

# The art of influence

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**Table 1. Aristotle's principles of rhetoric (the three means of persuasion)**

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>Logos</b> - logical proof	'Claims' should be supported by a logical, rational argument. Arguments (e.g. 'argumentative claims') are strengthened through evidence
<b>Ethos</b> – the character of the person who is seeking to influence	The three subsets of ethos are: good will; good character; and good sense. Ethos is demonstrated by: respect for opposing viewpoints; proposing 'arguments' that are likely to be beneficial to the person being influenced; and being knowledgeable about the specific issue
<b>Pathos</b> – the emotional state of the person(s) who is being influenced	Pathos can be used to influence others through, for example, narratives of emotive events, vivid language, emotional appeals and metaphors

**Table 2. The six universal principles of influence\***

<b>Principle</b>	<b>Description</b>
Reciprocity	Most people feel obliged to return a favour in the future. If not, there is a perceived burden of indebtedness that is re-enforced through social norms. As a result, people may positively respond to the same request they would have refused without the obligation to repay a favour. <i>Practical example: sale staff handing out 'free' samples.</i>
Commitment and consistency	The 'consistency illusion' is a powerful driver for most people, who prefer to act in a way that is consistent with their previous behaviour or perceptions of themselves. Once we commit to a request (especially if we do so in a visible manner) we start to perceive ourselves as 'that type of person' who will or won't act in a certain manner. <i>Practical example: Signing up to achieve a daily step goal</i>
Social proof	People are more likely to engage in certain behaviour if they relate to the people who performed similar acts before them. This effect has been referred to as 'herd behaviour'. This type of conformity is an adaptive response to ambiguity <i>Practical example: taking off shoes before going into a house</i>
Liking	People are more likely to be influenced by those they 'like'. Some of the drivers that increase likeability include: similarity; familiarity; cooperation; associations (sharing values); compliments
Authority	Most people are conditioned to obey (perceived) authority. However, sharing uncertainty, followed by demonstration of obtaining new evidence, can be especially powerful. The authority of medical educators are derived from different sources, but especially experience. Authority can be implied through association with a successful organisation <i>Practical example: 'Before starting her own company, she was a director of a multinational conglomerate'</i>
Scarcity	People perceive opportunities, experiences and objects that are scarce (or appear to be scarce) as being of greater value than those that are abundant. The principle is applied by limiting numbers and/or time <i>Practical example: limited editions, 'while stocks last', 'sale ends today'</i>

\* CIALDINI, R. B. (2007). *Influence: the psychology of persuasion*.

**Table 3. A framework of aspects relating to influencing an individual person**

The person you need or want to influence	What previous, shared experiences do you have?	What positive history do you share?
		What negative history do you share?
		What have they done for you that they may feel you 'owe' them for?
		What have you done for them that they might feel they 'owe' you for?
	What are your <i>current requirements</i> from the person?	What is the <i>most you can expect</i> from them at the moment?
		What is the <i>least you need</i> from them at the moment?
	What motivates the person?	What are the main drivers in their <i>personal life</i> ?
		What are the drivers in their <i>career</i> ?
		What motivates them at work?
		What demotivates them?
		Do you know what is important to them?
	Who else influence them?	Who has influence in their lives?
		Do you have opportunities to influence them?
	What are the person's <i>characteristics</i> ?	What is their personality type? (Myers Briggs or other classifications)
		What is their spontaneous 'Belbin' team role?
		From a transactional analysis perspective, what 'ego' state do they have in relation to you, i.e. 'parent'/'adult'/'child'?
What is their preferred <i>learning style</i> ?		

**Table 4. A framework for influencing individuals, teams and organisations<sup>§</sup>**

Practice	Commitment	Evidence	Rating*
Challenge the current reality	<i>Search out</i> opportunities (for others) to improve, innovate and learn		
	<i>Experiment</i> and learn from mistakes		
Inspire a shared vision	<i>Envision</i> a better future		
	<i>Enlist</i> others		
Enable others to act	<i>Foster trust</i> and promote collaboration		
	<i>Strengthen others</i> : provide them with choice, develop their competence, assign critical tasks, offer visible support		
Model the way	<i>Set the example</i> through your own behaviour		
	<i>Achieve small wins</i> to make progress and build commitment		
Encourage the heart	<i>Recognize</i> contributions and efforts		
	<i>Celebrate</i> accomplishments		

\*0=no evidence these commitments exist; 1=rare to see commitments applied; 2=commitments are inconsistently present; 3=commitments are typically present but varies in application; 4=consistent application of the commitments

<sup>§</sup> KOUZES, J. M., & POSNER, B. Z. (1997). *The leadership challenge*. San Francisco, CA, Jossey-Bass