

Influence Skills for Port Leaders

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Agenda

- Baseline activity
- Influence defined
- Model influencers
- Influence framework
- Influence skills
- Influence activity
- Self-assessment
- Influence planning

Baseline Influence Activity

- **Identify several influence challenges you face in your role.**

Influence Target	Ideal Outcomes	Factors That Make it Challenging

1. **Select one challenge and capture some ideas on how you might approach that situation. What will you say or do to influence that person?**
- **Now find a partner and compare notes on your challenges and approach to responding to it. Identify commonalities.**

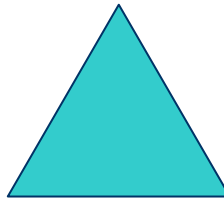
Introduction to Influence

Influence Defined

Influence is a special form of communication where we use our power to effect results . Unlike communicating to inform, when we communicate to influence others, we are generally hoping to see some outward action as a result of our communication. Ideally, it prompts action.

Results

Relationships



Influence represents a balancing act between creating results and building relationships. If too much emphasis is placed on results, it has the tendency to destroy relationships. If too much emphasis is placed on the relationship, little actually gets accomplished.

The use of influence has only increased over the past 20 years as many organizations have grown more complex and flatter. Further, the increased used of matrix-oriented projects means that our ability to influence has become even more important to achieve results in most organizations.

Influence can also be directional – upward, lateral, downward and external. The strategies we use might differ based on the positional relationship between us and the person we are trying to influence.

Introduction to Influence

Influence Defined (Continued)

Influence happens in the mind of the other person we are attempting to have impact with. We may believe we have effectively influenced another, but just because we believe this doesn't necessarily make it so.

Power

It is impossible to talk about influence without also considering the concept of power. While power is defined in many ways it is generally defined as a potential to impact others – the potential to shape others worlds.

Many managers fear openly discussing power since in some contexts it has a negative connotation. However, power in and of itself is not necessarily bad. In fact, it is an important element of how organizations function.

Power comes in many flavors. Of most importance to managers is the distinction between two types: legitimate or informal:

- ❑ **Formal, externalized power** is the type of power that is granted to managers by their organization. It comes in the form of authority such as the ability to hire/fire, promote, sign checks, etc.
- ❑ **Informal or personal power** is based on more personal qualities, such as ones' past accomplishments, reputation, personality style, affiliations or relationships.

Formal power is important to use in some contexts, however some managers may overuse it. This may have the impact of damaging relationships. Influence is most effective when it is based on personal power based on fulfilling the needs of both parties.

Introduction to Influence

- What is the source of your power in your port? Capture some ideas below.

- What factors determine when you use your legitimate formal power versus your personal power?

- Find a partner, share your insights and explore commonalities or differences.

Introduction to Influence

Influence versus Manipulation

Some people confuse influence with manipulation. It is very important to clarify these approaches to getting results. The type of influence we are suggesting is authentic and with integrity, focused on helping both parties to achieve an outcome with an explicit agenda. With this approach there is a tendency to build relationships. Manipulation, on the other hand, tends to rely on hidden agendas to focus on the needs of one party. The result is the tendency to destroy relationships and damage reputations.

- **What are some behaviors or influence strategies you have experienced that have appeared manipulative?**

- **What was the impact of these behaviors on you and the relationship you had with the person you perceived to be manipulating you?**

Activity: Model Influencers

- **Reflect on the people working at your port and/or the industry as a whole. Identify 2 people who you believe are effective at influence.**
- **List the attributes of these leaders that makes them influential – be specific!**
- **Find a partner and discuss what your wrote; identify commonalities**

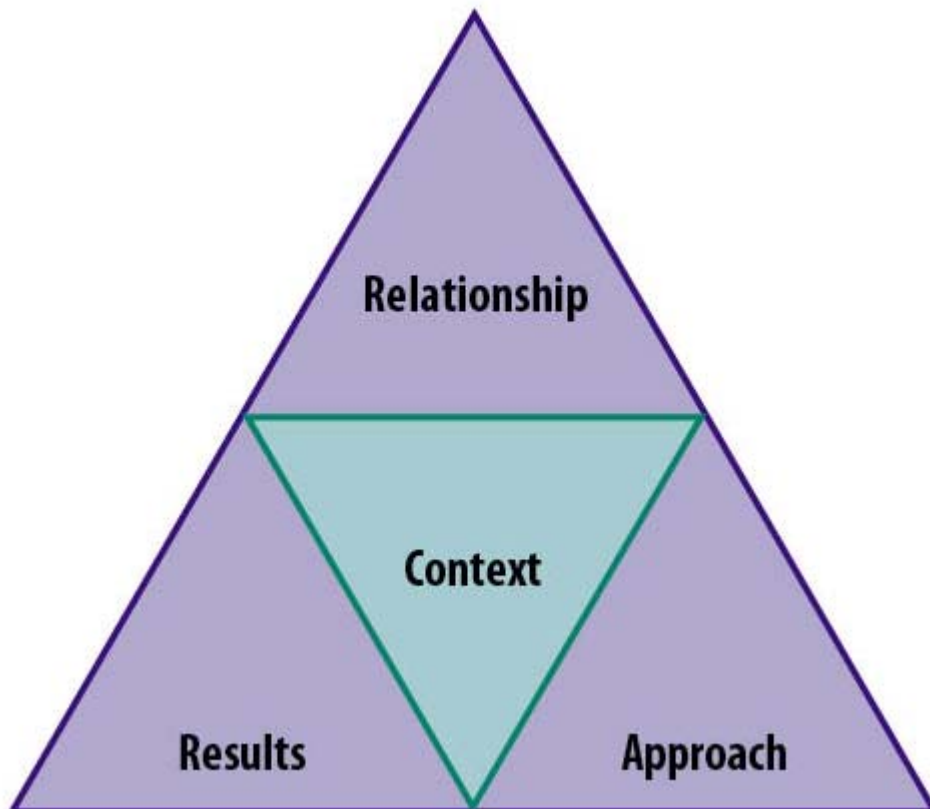
Activity: Model Influencers

Attributes and skills of effective influencers in the port industry:

Influence Framework

Introduction

Effective leaders realize that influence does not happen randomly; it takes planning and preparation. According to Kim Barnes, author of *Exercising Influence*, there are four key factors that need to be considered when preparing for an influence situation. Results, Relationship, Approach, and Context:



Influence Framework

1: Results

The first step in preparing for an influence situation is to be very clear about the results or influence goal you are attempting to achieve. Many people inadvertently create resistance to their ideas because their influence goal is so broad or undefined. Influence goals should be *specific, observable and flexible*.

2: Nature of the Relationship

Influence always happens in the context of a relationship. There are a number of dynamics to consider in influence relationships. From a chronological perspective, ones' ability to influence another is a by-product of past experience. Every time I attempt to influence you in the present, our past comes into play. If our past experiences have been positive, I will be more open to your attempts to influence me in the present. Likewise, if I have damaged my relationship in the past, I may need to build the relationship in the present before I can effectively influence another.

3: Tactics and Behaviors

According to Barnes, the third component of the influence framework to be considered are the tactics and strategies one might use in influencing another. Effective influencers use a variety of skills to influence others based on the situation and the individual they are attempting to influence rather than stay in their comfort zone.

Direct influence consists of **expressive** (telling, selling, etc.) and **receptive** behaviors (inquiry, listening, etc.). Generally speaking, most effective influencers try to **balance** their use of expressive and receptive influence behaviors in order to engage the target of their influence. Indirect influence strategies consist of coalition building by building networks of support.

Influence Framework

4: Context

Effective influencers consider 3 perspectives with regard to context: personal, cultural and organizational.

Personal context relates to qualities and attributes of the person who are trying to influence – their values, interests, concerns, styles, ways they like information, etc.

Cultural context refers to the culture of you as the influencer and the culture of the target of your influence. Within each culture there “rules” that guide behavior. If you are unaware of these cultural “rules” you might inadvertently damage important relationships by using inappropriate behavior or making incorrect assumptions about the other person.

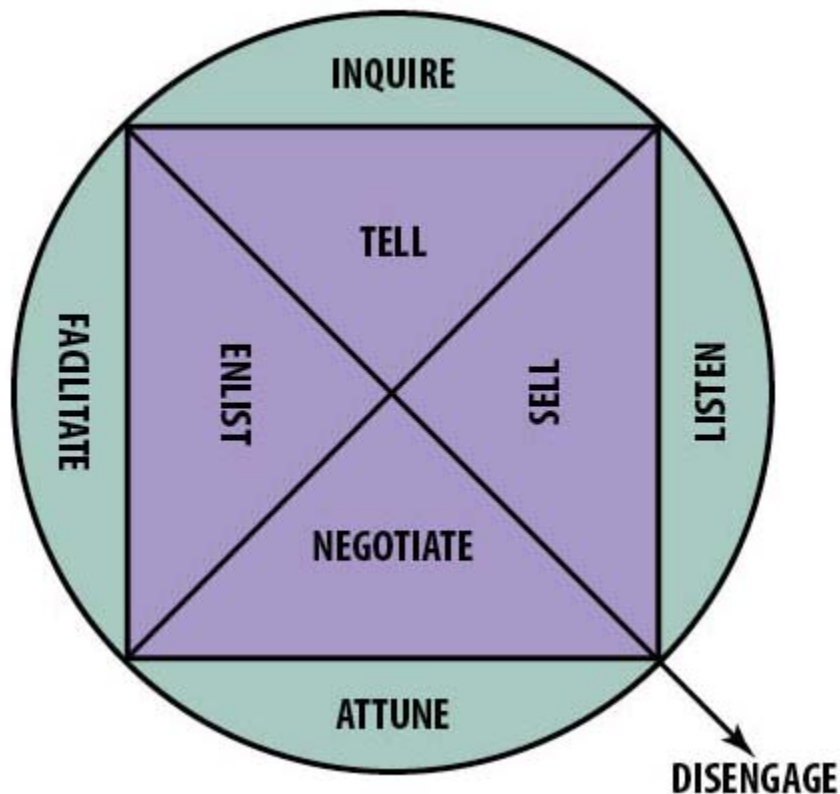
Organizational context refers to the norms and “rules” associated with the organization that your influence target is a part of. Many organizations have multiple contexts that need to be considered. For example, the culture and norms associated with the finance department might have a very different organizational context than the marketing department.

Influence Skills

Introduction

Direct influence skills can be either **expressive** or **receptive**. Expressive skills are used to send information to the other person. Expressive skills are used to elicit information from the other person. Although everyone has a comfort zone for one or the other, good influencers are skilled at using both types of influence behaviors.

In addition to direct influence skills, effective leaders often use **indirect** influence skills to build coalitions of support through others. For example, this might involve engaging others to help build bridges to the person you want to influence.



Influence Skills Assessment

Instructions

Complete the self-assessment tool and complete the following questions:

- Which tactics or skills are you most proficient or comfortable with?

- Which tactics or skills need the most work – either you are using them too much or too little?

- What are some upcoming influence situations you might practice these skills?

Influence Skills: Expressive

- **Tell: communicate the desired action**
 - **Suggest:** “I suggest we work together to develop a budget template”
 - **Express Needs:** “I need your help to create the budget template”
- **Sell: Convince the other to commit to action**
 - **Offer Reasons:** “There are 3 main reasons why this program will work...”
 - **Refer to Shared Values or Goals:** “Because our port is committed to innovative customer service,...”
- **Negotiate: Give the other party a vested interest in acting**
 - **Offer Incentives:** “If you will create the budget template, I will develop the cover memo to be distributed...”
 - **Describe Consequences:** “If you are unable to create the budget template, we may not be able to meet the deadline set by the executive director...”
- **Enlist: Create enthusiasm and alignment**
 - **Envision:** “I have a sense we will get some well-considered and complete budgets using this new process...”
 - **Encourage:** “You bring a lot of experience to the budget process; I’m confident the presentation to the leadership team will work really well.”

Influence Skills: Receptive

- **Inquire: Get information or involvement; guide thinking**
 - **Ask open-ended questions:** “What concerns you about my proposal?”
 - **Draw out:** “Can you say more about your second point regarding the cost?”
- **Listen: Learn limits or expand another’s thinking**
 - **Check understanding:** “Let me make sure I heard your concern correctly...”
 - **Test implications:** “I wonder if part of your concern about cost is the time it will take to complete this project. Is that so?”
- **Attune: Build trust or increase openness**
 - **Identify with the other:** “If I were you, I might also think that the cost is very significant.”
 - **Disclose:** “I have to admit I underestimated the time and expertise it would take to create the budget package.”
- **Facilitate: Get the other party to take responsibility for action**
 - **Clarify issues:** “Sounds as if there are two primary concerns you have about the program...”
 - **Pose challenging questions:** “What would it take for you to support my proposal at the management meeting today?”

Influence Planning

Scenario: _____

Influence Target: _____

Influence Goal:

- **Best outcome:**
- **Realistic outcome:**
- **Worst outcome:**

Context:

- **Individual**
- **Cultural**
- **Organizational**

Relationship with Target:

- **Past**
- **Present**
- **Future**

Influence Planning

Influence Approach:

Reasons your target will support you	Reasons why your target will resist

Tactic/Behavior	Language