

PRACTICAL INFLUENCING SKILLS

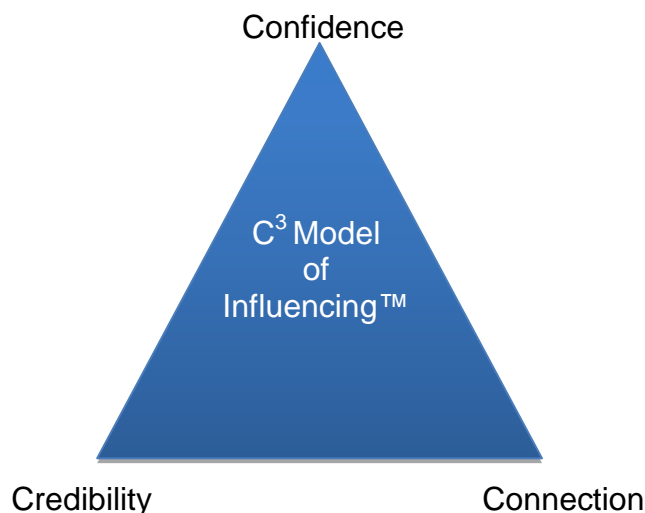
Introduction

Influence is a critical part of your role. You need to influence a number of different stakeholders in many different situations. What is it that some people do naturally that makes them influential even if they do not have authority in a situation?

The following model is a simple structure to help you think about influence. It comes from research into people who are good in these areas.

Foundations for Effective Influence & Presence: The C³ Model of Influencing™

The C³ Model of Influencing™ is a practical way for you to think about influence and presence. By focusing on the three elements you can develop your abilities.



Confidence was covered in the workshop with the distinction being made between surface (tactics) and deep (practice) confidence. This document focuses on the other two elements: credibility and connection (rapport).

The Foundations of Effective Influence

To influence people effectively you need to have:

- Confidence (at the point of influence);
- Credibility and;
- Connection (or rapport)

Further, you need to recognise that different people respond to different types of influence. Whilst we could only highlight one or two elements of influence in the workshop session we believe focusing on these things

will help ensure you get the outcomes you want for you and for the people you need to influence.

Our Preferences

As in so many areas of life we have individual preferences that guide how we communicate, how we are influenced ourselves and how we influence others. If we have similar unconscious preferences in these areas to our 'client' or colleagues then we are likely to be able to influence effectively. But we need to take the 'chance' element out of the equation. We need to be able to influence a wide variety of people and this requires flexibility in our approach.

We have discussed that influence requires both credibility and connection. Most people gravitate towards either a preference for a connection (rapport) based relationship or for a credible based relationship and this comes across in how we communicate with others. Understanding these preferences will help us work more effectively with those people who are different from us.

We need to:

- Be aware of our own preferences around how we influence and;
- Be aware of how the other person prefers to be influenced

Demonstrating and Building Connection & Credibility

In thinking about our work communicating with, influencing and motivating other people we need to become aware of their (and our) communication preferences. If we are communicating in a different way from them there is the potential for them to get a different message from the one we are communicating – one that may lack the influence we require.

Influence requires us to have both a connection with the other person as well as credibility. Only when we have and demonstrate both can we influence effectively.

A useful model to think about is to use the analogy of cats and dogs in thinking about how we communicate with others. This is based on the work of Michael Grinder in his book 'Charisma – The Art of Relationships'

Cats & Dogs

Think about how these two types of pet relate to you and others. When you walk into a room and see a dog, the dog often jumps up and comes over to see you wanting to engage and interact. If you walk into a room with a cat they are likely to ignore you until it suits them. To get the interest of a dog you simply need to walk into a room because they are interested in a personal relationship. To get the interest of a cat you need to make them curious.

Both dogs and cats believe 'relationship' is key but they define it differently: the dog thinks of a personal model whereas the cat thinks of a business model. These link to the characteristics of innate credibility and innate connection building. If your preference is for the credible you will often approach others from this preference – you will communicate credibility. If your preference is from the connection model then this will be how you tend to approach others.

Cat – Business Model – Credible - Pilot	Dog – Person Model – Rapport – Steward
Clear roles & functions	Personal relationships
Roles	Rapport
Tasks / clear expectations	Trust
Leadership	Friendship
External focus	Internal focus
Acts based on verifiable data	Acts based on feelings
Wants to be respected	Wants to be liked
Structured	Unstructured
Professional assistance	Emotional support
Clear outcomes held stable	Compromising
Facts and data	Assumptions based on interpretations

This model can be seen in a number of roles in work situations. Think of a trip on an airline. You are often welcomed by the pilot. The pilot (if you are lucky) communicates credibility, leadership, calm, authority and respect. Their address might be followed by that of the steward and their voice communicates approachability (if you are lucky) and friendliness. This is an example of the business model (pilot) and person oriented model (steward).

Your preference: Cat or Dog?

Whilst we can be both 'cat' and 'dog' like in how we communicate (and might be different in different contexts) we often have preferences. Understanding our preferences can help us see where challenges in communication and relationship can occur.

The following statements indicate typically 'dog' and 'cat' preferences. Which are most true for you...?

Category	Cat tendencies	Dog tendencies
<i>Confidence / competence</i>	More confident than competency warrants	More competent than confident
<i>Operate</i>	From my <u>position</u> as the pilot	From my <u>person</u> as the flight attendant
<i>Voice pattern</i>	Credible	Approachable
<i>Power</i>	Comfortable with it	Shy from it
<i>Seek</i>	Promotion / challenge	Comfort

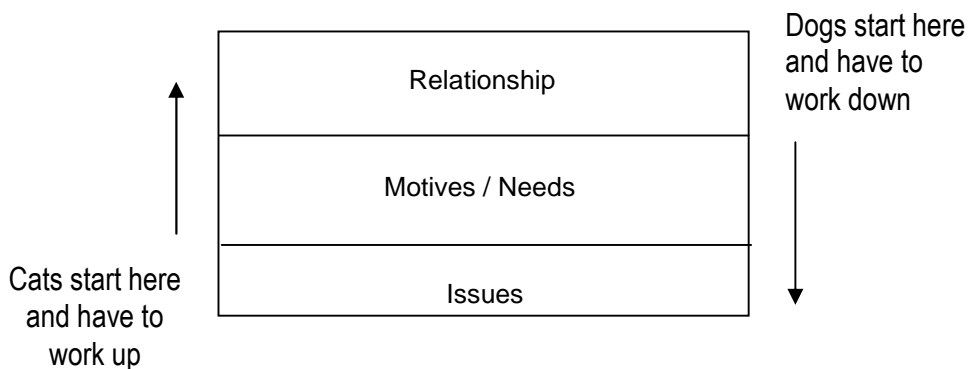
<i>Innate trait</i>	Just being myself	Very aware of others
<i>Average trait</i>	Want to be respected	Want to be liked
<i>People</i>	Hold accountable	Highly accepting
<i>Emphasis</i>	Issues	Morale / relationship
<i>Management style</i>	Intervene early	Intervene much later
<i>Gestures</i>	Palms down	Palms up
<i>Purpose in life</i>	To dabble & tinker	To be happy
<i>Intrigue vs. clarity</i>	Love intrigue	Love clarity
<i>When extremely calm</i>	Seen as definitive	Seen as seeking information

To be influential with others we need to be able to operate in a flexible way. We need to be able to demonstrate both approachability (for the dogs) and credibility (for the cats). The table below illustrates some of the characteristics of both.

Credibility (more 'cat like')	Approachability (more 'dog like')
Voice tone: More monotone and down at the end	Voice tone: More musical and end son a up
Sit upright, head still & on top of shoulders	Lean towards the person, head slightly forward & tilted
Palms down	Palms up
When listening, head still, silent	When listening, bob head, make encouraging noises
Weight: evenly distributed	Weight: body slanted, more weight on one leg

Levels of communication

Cats and dogs often have a different focus in their interactions. Cats are more focused on the issues and like to hold themselves and others accountable. Dogs focus more on morale and relationship and are often more accepting of others. We can consider three levels of communicating:



The key messages here are to recognize that:

- To influence others we need to have both connection and credibility
- Different types of communication and body language communicate rapport and credibility
- We will have a personal preference which means that we are more likely to come across as either highly credible or good at connection (rapport) building
- If we better understand the person we are trying to work with we might recognize that we need to change our natural and unconscious approach in order to better meet their needs