

How to Win People's Cooperation: The Art of Influencing Others

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**The key to successful leadership is influence,
not authority** — Ken Blanchard

Regardless of your role in an organization, you need to persuade others to your point of view. Being able to win people's cooperation is a critical skill for any business professional. In fact, some say leadership means the ability to influence. The good news is that influence is a skill that can be learned. It requires paying attention to seven all important principles.

1. **View your idea from your listener's perspective.** Before you open your mouth, consider the impact of what you propose on your listeners. Will this inconvenience them? Frighten them? Cause an increase in work load? When you see things from the perspective of the other person, you become more sensitive.
2. **Look for common ground.** People are less resistant when you can show them that your idea considers their way of thinking. Your idea can help them gain what is important to them.
3. **Thoughtfully and logically outline what you want your listener to do.** Your job is to order, clarify and intensify for your listeners. Illustrate your message so people can see it and hear it. Resist saying too much. Follow the Rule of Three- three main ideas, not ten. Avoid acronyms and buzz words that blur meaning. Steve Jobs said, "When ideas are simply explained, decisions are easy."
4. **Demonstrate value.** Show listeners why an idea is appropriate, necessary and in their best interests. What proof can you offer to show your idea is worth it? Define and quantify benefits, not just for the organization, but for the individual.

5. **Be yourself.** Be genuine, sincere, and approachable. Demonstrate openness through your body language. Pay attention to crossed arms, clenched fists, and intense facial expressions. Watch the tone of your voice. Little things matter and will be noticed.
6. **Invite questions.** Carefully listen. Show you really want to understand any concerns. Listen without interrupting or talking over. Avoid patronizing statements. Validate or acknowledge the other person's way of thinking. Then, find the best way to answer without being arrogant. Be brief.
7. **Inspire.** Help people to believe. Passion is everything in the influence game. You can't inspire unless you are inspiring. Feel your idea. Taste it. Passion causes a tidal wave! Think Steve Jobs. Project a commanding presence. Look, act and sound confident.

Influencing others doesn't happen by accident. It takes carefully paying attention to what you say and how you say it.

Question: *When was the last time you had to influence someone? What did you do or say that netted the results you got? We're interested in your reaction to this article. Click here – to comment on this article, share your concerns or ask questions. Judy will respond to all questions.*

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