in the first place. Being open about your purposes, agreeing an agenda, not trying to manipulate, avoiding judgement, criticism and jargon may all help.

PAPER 4

QUESTIONING SKILLS

Having successfully "gained entry" with the other person it is often necessary to gather information from them so that you can assess the situation and plan your strategy. You may be able to gather some information through reading and observing, but asking questions skilfully is often the quickest way to gather accurate information.

Questions will help you to acquire information, but you can also use them to:

- explore feelings and attitudes
- stimulate thought and discussion
- help the other person to think through a problem
- clarify an issue

TYPES OF QUESTIONS

There are many different types of question you can use and they elicit different types of responses. The skill is to decide when to use which type of question.

1. Open questions

Open questions invite the other person to express her/his thinking freely. The length and nature of the response is determined by the person being questioned. Such questions often begin with "why", "how", or "what".

"How do you think this will affect the work?"

"What impression did you form of the project?"

"Why do you feel that way about her?"

Open questions are good for getting at: reasons, feelings, beliefs, hopes, opinions.

2. Closed questions

Closed questions allow a "yes" or "no" or other short response. Such questions often begin with: "where", "when", "how often", "which", etc.

Closed questions are good for establishing facts. It is often necessary to precede a series of open questions by a closed one to find out some particular fact.

3. Extending questions

Extending questions probe, pursue a line of thought or invite further exploration. e.g:

"could you tell me more about that?"

4. Clarifying questions

Clarifying is used when you are not sure that you have understood. It is important not simply to accept everything at face value nor go on when you are unclear what a person means or feels, e.g:

"I'm not quite clear about that - could you explain a bit more?"

"When you say the project leader was temperamental in what way did she seem temperamental to you?"

Beware. Needing to ask a lot of clarifying questions may imply that you are not listening.

5. Leading questions

Leading questions make it clear which answer is expected. Such questions should be avoided since the information they yield is not likely to be valid, e.g:

"You enjoy responsibility don't you?"

6. Hypothetical questions

These are questions which pose a hypothetical problem or situation and ask the person how she/he would react. Usually such questions do not yield valid information. The way a person responds may be indicative of their mental agility or creativity but it gives no evidence of their actual behaviour in the given situation, e.g:

"How would you deal with an elderly minister with a drink problem?"

7. Double barrelled questions

Double barrelled questions ask the other person to respond to two ideas in one question. Apart from being confusing people usually only respond to one part of the question. (Generally the last part, or the part they prefer) e.g:

"What is your health like, how many times have you been sick in the last year?"

8. Questions which imply value judgements

Questions which imply value judgements are those which make your own feelings obvious, particularly where this implies criticism of the other person, e.g:

"Why on earth did you do that?"

Such questions are liable to put the other person on the defensive and can usually be framed more neutrally.

ASKING QUESTIONS

- | | | | |
|----|------------|----|------------------|
| 1. | OPEN | 5. | LEADING |
| 2. | CLOSED | 6. | HYPOTHETICAL |
| 3. | EXTENDING | 7. | DOUBLE BARRELLED |
| 4. | CLARIFYING | 8. | VALUE JUDGEMENTS |

BE AWARE OF WHAT YOU ARE DOING!

SUPPORTING BEHAVIOUR

You may need to use supportive behaviour at the first meeting in order to build rapport; or at any stage in your contact with the other person when she/he seems hesitant, nervous or tentative.

Support is demonstrating acceptance of the other person no matter what she/he thinks, says or feels. It is independent of whether or not you feel the same way.

WHAT TO SUPPORT

- the other person's hesitancies, fears, doubts, uncertainties and anxiety
- the right of the other person to feel differently from the way you might in the same situation
- the reality of the other person's perceptions, even when you see things differently

HOW TO SUPPORT

1. Accept what the other person tells you as real (for her/him).
2. Don't give unsolicited advice.
3. Don't tell a person she/he shouldn't feel, think or believe that way. Such talk is never experienced as helpful.
4. Listen
5. Reflect back: restate what the other person has told you using similar words.
6. Suppress your pet solution. Ask the other person what actions she/he has thought of.
7. Ask the other person what kind of help is needed. Supply the help if you can. If you can't, explain why clearly.
8. Don't generalise (i.e. "Everybody feels that way.") because that is not helpful.

EXAMPLES OF SUPPORTIVE PHRASES

It's upsetting to have that happen.

I can see why you feel that way.

How did you handle that?

What do you want to do about it?

You feel bad because that happened.

What kind of help do you need?

PAPER 6

CONFRONTATION AND ASSERTIVENESS

Many people, particularly women, when trying to influence others use behaviour styles which are based on attracting and charming the other person. Although these styles are often appropriate there will be occasions when confrontation and assertiveness are needed. The successful influencer needs to be able to use whatever style she thinks will work for that person or that situation.

ASSERTIVE INFLUENCE STYLES

Assertive influence styles are only effective when you know clearly where you want to go and you are sure you are right. There are several different methods which can be used.

1. Coerce

Apply pressure by showing the other person the cost to her/him of not going along with you. This can cause resentment and lack of commitment.

2. Educate

Provide information which the other person does not have. This can be effective if your information is seen as relevant. If there is a conflict of interests you may be distrusted.

3. Persuade

Sell your ideas to the other person with logical arguments. This can be effective if she/he trusts you, otherwise you will be seen as manipulative or self-seeking.

4. Emotional appeal

Appeal to the other person's feelings and values.

5. Use Expertise

This is persuasion based on your claim to superior knowledge and expertise. First you must build credibility for this to work. There is a danger that the other person may become dependent on you and scapegoat you if things go wrong.

6. Vision Building

Build a vision for the other person of how things could be if she/he went along with you.

There are inherent dangers in assertiveness but there are times when nothing else will work, and there are people with whom no other style will work. You must be sure you are right before becoming assertive because this influence style means that you are pressurising someone to move in a direction chosen by you. If it turns out afterwards to be the wrong direction then the blame is placed squarely in your court.

CONFRONTATION

Another related method of getting the other person to move when all else fails is confrontation. This when skilfully used is a very powerful influence style, but should be used sparingly. People who are seen as very confronting tend to be feared and avoided.

WHAT IS CONFRONTATION?

Confrontation is making the difference explicit between:

- what you value and what the other person values
- what you think and what the other person thinks
- what you feel and what the other person feels

When you do this you risk hurting the other person's feelings.

Confrontation also makes differences explicit between:

- what you want to do and what the other person wants to do
- what you actually do and what the other person actually does

When you do this somebody has to change their behaviour, the risk is that it may be you.

Confrontation also makes differences explicit between:

- what the other person says and what they do

When you do this you risk making the other person angry (defensive).

HOW TO CONFRONT

1. Acknowledge the other person's position as legitimate (for her/him).
2. Differentiate the other person's position from yours.
3. Check to see whether you have heard the other person clearly and that she/he has heard you.

4. Accept angry, hostile feelings in yourself and in the other person as real. Be responsible for your own feelings. Leave the other person free to feel differently.
5. Don't try to solve the problem until differences have been fully explained.
6. Ask the other person to describe her/his preferred solution. Be prepared to state (and differentiate) yours.

EXAMPLES OF CONFRONTING PHRASES

We see that differently

You believe x whereas I believe y

I disagree. Your position is x and mine is y.

Do you understand my position? It would help me if you could say it back to me.

CONFRONTATION

1. Acknowledge their position
2. Make differences explicit
3. Make sure you've heard each other
4. Accept angry and hostile feelings
5. Fully explain differences before
problem solving
6. Ask them for their preferred
solution

ASSERTION

- | | | | |
|----|----------|----|------------------|
| 1. | COERCE | 4. | EMOTIONAL APPEAL |
| 2. | EDUCATE | 5. | USE EXPERTISE |
| 3. | PERSUADE | 6. | VISION BUILD |

BUT FIRST - MAKE SURE
YOU ARE RIGHT!

PAPER 7

HOW TO INFLUENCE GROUPS

The influential group member needs first of all to be aware of what is happening in the group. A heightened awareness of group processes makes it easier to influence those processes in the direction required. A group member who is clear about what is going on in her group can influence that group even if she is not the leader.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR IN GROUPS

The first requirement is to learn to distinguish between "content" and "process".

CONTENT: Content deals with the subject matter or the task upon which the group is working. In most groups, the focus of attention of all members is on the content.

PROCESS: Process is concerned with what is happening between and to group members while the group is working. Process deals with such factors as morale, feelings, atmosphere, influence, participation, leadership, conflict, co-operation, etc.

Very little attention is paid to process, even when it is the major cause of ineffective group action. Sensitivity to group process will better enable one to diagnose group problems early and deal with them more effectively.

Having decided to pay attention to group process, the second requirement is to distinguish between "task" process and "maintenance" process.

TASK PROCESS: Task process in a group is any behaviour which is primarily trying to get the group task accomplished. Here are some examples:-

INITIATING: Proposing tasks or goals; defining a group problem; suggesting a procedure or ideas for solving a problem.

SEEKING INFORMATION: Asking for facts; seeking relevant information; seeking suggestions or ideas.

GIVING INFORMATION: Offering facts; providing relevant information; stating a belief about a relevant issue; giving suggestions or ideas.

CLARIFYING: Interpreting ideas or suggestions; clearing up confusions; defining terms; indicating alternatives and issues.

SUMMARISING: Pulling together related ideas; restating suggestions after the group has discussed them; offering a decision or conclusion for the group to accept or reject.

Other task process behaviours include planning, timing, making lists of information, checking progress and reporting group results.

MAINTENANCE PROCESS: Maintenance is any sort of behaviour which helps the group to remain in good working order. Maintenance is about creating a good atmosphere for working on the task and about creating good working relationships within the group. Here are some examples.

HARMONISING: Attempting to reconcile disagreements; reducing tensions; getting people to explore differences.

GATE KEEPING: Helping to keep communication channels open; making sure everyone participates; making sure ideas are heard and discussed.

ENCOURAGING: Being friendly, warm and responsive to others; indicating by remark or facial expression the acceptance of another person's contribution.

DEVELOPING IDEAS: Listening to other people's ideas, supporting them and developing them further.

GIVING FEEDBACK: Letting other group members know how you value their contribution to the group.

In order to ensure that your maintenance contributions are worthwhile and influential it is necessary to have an understanding of the emotional issues that underlie most group activity.

EMOTIONAL PROBLEMS IN GROUPS

There are many forces active in groups which disturb work, which form an emotional undercurrent in the stream of group life. These undercurrents produce behaviour which can make it difficult for the group to function. Groups often ignore such issues or wish them away. The effective group member will recognise such issues and then encourage the groups to discuss and deal with the issues openly, thus removing the block to its progress. Here are some examples of emotional issues.

IDENTITY: Who am I in this group? Where do I fit in? What kind of behaviour is acceptable here?

GOALS AND NEEDS: What do I want from this group? Can group goals be made consistent with my goals? What have I to offer the group?

POWER: Who will control what we do? How much power and influence do I have?

INTIMACY: How close will we get to each other? How personal? How much can we trust each other?

Here are some examples of the sorts of destructive behaviour which these emotional issues can produce:

COUNTERDEPENDENCY: Opposing or resisting anyone in the group who represents authority.

DOMINATING: Asserting personal dominance; attempting to get one's own way regardless of others.

WITHDRAWING: Trying to remove the sources of uncomfortable feelings by not contributing for long periods and psychologically leaving the group.

PAIRING UP: Seeking out one or two supporters and forming a kind of emotional subgroup in which the members protect and support one another.

BEHAVIOUR WHICH INFLUENCES GROUPS

Here we are looking for behaviour which favourably influences a group, which helps it forward in the accomplishment of its task. We are also looking for behaviour which makes an individual group member significant to that group, and able to control to some extent the direction of the group's movement and its final result.

First of all you can become significant to the group by observing what is happening in the group in terms of process, and by making contributions to the group at the process level. This includes both task and maintenance process and all the behaviours described under those headings are relevant.

There are however certain of these process behaviours which are particularly powerful in taking a group forward. The group member who includes these in her repertoire will become more influential. These behaviours are:

- clarifying
- summarising
- encouraging
- developing ideas

The group member with her own ideas to contribute to the content may or may not be influential depending on her group skills. The group member who listens out for and encourages, clarifies and develops ideas, and then summarises at certain points is certain to be influential in that group.

TASK

INITIATING

GIVING/SEEKING
INFORMATION

- CLARIFYING
- SUMMARISING

PLANNING

TIMING

CHECKING PROGRESS

MAINTENANCE

HARMONISING

GATE KEEPING

- ENCOURAGING
 - DEVELOPING IDEAS
- GIVING FEEDBACK

PAPER 8

LEADERSHIP AND INFLUENCE

In order to lead we have to influence people by one means or another. Here we are interested in influencing not only our subordinates, but colleagues at our own level and those above us. The person who understands how to lead and influence people, and who has developed influence skills can make a considerable impact on an organisation, and not just on the people over whom she/he has authority.

WHAT IS INVOLVED IN LEADERSHIP?

This means getting the other person to move from her/his present position to a new position, and to stay in the new position.

Technical aspects:

There may be technical information based on our training or experience which we can give to the other person. Chances are we want to influence her/him because we have insights into the situation which she/he has not.

Procedural Aspects:

These are important and include timing, how to approach the other person, who else to involve, how many meetings it needs, whether it should be done formally or informally, over the telephone, face to face, by memo, etc....

Emotional Aspects:

The other person may have negative emotions about us, or about being helped or led. On the other hand she/he may try to relieve herself/himself of her/his problem or responsibility by dumping it all on us.

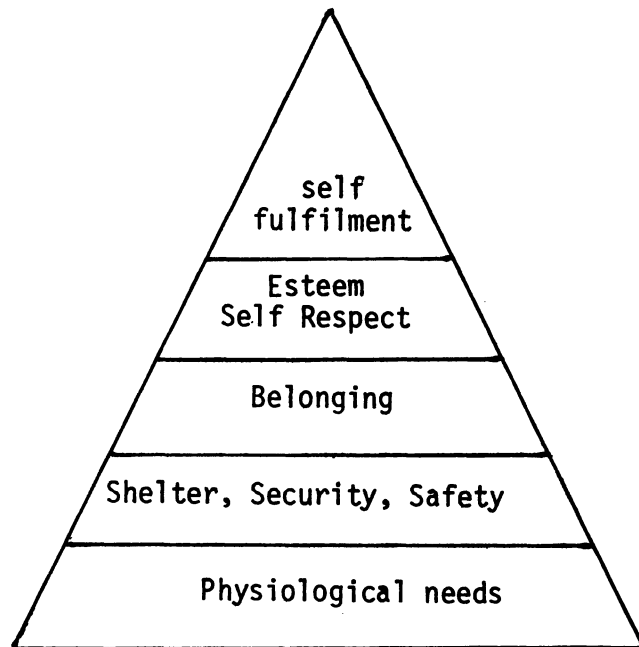
Many "leaders" try to concentrate just on the technical content, without giving much thought to procedures and emotions. The really influential person is skilled in all three aspects.

EMOTIONS ARE ALWAYS PRESENT

Much of our behaviour expresses both our striving for emotional satisfaction and our avoidance of emotional threats. We move towards what we desire and away from what we dislike. The more we understand about the other person's emotional needs the more likely we are to be able to influence her/him.

Let us examine some of the theories of human needs to build up an understanding of this subject.

Maslow postulated that human needs fall into the following hierarchy.



It is possible for leaders to influence people by satisfying these emotional needs. Therefore it is a great help to understand the satisfactions or gratifications that a person seeks.

Most people fall into one of the following three categories as far as their emotional gratifications are concerned.

1. The friendly helper

This person behaves in ways that are trusting, loyal, helpful, caring, supportive, accepting, etc.... She puts the welfare of others very high up in her priorities. Her gratifications come from being good to others without demanding direct rewards in return.

2. The tough battler

She is self confident, ambitious, persuasive, forceful, challenging, bold, risk taking. She places the achievement of goals through influencing the activities of others at the top of her priorities. Her gratifications come from being self assertive and directing.

3. The analytical thinker

This person is cautious, practical, economical, reserved, analytical, principled, orderly, thorough, etc.... She places self sufficiency and self reliance at the top of her priorities. Her gratifications come from achieving self direction through logical analysis and wise foresight.

It is not only helpful to consider which category characterises the person being led, but also to determine to which category you belong.

There are leadership problems to be found in all three categories.

1. The friendly helper may need to stand up more often for her own interests and for what she thinks is right.
2. The tough battler may need to be more sensitive and realise that some situations will not yield to force.
3. The analytical thinker may need to become more aware of her own feelings and the feelings of those around her.

BUILDING A GOOD RELATIONSHIP

In order to influence someone we must build a good relationship with them. This depends on:

1. Establishing rapport. Listen actively, empathise, encourage, reflect back, observe.
2. Establishing your credibility. Display the knowledge, experience, qualifications you may have to offer.
3. Build trust and confidence. Display integrity with information. Show genuine interest and concern.

INCREASING READINESS FOR CHANGE

1. Show the present limitations and problems in the situation, using if possible objective, concrete information.
2. Build a vision of the future. This should lead (along with 1) to dissatisfaction with the status quo.

Then the person is in a state of readiness for change. Whether or not she changes depends on:

1. her/his level of security
2. the leader's behaviour
3. the probability of success

You may have little control over 1 and 3 but you do have over 2. Since the leader's behaviour is the one factor under our control let us examine the alternatives available.

INFLUENCING STYLES

There are two main styles to be used in influencing others, one is pulling and attracting, the other is pushing and asserting.

PULL

Get inside of the other person, let them know you are with them. Share with them where we go from here.

Bridging - Involving and supporting

- Active listening
- Finding common ground

Attracting - Excitement raising

- Vision building
- Disclosing

PUSH

A pushing style is effective when you know where you want to go.

Persuading - give proposals

- give reasons for and against

Asserting - set expectations

- evaluate
- give incentives
- apply pressures

MOVING FROM PULL TO PUSH

It is important to know how to move from Pull to Push because most interactions are best begun with a pulling style to build rapport.

To move from one style to another we must first disengage the other person by

- distancing
- reducing conflict
- humour

then change styles.