



LEADERSHIP COMPETENCY: INFLUENCES OTHERS

"Leadership is Influence"

John C. Maxwell

Defining Characteristics

- Persuades others to agree with one's priorities and gains support for one's recommendations or initiatives.
- Communicates a vision that inspires others to take action.
- Builds effective working relationships to gain the necessary resources and cooperation to implement projects to further organizational goals.
- Understands possible objections of key stakeholders and addresses their concerns, when possible, in the recommended solution.

Development Activities

1. Attend social functions or make an informal lunch date with key people with whom your organization needs to build strong relationships to build rapport and strengthen relationships.
2. Acknowledge that each individual may be coming from a different point of view and set of priorities. Learn as much as possible about his/her needs, problems, aspirations, and perspectives so that any recommendation you might offer would take into consideration their concerns and needs.
3. Support others to be successful, helping to build relationships and widen one's circle of influence and support.
4. Find a mentor relationship with someone who understands the politics of the organization and is skilled in navigating the politics and power dynamics.
5. Volunteer to lead an important task force or critical project team.

6. Identify all the individuals that may be key to successfully accomplishing your goals.
Consider individuals in both your formal and informal circle of influence.
7. Participate more fully in groups by offering thoughtful suggestions, recommendations or conclusions.
8. Use effective eye contact and speak to all individuals in the group.
9. Increase your impact by being well-prepared for meetings. Have the facts and figures at hand to enable you to be more influential in stating your opinions.
10. Accept organizational politics as a reality of organizational life. Improve your ability to understand and maneuver within the power structure will enhance your ability to influence and gain acceptance of your ideas.

Recommended Reading

1. Block, Peter. The Empowered Manager: Positive Political Skills at Work. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1991.
2. Block, Peter. Flawless Consulting: A Guide to Getting Your Expertise Used. San Diego, CA: University Associates, 1981.
3. Brady, Chris, Woodward, Orrin. Launching a Leadership Revolution: Mastering the Five Levels of Influence. New York, Business Plus – Hachette Book Group USA2005
4. Charvet, Shelle Rose, Words That Change Minds, Mastering the Language of Influence, Kendall Hunt publishers, 1997.
5. Cohen, Don, and Prusak, Laurence, In Good Company: How Social Capital Makes Organizations Work, Amazon, 2001.
6. Cialdini, Robert, B., Influence, The Psychology of Persuasion, Quill Publications, 1993.
7. Carnegie, Dale, How to Win Friends and Influence People, Mass Marketing Publishing, 1994.
8. Cohen, A.C. and D.L. Bradford. Influence Without Authority. New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1990.
9. Conger, Jay S., "The Necessary Art of Persuasion," Harvard Business Review: On Point "Managing Up" series, originally published in May-June, 1998
10. Ferris, Gerald R., Davidson, Sherry L., and Perrewe, Pamela, Political Skill at Work: Impact on Work Effectiveness, Davies-Black,

Palo Alto, CA 2006.

The authors define four key dimensions of political skill: social astuteness, interpersonal influence, networking ability, and apparent sincerity. Their 18-item Political Skill Inventory, measures strength in these areas. Techniques to improve these skills are discussed, along with an arsenal of political tactics that contribute to professional success.

11. Kotter, John P. Power and Influence: Beyond Formal Authority. New York: The Free Press, 1986.
12. Maxwell, John C. The 360 Degree Leader: Developing Your Influence from Anywhere in the Organization, Nashville, Tennessee, Nelson Books, 2005
13. Reardon, Kathleen K. "Courage as a Skill," Harvard Business Review, January 2007

Other Resources

- Leadership Talent Solutions conducts 360 feedback surveys or interviews with key stakeholders to assess an individual's style and skill in influencing others. <http://www.leadershiptalentsolutions.com/>
- On-line training program in developing influence and negotiation skills: http://www.training-classes.com/programs/02/44/24478_negotiation_skills.php
- Center for Creative Leadership": "The Women's Leadership Program" <http://www.ccl.org/leadership/programs/WLPOverview.aspx>