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1. A4 VERSION OF A SELF-ASSESSMENT CHART TO UNDERSTAND YOUR INFLUENCE STYLE
2. A4 VERSION OF INFLUENCING STRATEGIES DIAGRAM
3. CHAPTER 23 OF MASTER EXPERT: THE DESIRE FOR INFLUENCE (INSTRUCTIONS FOR HOW TO USE THE CHART).

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Capability: **COLLABORATION**

Influencing Strategies: my work?

Rational persuasion: The person uses logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade us that a proposal or request is viable and likely to result in the attainment of task objectives.
Inspirational appeal: The person makes a request or proposal that arouses enthusiasm by appealing to our values, ideals and aspirations or by increasing our confidence that we can do it.
Consultation: The person seeks our participation in planning a strategy, activity or change for which our support and assistance are desired, or the person is willing to modify a proposal to deal with your concerns and suggestions.
Ingratiation: The person seeks to get us in a good mood or to think favorably of him or her before asking us to do something for them.
Exchange: The person offers an exchange of favors, indicates a willingness to reciprocate at a later time, or promises to share the benefits if we help accomplish the task.
Personal appeal: The person appeals to our feelings of loyalty and friendship toward him or her before asking us to do something.
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Legitimizing: The person seeks to establish the legitimacy of a request by claiming the authority or right to make it or by verifying that it is consistent with organizational policies, rules, practices or traditions.
Pressure: The person uses demands, threats or persistent reminders to influence us to do what he or she wants.

1	**ATTRACTS MOST RESISTANCE**
2	**1.** **2.**
3	**3.**
4	**ATTRACTS MOST COMPLIANCE**
5	**1.** **2.**
6	**3.**
7	**ATTRACTS MOST COMMITMENT**
8	**1.** **2.**
9	**3.**

Capability: COLLABORATION

Influencing Strategies

Source: Falbe, C.M. & Yukl, G

THE DESIRE TO INFLUENCE

EXTRACT: CHAPTER 23

MASTER EXPERT

HOW TO USE EXPERTSHIP TO ACHIEVE PEAK PERFORMANCE, SENIORITY AND INFLUENCE IN A TECHNICAL ROLE

ALISTAIR GORDON & DOMINIC JOHNSON

"A well-known principle of human behavior says that when we ask someone to do us a favor, we will be more successful if we provide a reason. People simply like to have reasons for what they do."

Robert B. Cialdini,
Influence: The Psychology of Persuasion

RELATIONSHIP DOMAIN

COLLABORATION

CHAPTER | 23 |

The Desire to Influence

Influencing is a skill, not the efficient presentation of facts. Without establishing personal credibility and emotional connection, most experts will fail to effectively influence.

IN THIS CHAPTER, WE WILL EXPLORE:

- **Why is mastering influencing skills so important for experts?**
- **Different influencing strategies and their impact and effectiveness.**
- **Which influencing strategies do we use as our default tactics?**
- **Which tactics do our stakeholders generally deploy with us, and why?**

MANY EXPERTS FEEL THAT they don't have the degree of influence that their expertise necessitates. Yet they haven't given much thought to what methods of influence they can use, nor the relative effectiveness of the available methods. Given that they rarely have the formal authority to compel others to act, influencing others is a vital success factor for experts.

Experts often report their frustrations about having their opinions heard and their recommendations adopted. We sometimes imagine that having more formal authority would be the answer because then people would have to listen to us. This is why borrowing strength from others' authority is so heavily relied upon, despite being correlated with triggering high levels of resistance.

We may occasionally experience surprise, wonder and envy when seemingly less informed people in the organization who happen to have positions of authority have their ideas taken up, even when they have comparatively dumb ideas in our opinion.

> ***"Aristotle's Pyramid of Influence describes the three key factors in persuasion."***

We might be tempted to seek the sponsorship of a senior business leader to lend weight to our recommendations and give them extra clout. Let's explore some useful strategies that might help us to influence others and examine how effective they are.

Getting Cut-Through

RICHARD HAS BEEN MAKING slow progress on advancing his initiative to update the organization's records management system. He feels that the proposal he prepared was well argued, covering the regulatory requirements for thorough record-keeping, some documented issues that the organization has had with adequate storage and retrieval of key records, the average (and excessive) amount of time spent looking for files, the irritation this causes customers, the features and benefits of the proposed system, and alternative quotations from three separate capable suppliers.

But, for reasons that aren't apparent, the senior managers to whom Richard has been proposing the purchase of a new records management system have been taking forever to make a decision. Even though they asked him to prepare the proposal, they've not yet moved on it, so he's been asked to rework his proposal several times.

Richard's challenge is not unique. Many experts find that they routinely have to influence decisions, others' behaviors, and request support from other departments without having any formal authority to require or compel others to act. Like Richard, they put together the relevant facts and reasoning and then wonder why this fails to provoke the anticipated response. Are people impervious to sound logic and evidence? Because sometimes it seems nigh on impossible to move decisions forward despite one's best efforts.

So how does one effectively influence others?

Research suggests that most people's instincts are to try and rationally persuade others, perhaps followed by applying pressure in some way. Such methods fail to take into account how most people make the decision to commit to a course of action.

Aristotle's Pyramid of Influence

MORE THAN TWO THOUSAND years ago, the great Greek philosopher Aristotle created what has become known as Aristotle's *Pyramid of Influence*. It describes the three key factors in persuasion.

Aristotle is regarded as the father of rhetoric, which is the technique of using argument to convince. He wrote many works on this topic and greatly influenced the other Greek philosophers and the Romans. His influence continues to this day.

The pyramid has three layers, each denoted by a Greek word: Logos, Pathos and Ethos (see Figure 23.1).

Logos: Intellectually Convincing

Logos is the essential, logical, convincing nature of what you're saying. Is your case well structured? Is your case logically sound? Is it convincing intellectually? Is it meaningful?

Pathos: Emotionally Compelling

Pathos is to do with relationships. Are they in place? Are the feelings right between everybody? Did our presentation evoke the right feelings in the other person that will prompt them to take the desired actions? Is the relationship in a good state? Because if that's not right, it doesn't matter how compelling your *logos* is. You're going to run into resistance.

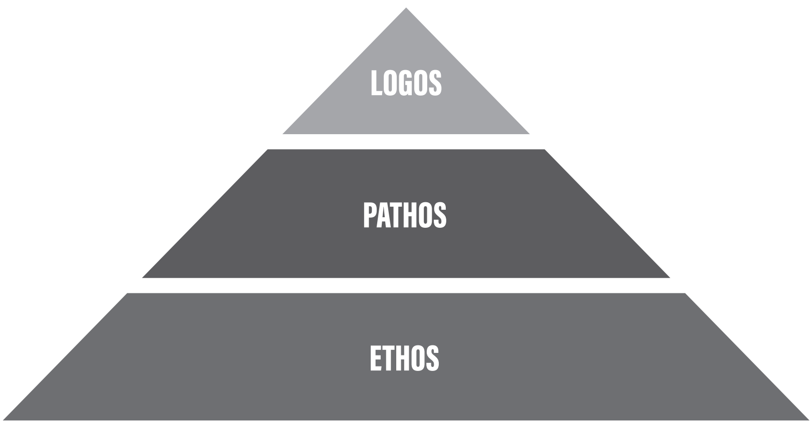

FIGURE 23.1: Aristotle's Pyramid of Influence

Ethos: Ethically Credible

Ethos is your own integrity. Are you aligned with your message? Are you the living example of its truth? Have you provided adequate proof? Because even if your relationship is right and your message is logically sound, if people don't feel your intent is right or sense that you're ethically suspect, then they'll still reject the message.

The Pyramid of Influence is used to graphically demonstrate the relative importance of each of these three elements of influence.

At the base, with the most volume and therefore argued by Aristotle as the most important, is *Ethos.* Are we credible? Are we worth listening to?

We've all had the experience of coming out of an all-day meeting only to find our inbox flooded with emails. Do we read with each email from the bottom up? Typically, we will selectively choose which emails to open and read based on two principles. Firstly, who sent it? There are people we're more inclined to prioritize. Secondly, what is in the subject line? If we're interested in what the message is about, we're far more likely to open that email first.

Emails from our manager are likely to get priority treatment. But if we take a group of random colleagues, are we selective in prioritizing emails from some colleagues over others? Most of us certainly are. We'll choose to answer emails from those we like, those we feel are credible, valuable, and who don't waste our time. We'll avoid opening emails from those who never really add value or those who always want something from us but never provide any value in return. Such decision-making represents our instinctual assessment of others' ethos and the degree of pathos that we feel toward them.

At the middle level, again with much more volume than rational persuasion (*Logos*) at the top, is *Pathos*. This is really about whether the topic the person is talking to me about creates an emotional connection. Do I care?

If someone from human resources is talking to us about compliance with the development planning process or something we have little interest in, we'll most likely switch off. If HR is talking about a new structure for bonuses, we may or may not switch off, depending on the extent to which we feel this will impact us. However, if the HR team starts talking about how to apply for grants to attend an overseas technical conference for a week to hone our expert skills, we may well sit up and take serious notice. Maybe we'll even note the deadline for submissions.

> ***"It's as much about client experience as it is about a rational argument."***

Once we feel the person in front of us is worth listening to and is talking about something that interests us, we're prepared to listen to their rational argument. For many experts, we imagine the pyramid to be the other way up. Rational argument comes first.

Applying the Pyramid

A WHILE AGO, THE authors were coaching a group of accountants at a professional services firm that was trying to win a big contract. It was the day before the first important meeting. They had rehearsed over and over again their responses to each anticipated question. Their technical content was very sound. Compelling, in fact. They could demonstrate their technical expertise comprehensively. Any rational decision-making group would be persuaded.

However, the reason we were involved was because the firm kept missing out on winning contracts. Irritatingly, the partners told us, this was often to firms that they knew had less technical expertise and experience than they did.

We undertook a rehearsal, with us playing the clients. We asked a range of questions about their technical capability and credentials, all of which were answered with clinical efficiency.

Then we asked the partners about *how* they worked with clients, including which relationships seemed to work and how they adapted their services to clients with different operating styles, history and culture. Here, the answers were vague and delivered with a certain disdain, as if these aspects were of much less importance.

In our debrief, we asked the partners why this was so. Did they think about account management, adapting different styles to different types of companies, and so on? The answer was "no." They hadn't thought about this. Did they have client testimonials that highlighted how well client accounts were managed? No. Did they understand what their existing clients liked and perhaps disliked about the way the relationship worked? No, they had never thought to ask.

In effect, the partners focused on *logos* and assumed that this was the most important criterion a prospective client would use.

"Which of the nine influencing strategies do we tend to use most?"

We had a long discussion about the importance of the client experience and introduced pathos and ethos into their pitch. It turned out their clients had plenty of positive things to say and many good stories to tell about how the organization's team went above and beyond their duty to serve their clients. One particular aspect came up repeatedly from existing clients: if the organization had ever made a mistake, which was rare but possible, the partner would be on the line to the client immediately to inform them. Clients didn't like the mistakes, but they loved the way the organization responded. These became important aspects of their new pitch to the prospective client.

And they did win the contract. The client's feedback was telling. "We were sure you were technically competent, but then so were the other parties we evaluated. But we felt like you were people we could work with, and you shared our values: be real, say it like it is, and quickly fix problems."

He was a clever fellow that Aristotle.

Influencing Strategies

HERE ARE NINE SPECIFIC influencing strategies that are commonly used, often unconsciously (see Figure 23.2).

Which ones do we tend to favor? Which do we most or least commonly encounter in our workplace? Which work best for us? Which aren't effective?

Rational Persuasion

The person uses logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade us that a proposal or request is viable and likely to achieve the task's objectives. This is a tactic frequently used by most experts.

Inspirational Appeal

The person makes a request or proposal that arouses enthusiasm by appealing to our values, ideals and aspirations or by increasing our confidence that we can do it. This is a tactic rarely used by experts. After all, why bother when we have a winning rational argument? It also requires us to have significant market context and an understanding of what might inspire those we're seeking to influence.

Consultation

The person seeks our participation in planning a strategy, activity or change. Our support and assistance are desired, or the person is willing to modify a proposal to deal with our concerns and suggestions. The very nature of the work experts do in complex environments means we probably spend a lot of time trying to do this, often with mixed results.

Ingratiation

The person seeks to get us in a good mood or to think favorably of him or her before asking us to do something for them. Most experts we've worked with dislike this approach. It comes across as inauthentic, so we also dismiss it as an influencing tactic when it's deployed against us.

Exchange

The person offers an exchange of favors, indicates a willingness to reciprocate at a later time, or promises to share the benefits if we help accomplish the task. Often, the fight for resources in larger organizations requires us to participate, usually with some disdain, in this type of horse-trading.

Capability: COLLABORATION

Influencing Strategies

FIGURE 23.2: The Nine Influencing Strategies

Personal Appeal

The person appeals to our feelings of loyalty and friendship toward them before asking us to do something. This is very much a relationship-based approach, and it can be very conscious (open and obvious) or subconscious. We don't realize we're using this tactic or being swayed by it.

Coalition

The person seeks the aid of others to persuade us to do something or uses the support of others as a reason for us to also agree.

Legitimizing

The person seeks to establish the legitimacy of a request by claiming the authority or right to make it or by verifying that it's consistent with organizational policies, rules, practices or traditions. A typical example of this is "Head Office told us we have to do it."

Pressure

The person uses demands, threats or persistent reminders to influence us to do what he or she wants. This is most typically top-down, coming from the senior leaders (or even our own leader). But it may also come from external suppliers or customers who have found some leverage to hold us to ransom.

Influencing Culture

IN OUR PROGRAMS, WE ask participants to rank these nine influencing strategies by how often they're used (rank 1 is most frequently used and rank 9 is least frequently used). Then we ask participants to choose which three of the nine strategies attract the most resistance, compliance, or commitment (buy-in). We ask participants to simply choose three and not worry about ranking them.

We encourage you to undertake this exercise using Figure 23.3.

Think about how emails, project meetings, meetings with your manager, or with your manager's manager play out when tasks are being allocated, deadlines are being set, or performance is being discussed. How do people in your organization try to influence you? In Figure 23.4, you can assess your own default influencing strategies. Which do you use most?

This list of nine influencing tactics was developed in 1990 by Cecilia Falbe and Gary Yukl, two American academics who undertook a very large study of influencing tactics in large organizations in the US. The results included responses from employees working overseas for the organizations surveyed, but for all intents and purposes, we should recognize the data they produced is very Western by nature.

> ***"Most of us instinctively use one or two strategies… without assessing their effectiveness."***

Their very comprehensive study developed the most commonly used influencing tactics and then sought to understand the impact of these tactics on those subjected to them. Did the tactics gain commitment from employees (the highest level of effectiveness), or did they instead attract compliance (a reasonable outcome) or resistance (a problem outcome)?

Each of these influencing tactics potentially has a legitimate use in a specific context. It's very likely that until we've read these pages and completed the reflection exercise, we may not have contemplated that there are actually nine options to choose from when deciding on how to influence a stakeholder.

Capability: COLLABORATION

Influencing Strategies: my work?

Rational persuasion: The person uses logical arguments and factual evidence to persuade us that a proposal or request is viable and likely to result in the attainment of task objectives.
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2	**1.** **2.** **3.**
3	
4	**ATTRACTS MOST COMPLIANCE**
5	**1.** **2.** **3.**
6	
7	**ATTRACTS MOST COMMITMENT**
8	**1.** **2.** **3.**
9	

FIGURE 23.3: Influencing Strategies—At My Organization?

Most of us instinctively rely on or utilize one or more of these methods without giving conscious consideration to whether it's the most appropriate or useful, whether it has proven effective or not in the past, or whether the person or situation one is seeking to influence is likely to be open, malleable and responsive to such an approach.

In our discussions with many groups of experts and leaders over the years, we've found something consistently comes up here: the ordering of which influencing tactic is most frequently used varies enormously by organization, country and culture. There is significant variance from the Yukl research in the first task, where we're asked to order the tactics by use from 1 to 9. But interestingly, we've discovered that regardless or organization, country or culture, there is a very high level of consistency with the way in which we react when subjected to the tactics, as well as which ones produce resistance, compliance and commitment.

Does Pressure Work?

IF WE'RE UNDER PRESSURE — feeling worried or anxious, for example— then we may pass that pressure on to others. Since the pressure prompts us to make the situation a priority, we may reasonably assume that if others simply realized how catastrophic or desperate a given situation is, they too would understand the significance and urgency of the situation and naturally mobilize to address the matter. Such a tactic may seem both reasonable and necessary.

Quite often, such a tactic is effective in mobilizing action, although just as often, it would appear that it triggers resistance.

Figure 23.4 shows the results from the Falbe and Yukl research.

Pressure rates highest on generating resistance when deployed as an influencing tactic. This shouldn't be that surprising, really. People typically have enough pressure of their own and, at a primal level, wouldn't thank us for loading them up with more.

> ***"The results of the survey are quite counterintuitive."***

Even if they begrudgingly comply because they accept the stated threat as real and legitimate, they're unlikely to commit wholeheartedly. And they may, if it happens frequently enough, develop an impression that "here comes the person who always brings unwelcome pressure and hassle into our lives." In other words, that compliance may be secured at a high cost if it adversely impacts goodwill in the process.

Pressure can take many forms. It's highly unlikely that anyone nowadays will resort to actual threats. We sometimes encounter managers, experts or project managers with low self-awareness, empathy and self-control who believe that the only way, or the most effective way, to motivate somebody is to put the squeeze on them. But they are a dying breed.

> ***"If we rely on this method, we're pounding people into submission but not making many friends."***

And, since most experts have no authority to make or carry out actual threats, putting the squeeze on others tends to take a more subtle form. For example, painting doomsday scenarios:

"If we don't get this data into the report, we'll lose our biggest client."

"If you don't update our infrastructure, we'll lose all our data."

"If you don't follow the process we've defined, we'll have delays, major cost-blow outs, and I'll have to escalate to senior leaders."

Sometimes the pressure tactic is merely hounding someone with persistent follow-ups until they give us what we're after. It might even take the form of a notification trigger that a particular email requesting something has now been read, and therefore the clock is ticking, thus forfeiting plausible deniability.

If we rely on this method of influence—hassling, escalating, and so on—we may succeed in pounding people into submission, but we're unlikely to make many friends. We'll fail to secure a higher level of commitment.

In other words, the people we're seeking to influence are likely to develop no intrinsic sense of the value of what's being asked of them. They'll just do the bare minimum to get us off their back. Pressure rarely seems to inspire true ownership or commitment, where people don't need chasing.

Pressure is often implied in some of the other methods of influence, such as coalition (peer pressure), legitimizing (borrowing authority from elsewhere), exchange or ingratiation ("I've done such and such for you, so now you should feel obliged to reciprocate").

Surely Rational Persuasion Works?

ANOTHER OF THE SURPRISING findings involves the relative effectiveness of rational persuasion. It ranks third in resistance, with nearly half of people surveyed saying they find themselves resisting when the tactic is used.

Capability: COLLABORATION
Influencing Strategies: What Works?

1	Rational Persuasion	**ATTRACTS MOST RESISTANCE**
2	Pressure	**1.** Pressure **2.** Coalition **3.** Rational Persuasion
3	Exchange	
4	Legitimizing	**ATTRACTS MOST COMPLIANCE**
5	Personal Appeal	**1.** Legitimizing **2.** Coalition **3.** Pressure
6	Coalition	
7	Ingratiation	**ATTRACTS MOST COMMITMENT**
8	Consultation	**1.** Inspirational Appeal **2.** Consultation **3.** Personal Appeal
9	Inspirational Appeal	

Source: Falbe, C.M. & Yukl, G

FIGURE 23.4: Influencing Strategies—What Works?

It's not particularly surprising that it's the most common strategy employed in a business context, especially amongst experts, as we might suppose that rationality would play a huge role in determining the best way forward. After all, most experts in various fields have spent many years in rationally oriented learning in a rationally based field. Our technical and professional discipline has favored a rational way of operating. In fact, anything not rationally sound might constitute incompetence, unprofessionalism, a regulatory anomaly or failure. It might be easy for an expert with this conditioning to assume that all decisions are reasonably informed by a sound argument and the logical weighing of pros and cons.

The purely rational argument seems to assume that all we're dealing with when engaging with a stakeholder is their neocortex (see the description of emotional intelligence inChapter 5), which will make a logical, fact-based decision based on the evidence.

This influencing strategy and way of thinking fails to recognize the role of the emotional or limbic brain, which all too often filters information based on emotional biases.

These include biases like "I like Jennifer more, so I'm not going to subject her proposal to the same burden of proof that I'm going to apply to Geoff's."

Or "Roger has me feeling boxed in. His rationale appears to be irrefutable, but I nonetheless feel uncomfortable about what making this decision will mean for the business. Perhaps he has pitched an idea which favors his preferred outcomes in some way. I think I'll ask him to do some more research."

"The limbic brain filters information based on emotional biases."

Deploying Consultation and Inspiration

WE SHOULD, OF COURSE, always ensure our case is soundly reasoned. But we should not be surprised if this tactic alone doesn't guarantee stakeholder buy-in. We'll likely need to supplement a well-reasoned argument with additional tactics that predispose the other parties toward feeling emotionally compelled and inspired to accept it.

Do they get to feel consulted with? Have they had a chance to air their concerns, feel heard and understood? Have they had the opportunity to share their ideas about how things might look going forward?

Inspiration creates no resistance and only a small amount of compliance. Nine out of ten people in the research said it attracted commitment or buy-in. Consultation ranked second, with more than half of respondents saying it attracted commitment. In working with many groups of experts, these results have been broadly validated across various cultures, organizations and locations.

Of course, deploying consultation and inspiration as influencing tactics requires skill and is often more time-consuming. But at least we're actually making an effort to engage with the other person rather than trying to be hyper-rational.

Attempts to be inspiring can also be quite confronting. "Do I believe I can sell the stakeholders a compelling vision? Do I have insight into what they would find inspiring? What if I fail to provoke such inspiration? At least if I have just prepared a clinical, logical case based on flawless reasoning, if they reject it, then there's nothing lacking in me, only in their deficit of having sufficient smarts to recognize the flawless logic I've presented."

Is the ability to inspire purely a matter of charisma? Is it some kind of X-factor that some people are born with and others are not? What makes something inspiring?

> ***"We're not trying to convince ourselves. We're trying to convince a stakeholder."***

Experts who are successful at deploying these tactics ask themselves these questions:

- Is there an engaging purpose or vision that I could credibly articulate?
- Does our solution or recommendation address a strongly felt need from the perspective of a given stakeholder?
- Does life get better for someone as a consequence of what I am seeking to gain their support for? Who and how specifically? How might these anticipated advantages be credibly conveyed and felt?
- Is there some kind of noble principle at stake?

Inspiration certainly takes thought and effort. We need to put ourselves in the shoes of others and consider how they'll then relate to what we're saying. "Is there anything emotionally compelling about what I am asking of them?" At the very least, we can explore the idea that they're more likely to positively engage with us if we give them a compelling upside rather than bludgeon them into submission using some of the other methods.

Master Experts think very hard about using the right influencing tactics for the right reasons with the right people. They'll take some time to consider what has worked in the past, which arguments and tactics have had the most impact, and which tactics, when used, have meant efforts to influence have crashed and burned? They'll remove themselves from the very limited context of thinking, *what would convince me?*

We're not trying to convince ourselves. We're trying to convince a stakeholder who has a whole different set of needs, motivations and responses to particular influencing tactics. Ingratiation doesn't, in our experience, work very well on most experts, except perhaps those who are heavily ego driven. But that doesn't mean it won't work on some of our stakeholders. As experts, we might be skeptical of colleagues trying to inspire us, but inspiration is quite likely to work very effectively on many other stakeholders.

In our programs, after asking participants to identify critical stakeholder relationships, we then explore those that are either broken or not working well. We ask them to consider what influencing tactics they've been deploying with that stakeholder. Very often, it's a combination of rational persuasion and, failing that, legitimizing. And if even that fails, pressure. These are exactly the tactics that the wider organization or senior leaders often use on us! So, it's no surprise that these tactics don't work or fail to achieve a deeper buy-in than mere compliance.

Most experts want to be more influential. The ability to master each of these influencing techniques and then deploy them for the right reasons at the right times with the right stakeholders will hugely enhance our influencing effectiveness.

Richard's Records

AT THE BEGINNING OF this chapter, we described a typical expert dilemma being faced by Richard: getting a proposal approved. Richard, you may remember, had recast the proposal several times, as requested, but there was still no decision forthcoming.

After exploring the concept of influencing strategies and becoming acquainted with a 2000-year-old philosopher, Richard re-examined his business case. He realized many things that could have been included but were not specifically asked for were missing. These included:

- His and his team's credentials in records management and their experience in improving and updating systems in the past, thus reducing the risk of project or implementation failure.
- Any mention of the time and effort wasted by the organization due to using the current system, as well as the consequences. For example, people didn't update records as often as they should. A whole new section about the risks of poor record-keeping and new compliance regulations was inserted.
- No "what's in it for the employees" argument. Richard had just stated the clinical functionality of the new system and the costs, but he had not connected the impact of this easier-to-use system on everyday employees. A further small section on this was added near the start of the proposal.
- No "how this will improve customer service" argument. This was quickly rectified and put right at the start of the proposal.
- And finally, he'd had a discussion with his manager about the delay and had been told that senior leaders didn't see the project as "urgent." It was only viewed as a "nice to have." In response to this, Richard included a short paragraph on the cost to the organization and associated risks of doing nothing.

Richard re-submitted his new business case. Just a few weeks later, he was asked to present it to senior leaders, where it quickly got approval.

TAKING ACTION

Growing Our Influencing Skills

IF INFLUENCING SKILLS IS a capability you want to grow, here are some high-level suggestions for actions to take:

EXPLORE YOUR DEFAULT INFLUENCING TACTICS. HOW EFFECTIVE ARE THEY WITH KEY STAKEHOLDERS?

If we aren't deliberate in choosing which influencing tactics we use, we default back to the two or three we're most comfortable with. These are the tactics we use all the time. Questions we might like to ask ourselves:

- Which influencing tactics are my default setting(s)?
- Do I tend to rely heavily on rational persuasion, quickly followed by escalation to formal authorities (legitimizing) when my stakeholders fail to respond?
- Are there alternative strategies that I've never even considered using or testing?
- What tactics do I think might work best on particular stakeholders?
- What experiences do I have of others using tactics that seem to work on my major stakeholders?
- What experiences do I have of influencing tactics that definitely don't work and that I need to avoid using?
- Do I have a clear influencing strategy for my most important five or six stakeholders?

IDENTIFY THE INFLUENCING STRATEGIES BEING USED BY KEY STAKEHOLDERS

Start reviewing how you're being influenced by those you work most closely with. Some questions we may wish to ask ourselves:

- Am I resisting or complying, or am I doing work for stakeholders because I have bought into the task and its impact?
- How do I respond to various tactics?
- How could I ask questions of stakeholders so they use different tactics on me? For example, if I wanted to be more inspired, I could ask questions about how tasks and initiatives connect to strategy, like why are we doing this, how does it affect the big picture? I could ask about the difference a particular task might make.
- Are there particular influencing tactics that generate a very negative response from me, and how might I convince my stakeholders to avoid using those tactics?
- How do I push back on pressure? (see Chapter 10, *The Art of Saying No*).