

influential
conversations

A leader's guide to influencing others

PREVIEW

Participant Journal



leadscope learning
LEADERSHIP CONVERSATIONS



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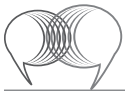
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Introduction to Influential Conversations

Influence: *The act or power of producing a sustained shift in the attitudes, beliefs or behavior of others, without exertion of force or direct exercise of command.*

Conducting influential conversations is not just a leadership skill, but a fundamental life skill. Whether at work, at home, or in our community, we participate in these conversations on a daily basis. One of the most basic ways we can improve the world around us is through becoming more influential in our interactions with others. We dedicate this program to that process.

The notion of influence boils down to a single powerful principle: we are influenced by another person when something in their way of being, doing, or communicating touches on something that is important to us. We are then motivated to change.

The literature describes many ways in which this principle manifests. For example Robert Cialdini, in his book *Influence, Science and Practice* describes the power of reciprocity, meaning that we are influenced to respond in kind to something someone does to us or for us. This process touches on the importance we place on fairness or on the keeping of an unspoken social contract. We are influenced by the need to uphold this value or process. As another example, he describes the urge to conform to what other people are doing, which speaks to the value we place on belonging, or the value we place on social evidence for appropriate behavior. We are influenced to be like others.

When we admire another individual, whether it be a friend or a historical figure we have never met, we are influenced by them because something in the example of their lives touches on values with which we resonate. We may be motivated to change our behavior to express those values more fully.

Within the confines of a particular conversation, this root principle holds: we will be influenced by another to the degree that something in the conversation connects to that which is important to us. The level of importance and the strength of the connection will mediate the amount of influence. In the absence of such a connection, influence will be slight or non-existent. The key, therefore, when conducting an influential conversation, is to discover what that connection might be for the other person and make it explicit. We explore this process in one of five principles of influence discussed in this program; the principle of finding common ground. All other principles are subordinate to this one.



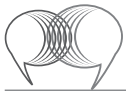
An influential conversation, therefore, can be as much about exploration as it is about presentation. The greatest salespeople and greatest leaders have always understood this.

Learning to be more influential involves being more conscious, being a better listener, exercising restraint, communicating clearly, and modeling the very characteristics we admire in others. If this sounds like a tall order . . . it is.

You may start on this journey because you want others to change. In the process of becoming more influential you may discover that you have changed the most of all. If so, then this program has influenced you in the way intended.

Welcome to the journey.

PREVIEW



Influence is the core skill of effective leadership

Approaches to leadership are changing. Leaders who still rely on positional authority to get things done may find themselves standing on weak ground. Traditional pyramid management structures are giving way to more complex power arrangements, where positional authority plays a lesser part. People at all levels in organizations are expected to think more independently, to participate in multi-disciplinary teams and to collaborate across organizational boundaries. Team members may report to more than one manager and may need to satisfy diverse stakeholders. Managers may find that new generations in the workplace relate to authority in ways different than previous generations. Command and control is not dead yet, but the prognosis is not good! In this changing environment the ability to influence others is becoming an increasingly important leadership skill.

Leadership-through-authority used to be about shifting others' behaviors. Whether they were on-board with the mission or objectives was secondary.

Leadership-without-authority requires that leaders master the ability to enroll and engage people, altering their beliefs, attitudes and opinions, so they truly "buy in" to key goals and tasks.

In other words, influential leadership is about:

- Commitment; not compliance
- Engagement; not going-through-the-motions
- Enrollment; not enlistment...

Commitment is critical to success, because personal commitment will withstand shifting circumstances: budget cuts, organizational transformation and personnel changes.

Getting commitment requires that leaders are skilled and resourceful in their ability to influence others.

Conversations are the key to influence

As with the process of *Navigational Conversations**, everyday workplace conversations provide perfect opportunities for influencing. Conducting these conversations with the skills developed through this program will result in greater influence and therefore stronger commitment from others.

**Navigational Conversations: Strategic Coaching Skills for Leaders is another program offered by Leadscape Learning. Learn more at: www.leadscapellearning.com*



Learning Outcomes

As a result of participating in the this program, participants will be able to:

1. Identify opportunities for influence within their social network.
2. Differentiate between influence and other approaches to initiating change.
3. Develop strategies for the application of five principles of influence to conversational interactions.
4. Conduct an influential conversation following a five-step structure based on principles of influence.
5. Adapt principles and strategies of influence to prepare for an upcoming influence opportunity.

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