

Chapter 1

Laying the Groundwork for Persuasion and Influence

In This Chapter

- ▶ Understanding influence and persuasion
 - ▶ Being clear about what you want to achieve
 - ▶ Taking on successful behaviours and attitudes
 - ▶ Turning to others for inspiration
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Regardless of how intuitive, experienced, powerful or educated you are, if you can't build relationships with other people, if you can't establish your credibility and demonstrate your trustworthiness, if you can't convince others through your words and actions to follow your suggestions, you stand little chance of making a difference in your career or your life.



The relationship you have with yourself as well as your relationships with others serve as the foundation of all your life's endeavours. Unless you are confined to a vacuum, the majority of your time is spent engaging with other people. You must work with other people in order to do anything and everything – including achieving satisfying, inspiring successes.

The days of 'command and control' leadership in the workplace and beyond are over. From my experiences with both personal and professional relationships, 'connect and collaborate' is the new and improved mantra. In most relationships, including those in the professions and industries, the twenty-first century brings a more educated workforce, flatter management structures and an emphasis on teamwork over individual accomplishment. All of which means that people can no longer play the 'because I said so' card in order to get others to change their behaviours and beliefs. In short, persuasion and influence has replaced force and coercion.

In this chapter you discover the mindset, characteristics and attributes of successful persuaders and influencers. You find ways of building effective behaviours into your own repertoire in order to persuade and influence others' choices, and you explore the value of working with others for mutual benefit.

Defining Persuasion and Influence

Many people use the verbs *to persuade* and *to influence* interchangeably, and while the terms are similar, subtle differences also exist. The following sections tease out the differences between persuasion and influence and then find their commonalities and interlinked qualities.

Distinguishing between the two

Both persuasion and influence involve deliberate changes in attitudes and behaviour – but *how* the change happens differs. When you deliberately try to change another person's behaviour through your own words and actions, you're practising persuasion. If you can change another person's thoughts, feelings and behaviour based on your character, you're practising influence.

Influence is about having a vision of the best outcome and motivating people to turn that vision into a reality. Some leaders, for example, can bring about change simply through the power of their personalities, without having to put into words what they want you to do. Over the course of time they have built up an arsenal of trust and credibility. By contrast, persuasion is a way of presenting a case that sways others' opinions and makes them believe certain information.

Both influence and persuasion share the same objective of creating change in someone else's behaviour or attitude. Persuasion requires that you communicate what you want, whereas influence works silently through example. When you sway someone's opinion by presenting your case convincingly, you're consciously practising persuasion. When people change their attitudes, feelings and behaviours based on your personality, you're practising influence.



You can boil the definitions down to this: *influence* is a catch-all term based on a person's character that defines a deliberate effort to direct or change someone's attitudes, feelings or behaviour through example. *Persuasion* is about communicating through both your verbal and non-verbal channels in a way that purposely changes someone's attitudes and behaviour.

Some say that persuasion is about winning hearts and minds, while others say that's the job of influence. Others say that persuasion can spur people to take action without the persuader gaining their sincere buy-in, while influence, in which you take the time to develop rapport (see Chapter 2), is a prerequisite to getting someone to make a particular decision. I say that, without trust at the core of whatever approach you take, you struggle to either persuade or influence anyone over a long period of time. The following sections 'Utilising the power of persuasion' and 'Employing the impact of influence' explore the strengths of both approaches in detail.

For this book, which primarily looks at persuasion and influence within business contexts, I'm working from a definition of persuasion as being a way of convincing others to take action without the persuader necessarily having garnered their sincere buy-in. By contrast, when you influence a person, I believe you do so more through your reputation than your actions; you've invested the time to demonstrate respect, build trust and establish rapport. However, I also use the two words interchangeably with the understanding you can use both appropriately in order to produce positive results.

Contrasting with manipulation

The difference between persuasion and influence and their distant cousin manipulation has to do with purpose and intention.



According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, *manipulation* has several meanings, two of which I find particularly interesting for the purposes of this book. Manipulation involves:

- ✓ Controlling or playing upon by artful, unfair or insidious means – especially to one's own advantage
- ✓ Changing by artful or unfair means so as to serve one's purpose

In the wrong hands, persuasion resembles manipulation. While you can gain short-term compliance through manipulation, you don't gain trust and credibility, both of which serve you much better in the long run.

The ethical persuader and influencer works from a position of fairness, honesty and mutual benefit.

Ethics is a sub-set of philosophy that explores questions around moral conflicts, such as good/bad, right/wrong and virtue/vice. I cover some ethical concerns related to persuasion and influence in Chapter 5. For an entire book on the topic, pick up *Ethics For Dummies* by Christopher Panza and Adam Potthast (Wiley).



Utilising the power of persuasion

In life you're either persuading someone or someone's persuading you. The key to persuasion is knowing what motivates a person and then gearing your approach towards that.

Persuasive techniques include:

- ✓ Being clear about what you want
- ✓ Respecting the other person
- ✓ Appealing to his values
- ✓ Stating your proposal to meet his needs
- ✓ Listening for feelings as well as content
- ✓ Demonstrating empathy
- ✓ Matching your tone of voice and body language to his
- ✓ Going for win-win outcomes

Notice that I didn't include relying on proven and reliable data in the preceding list. Of course you need accurate facts and figures, but the way you present them is more critical. Data is open to interpretation, and until you establish yourself as a person of influence you must be doubly prepared to present your case persuasively in order to influence your listener's attitudes and behaviour.

When time is of the essence – or your relationship with your audience doesn't involve much trust – turn to your persuasive powers. (When I talk about low levels of trust, I'm not referring to negative emotions or dishonesty. Building deep trust takes time, and you may not always have all the time you need; see Chapter 5.)

Understanding patterns of motivation

The two major motivations in life centre around the desire to gain something and the fear of loss.

- ✓ **If someone is motivated by the desire for gain**, he wants more of what he values in life – for example, respect, wealth, health and happiness. As a persuader, you need to find out what he wants and show him how he can gain more of what he values by adopting your proposal.
- ✓ **If someone is motivated by a fear of losing**, he wants to hold on to what he already has – such as health, financial stability, a relationship or an achievement. You can persuade him to consider your proposition to prevent that loss from happening.



Both patterns of motivation are often at play in one situation, for the same person. For example, when I was worried that my son and I would miss a connecting flight, I wanted to gain by speaking at a prestigious conference and widening my circle of influence. I also feared I would lose by inconveniencing the organisers if I turned up late or not at all. By appealing to both my desire to gain something and prevent loss, Max had no trouble convincing me to do as he said.



The fear of loss is frequently stronger than the desire for gain, which is why people often fear change. Change represents risk and uncertainty. Fear of potential loss can feel threatening. When you know what people fear losing, you can position your proposal in a way that protects what they value. Demonstrating how your proposal avoids any loss for them persuades them to act in a way that helps you achieve your goals.

Persuading ethically

Be discriminating in your use of persuasion, or someone may accuse you of selling refrigerators to Eskimos, taking coals to Newcastle, or selling combs to bald people. While these groups may buy from you once, the chances of them buying from you again are pretty slim after they realise you sold them something they didn't need.



To avoid being perceived as a manipulator, practise ethical behaviour. I devote a large section of Chapter 5 to the overlap of ethical behaviour and persuasion.

Applying persuasive techniques with integrity and a sincere intention to seek a positive outcome for others is a powerful tool for change. When you take the time to get to know the person you're persuading, when you invest your time and interest in building rapport, and when you prove yourself as credible and trustworthy, persuasive techniques such as *framing* – the way you view a person, place or experience and the meaning you give it – mirroring and matching, and timing are appropriate tools to use. (Flip to the index to find out more about these techniques, as I refer to them frequently throughout the book.)

Employing the impact of influence

While most people hunger to be influential – whether with friends and family, or colleagues and clients – they're hard-pressed to define what they mean by *influence* or *influential*. They know it's good and has a reputation for being positive and powerful. They also know that it's not about impressive-sounding titles, big salaries, or getting what you want when you want it by using the right words at the right time. It's not something that's given to you on a plate or that you can purchase online. Instead, influence is an earned commodity. The nitty-gritty of influence is *trust* and *time*. To become influential you have to:

- ✔ **Be patient.** Influence is built over time, whether you're a parent, a friend or the CEO of an international corporation.
- ✔ **Build trust.** Be reliable, dependable, consistent and honest when dealing with people.
- ✔ **Listen to people.** Take an interest in their personal and professional lives to demonstrate that you care about them.
- ✔ **Praise people's efforts.** When you acknowledge the achievements of others, they feel safe around you and believe you're looking out for their best interests, and when you require them to perform, they will.

If you ask me what's at the core of influence, I have to say trust. My mother, an influential woman in her own right, instilled in my sister and me the belief that trust is the foundation upon which all else stands. Trust is at the core of influence, and while trust is attainable, developing a truly trusting relationship and becoming influential takes time and patience.

I know of no magic formula or big secret to establishing trusting relationships, but I do know that you build trust by:

- ✔ Being honest, loyal and respectful.
- ✔ Getting to know people, being curious about them and seeking to support them.
- ✔ Listening to and acting on what people tell you in ways that are beneficial to all. (See Chapter 7 for more on the power of listening.)
- ✔ Recognising people's accomplishments and making them feel good about themselves.

The more trust you can establish, the more influence you gain. Practised persuasive techniques aren't necessary when you're working for the good of someone else who trusts you. You've already established an influential relationship with them, because they trust you, and when they trust you, they perform for you.



Influence is an earned privilege. Like putting money in the bank, you garner the trust of the people you want to influence before you start drawing on it. Without trust, there's no influence.

Influence is built on a powerful combination of trust and credibility that has stood the test of time. By consistently behaving in a way that's true to your values, you build trust. By consistently proving that you know what you're talking about, you build credibility. The steps to becoming influential are simple and ethical:

- ✓ Be true to your values
- ✓ Behave in a consistent manner
- ✓ Be constant in what you say and do

The best leaders rely on their ability to influence others as a means of producing productive outcomes. After taking the time to build a trusting relationship with another person, you can make a quick phone call and set the ball rolling for what you need or want quickly. You've already invested in establishing trust and credibility.

Combining persuading and influencing

In order to be successful – whether in your career, at home with family and friends, with people who provide you with a service, or anyone whose decisions and behaviours you want to shape – you need strong skills for persuading and influencing, often utilising both simultaneously. For example, having built a positive reputation over time based on your consistency, reliability, honesty and trustworthiness, you may then include a specific persuasive technique – such as reciprocity, scarcity, likeability or social proof – to move someone from point A to point B. In other words, you influence someone's decisions through your personality, and convince him to do what you want through your persuasive techniques. You can read more about the persuasive techniques I mention here in Chapter 10.

You can safely assume that the top persuaders and influencers possess a high quotient of emotional intelligence, which can be simply defined as an ability to bring out the best in yourself and others. Later in this section you can read more about this form of intelligence, in the sidebar titled . . . Emotional intelligence!



The appropriate combination of persuasion and influence resembles the mix of experience, tools and skills you need to build a house. Influence is the foundation you establish through solid relationships that you nourish and cultivate over time. A solid foundation is the result of your intentions and behaviours that build trust, establish credibility and add value to your relationships. Persuasion is a specific tool you use as required in order to achieve the best result. Persuasion is also a skill that includes talent and technique (that you apply with charisma) in an effort to get things done there and then.

When you persuade and influence people into changing their attitudes or altering their behaviours, you're empowering them to make their own choices, rather than forcing yours onto them. Not everyone's going to want to change, even if adjusting attitudes or actions is in their best interests. In

addition, most people balk at the idea of someone forcing his opinion onto them. If you struggle to get someone to change his behaviour – getting your son to clean his room, a neighbour to trim his trees or a colleague to finish projects on schedule, the following strategies may help overcome his resistance, and encourage him to consider your suggestions and come up with a solution he owns:

- ✔ **Appeal to his beliefs and values.** More than being resistant to change, people are resistant to being changed. If someone thinks that your idea threatens his core values, he may become defensive and not listen to you. If you believe that what someone's doing is not in his best interests, point out how the behaviour is at odds with his beliefs and values.
- ✔ **Point out the consequences of his behaviour.** People only change their behaviour when they believe the risks of standing still are greater than the risks of changing direction. Show him what he stands to lose if he keeps doing what he's doing.
- ✔ **Ask relevant questions.** It's easier for people to accept and believe an idea if they feel they've discovered it themselves rather than if you imposed yours on them. Ask the other person what he thinks would be the best course of action or if he thinks that a suggestion you offer may work.
- ✔ **Be prepared for resistance.** Not everyone's going to think that your way is the best way. If someone disagrees with you, listen to what he has to say and try to see the situation from his point of view. That way, you can find out his objections and come up with ways of addressing them.
- ✔ **Understand what motivates him.** Emotion is the greatest human motivator, whether it's positive – love, appreciation, aspiration – or negative – guilt, fear, anxiety. The most effective way of getting people to change is to appeal to their motivators rather than your personal desires and beliefs.
- ✔ **Let go of your emotional attachment to your ideas.** What works for you doesn't necessarily work for others. Keep your mind open for counter-arguments and feedback to your suggestions. A person may very well come up with his own solution by arguing against yours.

Persuasion and influence are both a science and an art that rely on the specific approach you take and on emotion. You must delicately balance how much you persuade a person based on various principles, such as the law of reciprocity ('You scratch my back, I scratch yours') or scarcity ('Only three spots are left!'), or any of the other motivating forces I cover in Chapter 10. In addition to the persuasive approach you choose to take, you have to keep in mind that whatever decision a person makes is based on an emotional response. You can find out how emotion and persuasion fit together in Chapter 3.

Emotional intelligence

The subject of *emotional intelligence* (or EI) continues to raise questions about its basis, methods and reliability. In simple terms, *EI* is your ability to recognise, evaluate and manage your own emotions as well as the emotions of others. Although EI may be enjoying popularity at the moment, it's been around for a while:

- ✓ In the mid 1800s, Charles Darwin explored emotional expression in survival and adaptation.
- ✓ In the early 1920s, the American psychologist EL Thorndike coined the term *social intelligence* to describe how people understand and manage others.
- ✓ In his classic book *Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences* (Basic Books), first published in 1983 and now in its third edition, Harvard University professor Howard Gardner posits the existence of several types of intelligence, including

interpersonal intelligence, which he defines as the ability to understand other people's intentions, motivations and desires, as well as *intrapersonal intelligence*, which is the ability to understand yourself, including your own fears, feelings and motivations.

- ✓ In his book *Emotional Intelligence: Why it can matter more than IQ* (Bantam, 1996), Daniel Goleman states that four components comprise emotional intelligence: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness and relationship management.

While numerous names and descriptions are ascribed to the concept of emotional intelligence, there's a shared belief that traditional definitions of intelligence are no longer adequate in understanding and explaining performance outcomes. For an overview of EI, turn to a copy of *Emotional Intelligence For Dummies* by Steven J Stein (Wiley).

Figuring Out Your Desired Outcomes

Knowing what you do want gives you something to aim for. As my godson Joshua told me one day, 'It's a lot easier to land your prey when you know what you're aiming for.'

Simply put: successful influencers and persuaders know what they're aiming for. They know what they want and how to achieve their desired outcomes. They're willing to invest in what they want and are patient in their pursuit. They consider the benefits of what they want, the impact their propositions have on others, and what it takes to get people to buy in to their proposal.

The following sections explore the process of setting goals that satisfy you and motivate others – all in an effort to produce great things together.

Getting clearer about what you want

Do your friends and family, boss and colleagues a favour and figure out what you want. Equally importantly, do yourself a favour and figure it out for yourself. When you know what you need and want, convincing others to accept your ideas is easier.



Knowing what you want may not always be easy to figure out. Fortunately, several established tools can help you clarify and then reach your goals, including one that I find particularly useful: creating SMART goals. Read more about creating goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Realistic and Time-bound in Chapter 12.



If you struggle to clarify what you want to achieve, you may want to work on crafting some SMART goals with a coach or someone you respect who can listen to you and ask thought-provoking questions.

Respecting others

As my daughter recently said when introducing me at an event, ‘Anyone who knows my mother knows her strict adherence to the Rule of Three. Being true to type, tonight she’s sharing with you her three Rs. When you treat others with respect and establish rapport, you can produce outstanding results.’

People are more willing to listen to your suggestions if you demonstrate your interest in them and respect them. When people feel you care about them, they’re prepared to go the extra mile for you. You don’t have to like the other person, nor do you have to be similar to them. You just have to respect them for the person they are if you want to produce positive outcomes. Great successes result when people work together in respectful relationships where everyone embraces differences as part of being human.

Treating people with respect is about understanding their needs and concerns and acting in ways that honour them. You must take them as they come, without judging them. As I was taught as a child in Sunday school, ‘Judge not, lest ye be judged’ (Matthew 7:1). For more about treating people with respect and building rapport, flip to Chapter 2.

Working together to achieve your goals

Working together to achieve goals is a lot easier than striving to do everything on your own. One person simply cannot envision, design and deliver a great proposal without some input from others. A company's chief financial officer can't turn in his end-of-year financial reports without working with the company's controller, accountant and administrators. A salesperson can't sell without a product or service. Nor can a world-class athlete achieve greatness without his support team firmly in place. Prove to me that people don't need the support of others in achieving their goals, and I'll personally send you a signed copy of this book!

Working together to achieve an outcome that meets people's values, needs and concerns requires input from many sources. Everyone who is affected by decisions needs to feel that he has been part of the decision-making process. If a choice is imposed on individuals who don't have the opportunity to have their say, they're less likely to buy in and then follow through than if they had some input themselves.

Getting input from everyone whose life is affected by a proposal is not always possible. When that's the case, individuals must rely on others – such as agents, advocates or assistants – to speak on their behalf and make sure that all issues that affect the individual are considered. For example, advocates for people with learning disabilities and mental health problems can speak on behalf of their clients to:

- ✓ Express their views and wishes
- ✓ Secure their rights
- ✓ Represent their interests
- ✓ Access information and services
- ✓ Explore options and choices

Embracing the Attributes of an Effective Persuader and Influencer

Effective persuaders and influencers know what they want, and they're not afraid to go for it. They're action-orientated go-getters who make things happen. While they have a clear vision of what they want (see the preceding section), they're also patient and understand that Rome wasn't built in a day.

The following sections reveal six of the core attributes that I encourage in my coaching clients who want to become better persuaders and influencers. In addition, I encourage my children to adopt these traits, because persuasion and influence are as important in day-to-day living as they are at the office.

Laying the Groundwork for Persuading and Influencing

Persuading and influencing don't occur naturally. The process requires thought, action and practice. Really good persuaders and negotiators plan their approach, having considered the character, issues, needs and concerns of the person they're persuading. See *Negotiating For Dummies* by Michael C Donaldson (Wiley) for more about this specific type of persuasion. In addition, specific characteristics, traits and mindsets are required if you're to be a top-notch persuader and influencer. In this section I share with you those qualities I believe are necessary if you're to be the best persuader, influencer or negotiator you possibly can be.

Showing that you're trustworthy

Do what you say you're going to do and behave in a consistent way. When people know what they can expect of you, they trust you to live up to – or even surpass – their expectations based on what you did in the past. Your circle of influence widens and your persuasive powers increase.

When people see you living your values, they feel safe around you. They know you're being true to who you are and know what they can expect from you.

You can demonstrate your trustworthiness in the way you treat people, in the way you approach your work, and in the way you run your life, particularly in the way you:

- ✓ Act in accordance with your values
- ✓ Treat people with respect
- ✓ Behave with honesty
- ✓ Demonstrate integrity
- ✓ Follow through on promises
- ✓ Aim for mutual benefit

When you show that others can count on you to do what's required to get the job done, you demonstrate that you're true to your word.



Throughout this book you read about the importance of trustworthiness during the process of persuading and influencing others. Perhaps of all the characteristics, trustworthiness is the most important because it makes the foundation that other attributes rise from.

Demonstrating confidence

Like a magnet, people who are comfortable with and connected to themselves draw you towards them. You just want to be around someone who demonstrates clear thinking, an open attitude, a balanced perspective and a willingness to stand up for what he believes in. By being connected to yourself – in your core, in your heart and in your head – you radiate a rock-solid foundation that others can trust. The ideal is neither apologetic nor aggressive; you simply radiate confidence in your ability to handle what comes your way. You can go with the flow yet, when the time comes, make decisive decisions. Under pressure, you demonstrate strength and resolve. If you don't have the answers yourself, you know where to go to find them. Read more about demonstrating this type of confidence in Chapter 6.

Behaving ethically

The film *Wall Street* (1987), with Michael Douglas starring as Gordon Gekko, became famous for introducing the world to the phrase 'Greed is good.' These words became a sounding cry throughout the business, while organisations and governments seemed to jettison ethics as the financial rewards increased. An unprecedented money meltdown was necessary to reveal what happens when behaviour strays to the wrong side of ethical.

Whilst seeking a definitive definition of the word ethical, I kept running into the word *honesty*. Other words and phrases such as *responsible*, *fair* and *a sincere concern for the good of others* also cropped up. If you're honest in your dealings with people, if you behave in a responsible fashion and demonstrate a sincere desire to work for the benefit of others, I'm prepared to say that you're behaving in an ethical way.

When I was a child, my parents taught me to be honest, responsible and to seek good for all. Pretty basic and effective, in my eyes – but now these principles are being taught at university and through online courses. For more about ethical behaviour, go to Chapter 5.

Having a positive and balanced mental attitude

Persuasive and influential people don't waste their time on negative thoughts or ill wishes for others. They seek harmony and want to see everyone come out a winner. They don't hold grudges or speak negatively about others, and they're true to their beliefs. They enter the persuasive process with positive intentions, knowing that going for a win-win outcome is the best way to demonstrate trustworthiness. The best persuaders and influencers seek the best for all.

Give some thought to the theory that behind every negative action is a positive intention. This concept comes from neuro-linguistic programming, which you can read more about in *Neuro-Linguistic Programming For Dummies* by Romilla Ready and Kate Burton. If a particular action seems harsh for the circumstances, look behind the behaviour to discover possible reasons for it. Emotions such as jealousy, fear and anxiety are frequently at the heart of mean and unpleasant behaviour, rather than people just being mean for the fun of it.

Being goal- and action-orientated

Not ones for sitting around waiting for Lady Luck to come to them, persuaders and influencers go for the goal, letting nothing get in their way.

Goals and objectives are tools to help you develop your persuasive and influential personage. When asked about going for your goals, the American actor Richard Chamberlain said, 'If you want something badly enough, and are willing to do whatever it takes to achieve it, then nothing, no one can stand in your way.' To that, I add that whatever you do, make sure it's ethical and sits comfortably with your values (see Chapter 2).



If you find yourself feeling lethargic whenever you head for your goal, check whether it's a goal you're actually committed to. Unless you really want what you're going for, you're not going to be too excited about doing what's required to get there. See Chapter 12 for more on goal setting.

Focusing on win-win outcomes

The poster people for persuasion and influence are generous and like to see each individual come out a winner. Aiming to achieve outcomes that work for the good of everyone draws people to you. If the people you want to persuade understand that your recommendations contain something good for them, they're much more willing to hop on board with your proposal.

Your persuasion and influence to-do list

Following is a list of behaviours for you to adopt that help you become a person of influence and persuasion. Rather than tackling them all at once, pick one or two to begin with, focusing on them for a week or so until you've embedded the action into your behaviour. You might also text yourself an occasional reminder, enlist a friend's support, or even tape your list to your bathroom mirror so you can look at it every morning and night as you brush your teeth.

- ✔ **Show up on time.** While some people use the waiting game as a power play, I say that unless you're the bride (who's allowed to keep people waiting for a few minutes), show up on time, prepared and ready to go.
- ✔ **Dress the part.** Like actors at work, look the part you're playing. Determine what attire is appropriate for the image you want to portray and dress accordingly. See Chapter 10 for more dress and grooming ideas that don't bust your clothing budget.
- ✔ **Treat others with respect.** When you show that you value others, their opinion of you rises, increasing your level of influence and your ability to persuade.
- ✔ **Demonstrate a genuine interest in people and projects.** People like feeling special, valued and appreciated. If you show your interest in them, they feel good about you. And when people feel good about you, they're prepared to do what you ask of them.
- ✔ **Aim to lessen the other's load.** If you can help someone, do. The person remembers you with positive feelings long after the action. As my niece Jenny says, 'People may not remember what you said or what you did, but they always remember how you made them feel.'
- ✔ **Be generous in your words and actions.** Speak well of people and behave with kindness. Acting with negativity tarnishes your reputation. People figure that if you're saying something bad about one person now, nothing can stop you from speaking negatively about them in the future. Avoid judging and gossiping. Negativity comes back to bite you when you least expect it.
- ✔ **Think about your words and actions.** Determine which behaviours can get you to your goals and which are likely to keep you from achieving them.
- ✔ **Envision the end point.** Include as much practical detail as you can in order to energise you and keep you going. When the going gets tough, when you meet setbacks and resistance, having a clear vision of what you're aiming for helps keep you on track.
- ✔ **Make sure your arguments and point of view meet the other person's needs.** People are willing to go along with you as long as they feel responsible for their actions, and not because you manipulated, coerced or bullied them.

Aim for mutually positive outcomes. Like a magnet, success draws people to it. To achieve win-win requires letting go of personal agendas and seeking success for all. You must listen actively (see Chapter 7) to what others say so you can understand their issues and seek commonality.



When someone's working for his own agenda, the person tends to talk more and listen less. Pay attention to your personal balance of talking and listening during conversations when you want to change someone's beliefs or behaviours.

Gaining Inspiration from Others

Look to your role models. If you don't have any, find some.



Keep your eyes and ears open and seek role models wherever you can find them. Pay attention to the people around you. Note how they treat others, and adopt their behaviours as yours, as long as their behaviours sit comfortably with your values. Where your role models come from doesn't matter. What matters is *how* they behave.

When you seek role models, be specific in what you need and want. Quiz yourself on the benefits you're seeking so you can be clear about the areas within yourself that you want to enhance. When you allow yourself to acknowledge that you can benefit from others' experience and expertise, you give yourself the opportunity to enhance your level of influence by seeking out the best of the best.

Observe people whenever you can. What do you notice? How are they behaving? What are their voices like? What effect do their voices have on you? How do they look? Describe their gestures and how you interpret them. How would you describe their attitudes based on what you observe? What about them appeals to you? By answering these questions, you give yourself models of verbal and non-verbal behaviour you can emulate – or not – depending on what you want to reveal about yourself to others.

Look for people whom you respect and admire, and bring them into your world. Pay attention to how they behave, and emulate those behaviours. You can have a number of role models in life – and they don't even have to know they're your role models. For example, when I worked in New York, I lived down the street from a 24-hour convenience store. Maria, the hardworking woman who owned the shop, always greeted me with a smile on her face and a cheery 'Hello, miss' whatever the time of day or night. Her friendly attitude and hospitable behaviour made me feel welcomed and appreciated. She still serves as a role model to me for the type of attitude that I aim to incorporate into both my work and social life. It's okay to see a person as a role model for a specific trait or cluster of traits. Not everyone necessarily incorporates all the traits you admire, and some may even have a few you find objectionable.



When considering your role models, look to people outside your immediate sphere of influence. If you admire someone's behaviour and want to gain by learning from the other person, ask. Tell him who you are, what you want from him, and your reasons for wanting him to be your role model. And be sure to tell him what you're willing to do for him in return. While it's always helpful to communicate with someone face to face – observing the other person's reactions tells you more than just the words he says – emailing and calling him on the phone are acceptable alternatives. Just be sure to let him know he doesn't have to do anything additional or different, and that all you want is to observe him and possibly ask a few questions along the way.

The good news about becoming a tip-top persuader and influencer is that you can develop your skills as long as you're willing to open yourself to the process and then practise the necessary attitudes and behaviours.



Always begin your path towards any goal – including working with role models – by listening. Paying attention to the way a person speaks, including his voice quality – tone, pace, pitch and volume – as well as the words he chooses indicate his thoughts, beliefs and feelings. In addition, listen for what he doesn't say, because that gives you further information you can benefit from knowing. As my daughter reminds me, 'You've got two ears, two eyes and one mouth. Use them in that order to learn from others.'

Successful persuaders and influencers are great listeners. They let others tell their stories without interrupting or judging, while allowing all the time that others need to speak. They listen for what others say, as well as for their unvoiced issues. They respond with interest and care. Jump to Chapter 7 for more.

