Influencer: The New Science of Leading Change

Study Guide

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This document contains a summary of key points, some observations, and some group discussion questions for "Influencer: the New Science of Leading Change" by Joseph Grenny, Kerry Patterson, David Maxfield, Ron McMillan, Al Switzer.

Though this guide supports group discussion, you may also find it useful as an individual study guide.

> **Note to participant**: You will likely gain more from the book if you read a small amount at one sitting and put some thought into how the ideas apply in your current ministry.

> **Note to leader**: The Self-Assessment Exercise is for each person's personal reflection. Some participants may prefer not to discuss it.

Influence Key 1 = Focus & Measure

KEY POINT:

Measurement done correctly will inform and drive behavior.

Clear and Compelling Goal

Discussion Questions

- What result are we trying to achieve with this ministry?
- Is our goal SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, time-bound)?

Example from the book:

Will NOT Work Well	Will Work Well
We will reduce preventable harm in hospitals.	We will save 100,000 lives from medical mistakes by June 14, 2006.
too vague	specific, time bound
not compelling	engages heart and brain

You can talk about results all you want, but they remain nothing more than ideas until you decide exactly how you will measure them in a relevant way. If our desired result is not particularly tangible, we will need to operationalize it into something we can measure.

Discussion Question

What is our measure of progress in this ministry?

Measure and Publish Frequently

A measure won't drive behavior if it doesn't maintain attention. We will need to measure frequently and publish the results frequently.

Example from Grace:

Here's a chart from one ministry that (in July 2012) began tracking and reporting a key measure (contacts) every week. Notice the difference between 2012 and 2013.
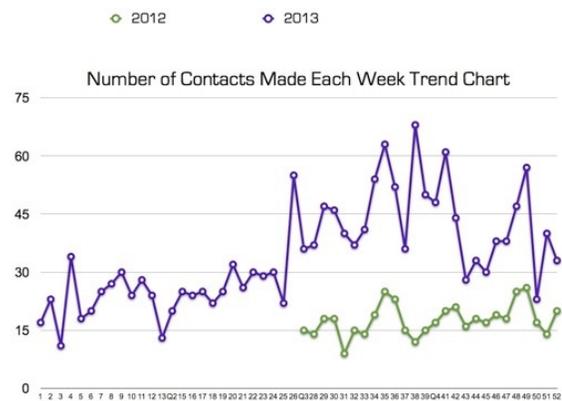
Discussion Question

In our ministry, do we measure and report at least monthly?

Influence Key 2 = Find Vital Behaviors

KEY POINT:

One or two vital behaviors, well executed, will yield a big difference in getting the results we desire.

Discussion Question

What are the vital behaviors that will increase the results that matter to our ministry?

Tips for Finding Vital Behaviors

1. Notice the **Obvious**. Look for behaviors that are obvious but underused (because they are difficult).
2. Look for **Crucial Moments**. Identify those times where everything will work against the results you want. Look for behaviors that can help you overcome those crucial moments.
3. Learn from **Positive Deviants**. Look for people that do well in a challenging situation even when others are having problems. Identify what they are doing differently that could help others succeed.
4. **Spot Culture Busters**. Watch for crucial moments when the needed behaviors go against cultural norms or unwritten rules.
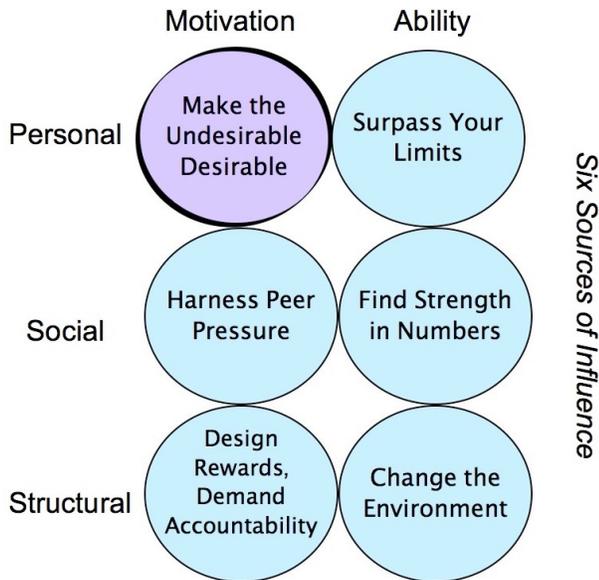
Test to Confirm Vital Behaviors

If you are unsure the behaviors you identify are true vital behaviors, track the behaviors and results then compare. If an increase in the desired results accompanies an increase in the behaviors, you have identified vital behaviors.

Influence Key 3 = Engage Six Sources

It will be a challenge to help people regularly demonstrate the vital behaviors. To overcome resistance to change, use **all six** sources of influence.

1-Make the Undesirable Desirable

One of the big challenges in changing behavior is that good behaviors feel bad and bad behaviors feel good.

4 Tactics to Help People Love What They Hate

Find ways to stimulate positive impulses.

1. **Allow for Choice**: Forcing people to comply will not bring change. Instead, help them reach their own conclusions. Listen to them and help them frame the change process in their own terms.
2. **Create Direct Experiences**: Help people connect with the consequences of their choices. Put them in situations where they try the new behaviors.
3. **Tell Meaningful Stories**: If you can't get the person to engage in a direct experience, provide a second hand experience. Create a vicarious experience with compelling stories.
4. **Make it a Game**: Find a way to keep score, giving frequent feedback that lets people know how they are progressing. Make sure that people are in control of the things you are measuring.

Discussion Questions for "Make the Undesirable Desirable"

- In this ministry, what vital behaviors appear to be undesirable to volunteers or staff?
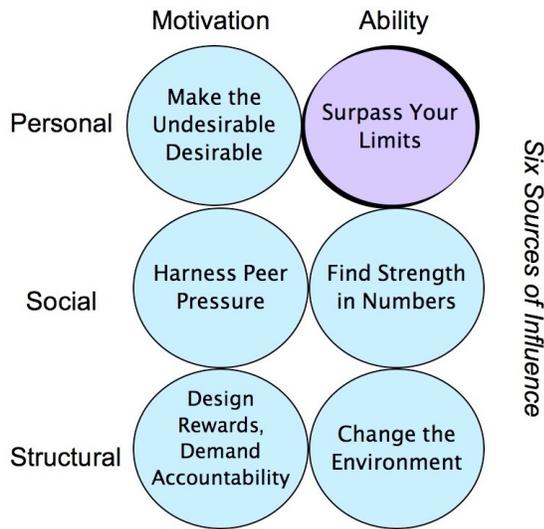- What can we do to make the undesirable desirable?

2-Surpass Your Limits

Refine Skills

Skill trumps will. To improve skill requires deliberate focused practice. While learning, there should be a short period between the teaching and testing. Provide **clear**, **frequent feedback** against a known standard. Set short-term objectives on behaviors that lead to results rather than on the results themselves.

Kick-Start Your Brain

Your amygdala (go system) engages whenever you sense danger. It also becomes active when you experience an appetite or craving. When this happens, you don't think clearly. To activate your frontal lobe (know system), argue with your feelings. When you force your brain to work on a question, it must use the know system because the go system is not equipped for that type of reasoning. This distraction can get you past the prompting of your go system. You then become more capable of doing the good behaviors.

Discussion Questions for "Surpass Your Limits"

- What opportunities do we provide our volunteers and staff for skill practice?
- Have we established a known standard for performance?
- How often do we provide clear feedback?

3-Harness Peer Pressure

Make sure people feel praised, supported, and encouraged when they enact vital behaviors. Enlist "accomplices" that say and do things to model the vital behaviors.

The Power of One

Arrange for a respected person to succeed at a vital behavior. This will motivate others to try the vital behavior.

Become an influencer yourself through **sacrifice**.

- TIME: Give a substantial amount of your time in practicing the vital behavior.

- MONEY: Give a substantial amount of your resources to support the vital behavior.
- EGO: Demonstrate how important the vital behavior is to you by sacrificing your ego when you make a mistake related to the vital behavior.
- PREVIOUS PRIORITIES: Sacrifice a previously important priority to support the new vital behavior.

Engage **formal** and **opinion leaders**.

Find those who are socially connected and respected who are also open to new ideas. Partner with these early adopters to increase the willingness of others to try the new vital behavior.

4-Find Strength in Numbers

When do you need the **help of others** to accomplish challenging changes?

1. When **Others are Part of the Problem**. If several people are reinforcing the wrong behavior, you will need to engage all of them to influence change. Ask your enablers to become your helpers.
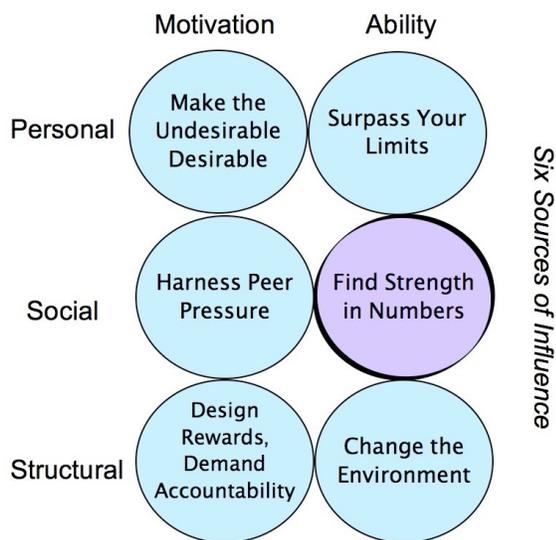
Create **new norms**.

- Break the **code of silence**. Find ways to make the un-discussable discussable. Make it safe to talk about controversial topics.

- Create **200 percent accountability** making people responsible for doing the vital behavior themselves and for holding others accountable as well.

Discussion Questions for "Harness Peer Pressure"

- Which of our volunteers have the most influence with other volunteers?
- What can we do to engage those influencers?

2. When **You Can't Succeed on Your Own**. Develop people's ability to work as a team. Teach them collaboration skills. Help them see how their needs are interconnected. Help them see the larger cause.

3. When the **Risk is High**. When there is a high likelihood of failure, put people in a position of being accountable for one another. Maximize peer support. Teach them to help themselves by helping others. Win as a team, not as individuals.

4. When **There are Blind Spots**. When people can't see where they are performing poorly, provide some real time feedback from someone who knows how to perform the task well.

Discussion Questions for "Find Strength in Numbers"

- How do we encourage volunteers and staff to be accountable for one another?
- What blind spots do our performers have?

Motivation   Ability

Personal

Make the Undesirable Desirable

Surpass Your Limits

Social

Harness Peer Pressure

Find Strength in Numbers

Structural

Design Rewards, Demand Accountability

Change the Environment

Six Sources of Influence
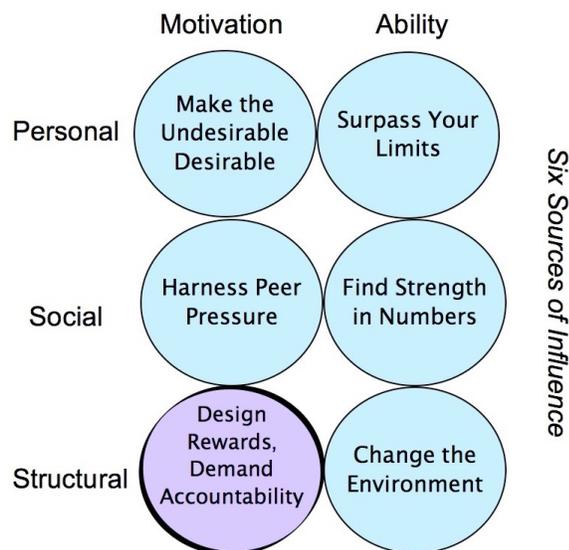
CAUTION #1

You can make things worse if you focus on rewards before addressing personal and social motivation. **First**:

- Connect vital behaviors with intrinsic satisfaction (make the undesirable desirable).
- Line up social support for the vital behaviors (harness peer pressure).

Only then should you consider rewards.

If personal and social motivation are solidly in place, think of incentives that are:

- Clearly tied to vital behaviors (not results because often people have no direct control over results); If you pick real vital behaviors, the results will come when the vital behaviors increase.
- Come soon after demonstration of vital behaviors (that you can observe)
- Symbolically significant (not extravagant, but welcome gestures of appreciation).

CAUTION #2

If you reward people for engaging in activity that they already find satisfying, this will often devalue the activity and lessen their likelihood of continuing the activity without reward.

CAUTION #3

Awards ceremonies are often demotivating both to the recipient and audience. The recipient may not like public attention. The audience may think they deserved the attention more than the recipient. This does not positively motivate people.

> *Pam Note:*
>
> Setting up a system where there is one "winner" can generate lack of cooperation. On the other hand, if you set up a system where people compete against a target and all those who meet the target "win," people are more likely to help one another win. This is called "creating a bigger winner's circle." See "Bringing Out the Best in People," -Aubrey Daniels

CAUTION #4

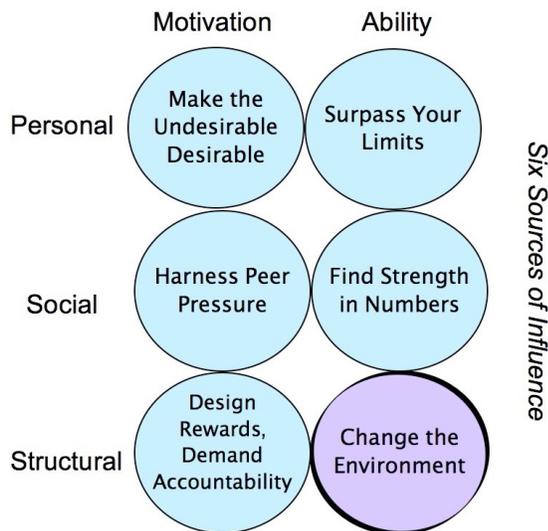Be careful of the message you send with punishment. Make the unacceptable behavior clear. Give a warning. Follow through. Don't ignore harmful behaviors.

Discussion Questions for "Design Rewards, Demand Accountability"

- What types of rewards or incentives are we using in this ministry?
- How have we addressed the concerns in Caution #1?
- How do we manage awards ceremonies? Are we violating Caution #3?

Pam Note:

- Visible = In front of those who you want to demonstrate the vital behaviors
- Timely = Gathered quickly after each opportunity to demonstrate the vital behaviors and reported frequently (weekly, not yearly)
- Relevant = Measures occurrences of vital behaviors
- Accurate = Reliably reflects the number of occurrences of vital behaviors

Some times it's easier and more helpful to change things instead of people.

Our environment is a source of influence that is often underused. There are two reasons.
1. Powerful elements from our environment are often invisible to us. We fail to notice their profound affect on behavior.
2. When we do notice an environmental factor, we usually don't know what to do about it.

Learn to Notice
Begin to look for ways your environment is affecting your behavior and the behavior of others.

Make the Invisible Visible
Find ways to draw attention to environmental factors that most people don't notice.

Mind the Data Stream
Data can drive behaviors if they are visible, timely, relevant, and accurate.

Reports and charts should be focused and deliberate. They should always focus on vital behaviors. It is a waste of time to gather and publish data not related to vital behaviors.

Manage Space: the Final Frontier
Frequency and quality of human interaction is largely a function of physical distance (propinquity). To optimize social support, find ways to make interaction convenient.

Make it Easy
Find ways to use things (tools, furniture, room layout...) to make vital behaviors easier and detracting behaviors more difficult. Look for ways to make the correct tasks easier to perform.

Make it Unavoidable
Often all that's required to make a good behavior unavoidable is to structure it into your daily routine.

Discussion Questions for "Change the Environment"

- How well are we purposefully using our data stream to drive vital behaviors?
- How does our physical environment support or discourage vital behaviors?

Become an Influencer

Three Keys

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┌──────────┐      ┌──────────┐      ┌──────────┐
│ Identify │ ──▶  │ Identify │ ──▶  │ Engage   │
│ Your     │      │ Vital    │      │ All 6    │
│ Goal     │      │ Behaviors│      │ Sources  │
│          │      │          │      │ of       │
│          │      │          │      │ Influence│
└──────────┘      └──────────┘      └──────────┘
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KEY 1: First, remember that your influence begins when you learn to focus and measure. Identify what you really want. Then create measures that help you focus on the goal.

KEY 2: Next, find the vital behaviors that will move you toward achieving your goal.

KEY 3: Finally, engage all six sources of influence to drive the vital behaviors.

Don't Confuse Tinkering with a Genuine Effort

Don't just try a couple of things. Put together a comprehensive plan to use all six sources of influence.

Diagnose Before You Prescribe

Carefully investigate what currently gets in the way of people engaging in the vital behaviors. Also look for possible sources of influence already in place that you can leverage. Until you do that, you can't create an effective plan that properly employs all six sources of influence.

Influencer Self Assessment

For each statement below, indicate a number from 1-10 (never > always).

Identify Goal and Find Vital Behaviors	never----------------------always
I identify what I want to achieve and create a SMART goal.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
Before creating a plan, I identify the vital behaviors that it will take to reach the goal.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I measure the occurrence of vital behaviors rather than results.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I test to confirm that more vital behaviors yields better results.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Make the Undesirable Desirable	never----------------------always
I help people see the bigger purpose behind the change.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I help people see why change is necessary.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I help people discover their personal goals that fit with the change.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I add elements of fun to learning new vital behaviors.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Surpass Your Limits	never----------------------always
I provide guided practice and immediate feedback until I see that they can demonstrate the vital behaviors.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I break complex tasks into small pieces so they can see progress.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I teach people how to cope with frustration in making changes.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I make ongoing coaching and training available.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Harness Peer Pressure	never----------------------always
I identify opinion leaders and get them involved in encouraging others to make needed changes.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I identify those likely to be most concerned about change and involve them early to reduce resistance.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I personally demonstrate the vital behaviors.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
If a change affects a team, I work with the entire team rather than their leader only.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Find Strength in Numbers	never------------------------always
I teach people how to help themselves by helping others.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I create convenient, comfortable ways for people to get help in demonstrating vital behaviors.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I make sure there are people around who can demonstrate the vital behaviors.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I help people see how their needs are interconnected.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Design Rewards, Demand Accountability	never------------------------always
Before I offer incentives, I make sure I've already harnessed peer pressure and made the undesirable desirable.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I make sure rewards support vital behaviors.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I give small thoughtful rewards to reinforce vital behaviors.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I praise even small improvements in demonstrating vital behaviors.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

Change the Environment	never------------------------always
I use reminders and metrics to keep the need for change visible for everyone who needs to change their behavior.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I make sure that progress toward goals is accurate, timely, and visible..	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I make changes to the physical work space to make vital behaviors convenient and easy.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10
I reorganize things to make doing vital behavior almost unavoidable.	1 -2 -3 -4 -5 -6 -7 -8 -9 -10

- Select one of the influence areas where your responses have the lowest numbers.
- Make a plan to address that area so that you become a more effective influencer.

Exercise: Personal Action Plan

Create a personal action plan to take a step toward becoming a more effective influencer.

Area I Will Address:
My Accountability Partner: (Person who will ask about my consistency, encourage me, urge me to continue, and praise me for progress)

Specific Actions I Commit to Take

Action	Where	When