



Can't get your team to act?

Inspire, Guide, Impact

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Why don't people just do what I say?

If you've ever asked yourself this, then I encourage you to read on.

Influence goes beyond authority and the notion that others should do exactly what you expect. It is about inspiring others to give their best and guiding them through strong relationships, effective communication, and aligned values.

These three pillars are essential for building trust and motivating others to achieve a common goal.

“The mediocre teacher tells. The good teacher explains. The superior teacher demonstrates. The great teacher inspires.” – William Arthur Ward

Here's how each of them plays a key role in influence.

1. Relationships

Relationships are the lifeblood of all leaders. Many times, the success or downfall of an individual can be traced back to the effectiveness of their relationships both internally with teammates and externally with clients.

It takes work to maintain healthy relationships and several important factors contribute to this.

- **Trust:** This is the cornerstone of any relationship. When team members trust their leaders, they are more likely to follow their guidance and support their vision.

Trust is built through consistent integrity and delivering on promises over time.

- **Emotional Intelligence:** The ability to understand and manage one's own emotions and the feelings within the team.

Leaders who are aware of how their behaviors impact others can connect with their teams and better provide what is needed for others to be successful.

- **Supportive Environments:** Influential leaders create a supportive work environment where employees feel valued and heard.

By investing in the development and well-being of team members, you foster loyalty and respect in the workplace.

This is essential for creating space that empowers people to generate ideas and solutions to complex challenges.

“To win in the marketplace, you must first win in the workplace.” – Doug Conant

- **Collaboration:** Strong leaders build relationships beyond their direct reports, to include the entire team, peers, departments, and external stakeholders.

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By expanding your network and engaging in open discussions, you gain broader influence within the organization and build a foundation for innovation.

“People don’t buy what you do; they buy why you do it and what you do simply proves what you believe.”

– Simon Sinek

2. Communication: The Tool for Influence

Effective leaders recognize that everyone comes from varying backgrounds and experiences, which shape the way they show up in the workplace.

More importantly, they implement learnings to augment their approach and ensure a collective understanding.

Before this can be done, it is important to understand how you communicate, in addition to the various styles of others.

This is where engaging a trusted advisor can benefit you in developing the most effective approach to enhancing your abilities.

Regardless of style, there are some important aspects of effective communication worth noting.

- **Clarity:** Making sure your words are clear, concise, and easy to understand.
- **Active Listening:** Listening fully to others enhances trust, which helps them communicate their truth.

- **Context:** Leaders inspire through reason, not authority. Explaining the “why” behind decisions helps others recognize the intent driving your choices.
- **Storytelling:** Compelling stories make vision, value and goals relatable by emotionally engaging the team.

3. Values: The Core of Influence

People are significantly influenced by a leader’s values. Values guide decisions, signaling to employees the principles you embody.

“It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it.” – Warren Buffett

Here’s a quick guide to ensure you stay on course.

- **Lead by Example:** Leaders who embody similar values inspire others to follow.
- **Ethical Decisions:** Making ethical choices builds trust and credibility.
- **Cultural Sensitivity:** Embracing differences and creating a culture of inclusion broadens a leader’s influence.

“People follow leaders by choice. Without trust, at best you get compliance.” – Jesse Lyn Stoner

If you look hard enough, I’m sure there are experiences that will support this.

In college, I interned with a financial institution where we assisted individuals

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with credit lines, loans, and home mortgages.

After completing the training, I was eager to contribute to the team and demonstrate my personal abilities, so I hit the phones cold calling prospective clients making 80 dials per day with little immediate success.

My hard work and persistence paid off and I was able to secure a sizeable mortgage loan.

I was ecstatic and felt a sense of pride for helping someone secure a path to buying their first home.

As I assisted my client through the process, collecting the necessary documents and educating them, it was time for us to sign!

Given it was my first experience with these products, I unfortunately missed a document that required my client's signature. She had taken a lunch break to complete the paperwork and by the time I realized this, it was well into the afternoon.

It was an honest mistake, but what transpired next revealed the real lesson in this experience.

When I went to inform my boss of this misstep and let them know my plan to remedy the situation with the client, he turned to me and said, "that's ok, just sign it for them."

Sign it for them?!?!

Needless to say, I didn't sign the document, decided to wrap up my internship the very next week and declined to accept a full-time position upon graduation.

"Decisions are easy when values are clear." – Roy Disney

The purpose of sharing this isn't to challenge your integrity. It's simply a reminder that your people are paying attention to your behaviors and actions, which will directly impact their enthusiasm for performing any task at hand.

Leadership influence thrives on living by core values, effective communication, and strong relationships.

Leadership development is about strengthening these abilities. Enlisting a skilled executive or professional coach can also enhance an organization by incorporating these concepts through the various layers of management.

These elements are proven to build trust, inspire teams, and align actions with goals to create a lasting impact in any organization.

"You can show up in life any way you want to. You just have to decide how you want to show up." – Karen Sheridan