

INFLUENCE

Wharton Computing Quarterly Meeting

What do we mean by “Influence” ?

- Influence is the ability to indirectly affect the actions and thoughts of others.
- More importantly for this discussion, it’s the ability to do it without direct organizational power.
 - ▣ Requests not commands
 - ▣ Opinions not policies.
 - ▣ Grass roots not mandates.

Who's Got It?

- Who do ask to help you convince your boss of something?
- Who do you bounce ideas off of?
- Who gets invited to your meetings despite not being directly involved?
- Who do our vendors try and get involved with their new offerings?



Myths about Influence

“You either have it or you don’t”

- Have you ever called in a favor?
- Have you ever gotten someone to place a rush for you?

All of us have influence to some degree. Differences:

- Scope
- Stakes

“It’s Unethical to use it.”

- Are you advocating what’s best for all?
- Are you being honest?
- Are you advocating your opinion and not yourself?

“Only Higher-ups Have Influence.”

- Power is merely one grantor of influence
- Others include:
 - ▣ Technical Authority
 - ▣ Natural Charisma
 - ▣ Experience

“I Don’t Need It, I’m right.”

- Betamax
 - ▣ Created by Sony, defeated by VHS
- Firewire
 - ▣ Created by Sony as IEEE 1394, never as successful on PC’s as USB
- Blu-Ray
 - ▣ Created by Sony... I’m not investing.

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How to Develop Influence?

Have Something To Say

- Have opinions
- Make them your own
- **Be more afraid of being unknown than of being wrong.**

Influence the Influential

- Figure out who they are
- Influence them

Two effects:

- Influence by proxy
 - ▣ They will influence on your behalf
- Gain influence
 - ▣ Influential will be talking about you



Conclusion



To Sum Up

- We've found influence to be a predictor of success here at Wharton Computing
- Abandon your hangups about using it.
- Say something!