Influencing without Formal Authority
Leading When You’re Not the Boss
presented by
Beverly Y. Langford
President, LMA Communication
Clinical Assistant Professor, J. Mack Robinson College of Business
Georgia State University

The New World

- Flatter
- More Diverse
- Faster Paced
Why Do You Need to Develop the Ability to Influence without Authority?

- You need something, and you have no authority over the person who can give it to you. Examples?
- The other person may not want to help you. Why?
- You don’t have a relationship with the person from whom you need help. Why not?
- You have a relationship, but it isn’t good. Why?
- You have one opportunity to get this person to help you. Examples?

Positional Power

- Having control over rewards for others
- Having authority to assign tasks and responsibilities
- Being able to use coercive tactics
- Holding employees responsible for tasks and duties

Personal Power

- Perceived as having control of useful information
- Having people like, respect and seek to identify with leader
- Using connections and relationships to achieve objectives
Developing Your Personal Power
Two Factors

- Relationships: Do they like you?
- Expertise: Are you credible?

http://www.hrvoice.org/9-ways-to-influence-without-authority

Keys to Success

- Know what you want
- Know what your audience needs
- Know what the environment demands
Understand the Audience’s Three Questions

- What has changed?
- How does it affect me?
- What do you want me to do?

What “Currencies” should you use?

- Inspiration
- Task
- Position
- Relationships

Building Relationships

- Analyze your relationship with the other person: positive, negative, neutral, nonexistent?
- Understand the communication or personal style does he/she prefer.
- Model the behavior that you want from others.

Getting Acceptance for your Good Ideas

- Make sure that your idea reflects the organization’s strategic initiatives.
- Have a clear plan to implement your idea.
- Get allies on board and be willing to share credit.
- Bring your ideas with confidence.
Understanding and Addressing Resistance

- Understand why people may resist.
- Handle objections preemptively.
- Box it in, and ask what it would take to convince your receiver.
- Stress benefits to the audience.

Remember the Four Magic Words

- I need your help
Strategies for Influencing Your Boss

- Do your homework before you say anything.
- Balance problems with possible solutions.
- Be willing to answer questions and deal with cross-examination.
- Consider your manager’s communication style.

Strategies for Influencing Your Boss

- Know what you want well enough to state it in a single sentence.
- Know the difference between features and benefits.
- Remember to include both personal and organizational benefits.
- Make your message easy to follow.
Unconscious Mistakes that Undermine your Success

- Couching proposals as questions
- Using minimizing language (kind of, sort of, just)
- Hedging
  - There might just be a few insignificant problems we need to address. (adjective)
  - I’m not an expert but you might want to try restarting your computer. (clause)
  - That’s false, isn’t it? (tag question clause)
  - That’s a great idea, don’t you think?


Body Language Mistakes to Overcome

- Slouching
- Nonexistent or Aggressive eye contact
- Making yourself too small or too large
- http://www.ted.com/talks/amy_cuddy_your_body_language_shapes_who_you_are
- Mismatching verbal and nonverbal communication
General Points to Remember

- Inspire others with your passion.
- Use data to make your points.
- Recognize the accomplishments of others.
- Build consensus as you influence.

Source: Felicia Davis, “Tips for Influencing without Authority.”

Personal Benefits

- You get what you want.
- You build a strong reputation and gain credibility.
- You make a positive difference for organizations and individuals.
- You succeed in the new environment.
Summary Tips for Influencing without Formal Authority

- Know what you want.
- Determine your trading approach-currencies.
- Inspire cooperation to overcome resistance.
- Go in to win with a position that addresses the needs of others and the organization.
- Learn from each encounter.