

INFLUENCE

competency



Difficulty



Easy
Stroll

Tough
Climb

Influence

Effective performers are skilled at directing, persuading and motivating others. They are able to flex their style to direct, collaborate or empower, as the situation requires. They have established a personal power base built on mutual trust, fairness and honesty.

Level	Performance Indicators and Behavioral Examples
<p style="text-align: center;">4 Strategic</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops and implements appropriate and creative recognition, rewards and incentives to move the organization to action. • Influences across all levels of the organization, and with external organizational stakeholders, through strong communications skills (primarily verbal), impactful messages and personal appeal (charisma). • Motivates others by creating and communicating a positive agenda (e.g., the vision for organizational growth, compelling stories, etc.). • As a leader, remains persistently optimistic, especially during challenging periods (e.g., economic slow-down, loss of customer, etc.). • Has a commanding presence; has impact.
<p style="text-align: center;">3 Advanced</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicates a legitimate, consistent agenda across multiple functions to provide clear direction. • Understands the dynamics of power and the responsibilities of leadership; is politically astute but avoids abuses of power. • Clearly articulates advantages to situations and validates areas of potential concern; uses credible examples to support thinking; is able to tie perspective to a desired outcome.
<p style="text-align: center;">2 Applied</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a visible, steady and reliable team leader; is able to identify and communicate compelling motivators (i.e., provides variety in task assignment, autonomy in decision making, assigns complete tasks (not just parts), provides feedback and explains meaning). • Presents a positive presence; projects contagious enthusiasm (smiles, shows non-verbal energy). • Is respected (influential) for technical expertise; influences others through ready dissemination of needed technical know-how. • Communicates decisions and supporting rationale in a way that is respectful of others and their opinions. • Effectively adjusts influence style to fit the needs of the team member: directs others (e.g., with a “rookie”) or involves others (e.g., with an expert). • Offers timely and specific verbal recognition and encouragement to pull team members toward goals.
<p style="text-align: center;">1 Elementary</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is capable of being persuasive and able to motivate others within scope of responsibilities. • Communicates clearly and effectively in informal settings. • Gains respect (i.e., influence through open, honest and fair treatment of others). • Is responsive, gains admiration (i.e., influence through acknowledging requests quickly, listening attentively, fulfilling assignments completely). • Practices what he/she preaches; walks the talk; keeps promises; is respectful. • Does his/her homework; is well prepared when attempting to influence.
<p style="text-align: center;">0 Inadequate</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lacks one or more of the qualities needed for personal power: consistency, fairness, equity, ability to self-disclose or solicit feedback, ability to articulate a compelling message, experience/expertise that garners professional respect, etc. • Unable to call upon more than one style to influence (e.g., directive, participative, etc.). • Relies primarily upon positional power (e.g., fear of punishment, promise of tangible reward, etc.) to prompt others to act. • Imposes own beliefs/decisions without consideration of others. • Is not assertive (e.g., does not voice an opinion one way or the other, cannot constructively confront others when necessary). • Does not offer rationale or supporting data. • Does not proactively identify questions or concerns of others. • Avoids or circumvents dissenting opinions. • Manipulates the situation for personal purposes rather than what’s best for the team or the business.

Significance

Your ultimate impact, the footprints you leave in the sands of time, are a result of how influential you have been. The skillful use of influence, not to manipulate, but to persuade others of your legitimate agenda, is essential to realizing your positive contributions. A vision is merely a dream unless you have the ability to rally others to your cause. Remember your leadership energy is important. Enthusiasm is contagious, but so is melancholy. Optimism is an essential trait of leadership because expectations color outcomes.

Best Ways To Develop

First, inventory your current sources of influence. Do you have a clear message? Have you clarified your value system—your moral compass (what is right or wrong?) Are you a good communicator? Do people respect you? All of these build power. Leverage your strengths and seek to remedy any power gaps. For example, become a better presenter, refine your message, increase your expertise, study and emulate effective leaders you know, etc.

Improving Your Capacity

When directing others, specific objectives will influence people more than general statements.

Use incentives and rewards creatively, frequently, and appropriately.

Read: *Helping: How to Offer, Give, and Receive Help* by Edgar H. Schein

Read: *How to Win Friends and Influence People* by Dale Carnegie

Read: *Humble Inquiry* by Edgar H. Schein

Read: *Influencing With Integrity* by Geine Z. Laborde.

Read: *The Leadership Challenge, Third Edition* by James Kouzes and Barry Posner.

Read: *Leaders: The Strategies for Taking Charge* by Warren G. Bennis and Burt Nanus.

Read: *Lincoln on Leadership* by Donald T. Phillips

Activity: Take a self-test on your power preferences, (e.g., Power Source Indicator offered by Organization Systems International.)

Activity: Interpersonal Influence Inventory III offered by HRDQ.com.

Activity: Sign up for a leadership workshop.

Start Today

Be there. Be physically available often and able to be reached almost always.

Write a personal mission and values statement; clarify what you believe in.

Seek immediate feedback on your ability to convey your enthusiasm and passion for what you believe in; realize that up to 70% of your message is nonverbal.

Tips

- Be aware that not all influence is intentional: as a leader you are always on stage.
- Influence is built on the personal power sources of expertise, integrity and compelling communications.
- To get positive performance, approach challenges with a positive attitude—expectations color outcomes.

Influence Style Indicator by Discovery Learning Inc.

Remember, the key to improving competency is not just learning about the skill but choosing a takeaway and developing an action plan to put new behaviors into practice until it becomes a natural response.

Development Action Planning Form

Step 1: Choose a competency area to develop.

Target Competency: _____

Step 2: Describe a positive outcome in the target area of competence; include your vision of a preferred future state.

Goal Statement: _____

Vision Statement: _____

Step 3: List the benefits of achieving your desired end state.

Benefits: _____

Step 4: Brainstorm the actions you might take to achieve your goal. For each, anticipate obstacles and options for overcoming them.

Action Steps	Obstacles	Options
1.		
2.		
3.		

Step 5: Finalize your action steps based on your brainstorming in Step 4. Now, list each action you must take to achieve your goal, including time frames and resources you will need.

Action Steps	Time Frames	Resources
1.		
2.		
3.		

Lipscomb's CORE Competency Development Program helps improve the competency areas that are critical to achieving your life and career goals. Through course materials, suggested practice opportunities and personalized coaching, competency-based education focuses on developing a new set of skills you can apply to daily life. Visit [Lipscomb Online](#) for more information on our Certificate, Undergraduate, and Graduate degree programs.