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# Improving Influencing Skills for Leaders

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May 2024

# **influence**

*/ˈɪnfluəns/ [in-flu-ence]*

the effect that somebody has on the behaviours, attitudes, opinions, and choices of others or on the way that something develops



## Why is influence important?

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Leaders today can no longer rely on coercion

Most people prefer to make a choice to do something – the power of agency

Influence becomes contagious



Establishing credibility



Engage others, share passion, and build a connection



Be open to influence from others



Practise personal accountability



Commit to continued learning and adaptability

Why do most people hang up immediately when they receive a cold call?

- Not invited or expected
- No connection or rapport
- No context or common ground
- Prior experience

**NO CREDIBILITY**

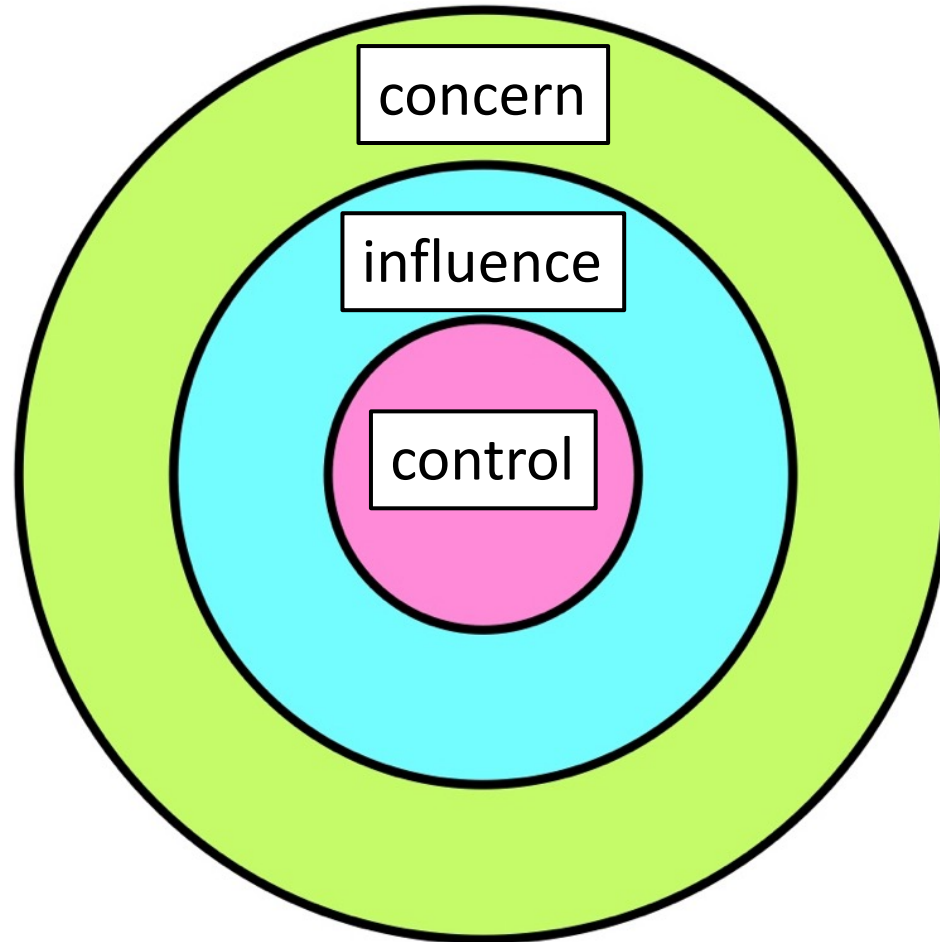




## Sources of credibility

- Positional power
- Track record, results, knowledge
- Third party reference, social proof
- Investing in the success of others



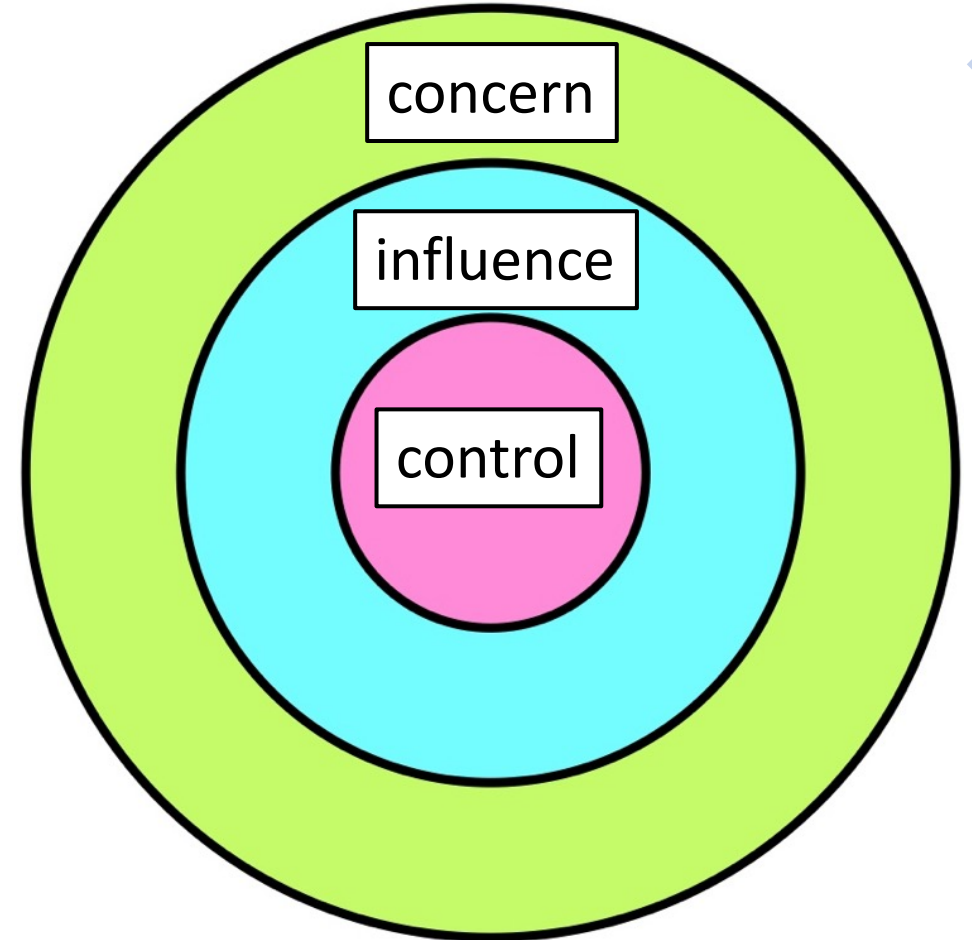


## How do you extend your influence?

Focus your efforts on your circle of influence and not your circle of concern.

### EXAMPLE

- Your boss is in a bad mood (circle of concern)
  - You can't control your boss's bad mood (circle of concern)
  - You can realise she's under pressure to get the monthly reports done so you
    - acknowledge and empathise with her (influence)
    - offer to help her (influence & control)
- ✓ Your actions speak louder than words
- ✓ Your influence will reach further when people know they can trust you







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## Share your passion

- Passion is so important:
  - it produces energy
  - it ignites others
- One of the traits people admire most in leaders is their ability to be forward-looking

*Mother Teresa*



## Some famous influencers

- Martin Luther – challenged current thinking, leading to Reformation
- Florence Nightingale – commitment to patients leading to establishment of nursing profession
- Rosa Parks – courage leading to political reform
- Nelson Mandela – created a new South Africa without bloody transition



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## Nelson Mandela

- Springboks were seen as symbol of oppressive minority white rule
- Mandela jailed for 27 years for opposing apartheid
- Mandela asked François Pienaar for opinion
- Mandela wore the rugby strip to the rugby world cup final in Johannesburg
- S Africa won against New Zealand in extra time



*“When the final whistle blew, this country changed forever.”  
François Pienaar*





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## Practise personal accountability



- Be clear about expectations
- Define results and communicate them
- Be the first to hold yourself accountable, including when things do not go well
- Sheryl Sandberg always ensures she understands the risks and benefits of her decisions before moving forward. This has helped her avoid critical mistakes and maintain a high level of transparency with her team.
- “If you could kick the person in the pants most responsible for most of your trouble, you wouldn’t sit for a month.”  
*Teddy Roosevelt*



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## Invest in your continued Learning and Development...and that of your team

Top Ten People Skills – That Help Increase Influence

1. Design Thinking
2. Analytical Skills
3. Team Management
4. Strategic Thinking
5. Team Leadership
6. Problem Solving
7. Operational Excellence
8. Mentoring
9. Self-Learning
10. Cross-team Collaboration

Source: LinkedIn





## Find support for your development

- Find a trusted friend to be a learning buddy or form a learning group
- Volunteer on a charity board
- Engage your direct manager
- Tell your team what you are working on
- Find resources to read and listen to





## Manage Your Energy

- It takes energy to do everything - make sure you build your energy by paying attention to the following five areas:
  - Sleep
  - Exercise
  - Nutrition & Hydration
  - Quiet reflection /deep breathing
  - Your close relationships

Thank you



Your Cliff Edge



®

*Helping lift you to greater success in business and happiness in life*

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