

Impact and Influencing:

“Think twice before you speak, because your words and influence will plant the seed of either success or failure in the mind of another”. - Napoleon Hill

By Liggy Webb

Making a positive impact and having the ability to influence people is a very powerful life skill to possess. More and more, in the competitive world we live in, having the confidence to stick your head above the parapet and get noticed is very helpful, not just in a work environment but on a personal level as well.

The key is to make the best impact that you can have on people's lives and to be conscious that all of our actions bear consequences. Let's work on the principle that we are all a mass of energy and if we hurt another person we in turn will hurt ourselves. Treating people how we would want to be treated is important and having respect for fellow man is indeed a virtue. If kindness was a religion, the world would certainly be a healthier and happier place.

We can, however, seek out ways to make a positive impact and, by generating enthusiasm and energy, we can add value and help influence others to feel good about themselves and feel more empowered. Self-confidence (and remember there is a fine line between confidence and arrogance) will breed confidence in others.

The greatest leaders in the world have one thing in common and that is a sense of purpose and self-belief.

So, once you have made a positive impact, you will find it far easier to influence and persuade people because they will already be on your side. Influencing is an important skill to have. However, it is important that you establish first of all what you are trying to achieve. If you are unclear about your own intentions or direction, it will just confuse other people and they will, in turn, lose confidence in where you are trying to take them.

Influence, by definition, is about having a power and power over others, so it is important that you use this power with integrity and due diligence. One of the key skills when influencing is to listen actively and make sure that you have all the facts around you so that you are well informed and are responsibly leading people in the direction you want to take them and toward the outcomes that you want to achieve. Demonstrating empathy and understanding will also help to get people on your side and make them feel far more part of the process,

as opposed to being bamboozled or railroaded into something that they may resent later.

A good amount of planning and preparation will help to keep you focused and also demonstrate to those around you that you are trying to influence that you are in control and that you know what are you are doing. If an idea or suggestion has been well thought through it will have far more gravitas.

An openness and honesty about the merits and pitfalls of a suggestion can be very positive too, as this provides a reality check and acknowledges and pre-empts any doubts that anyone may have.

They will be more receptive to being influenced if the pros and cons have been weighed up and they have all the facts.

“You don't have to be a “person of influence” to be influential. In fact, the most influential people in my life are probably not even aware of the things they've taught me”.

Scott Adams

The more you make someone involved and part of the process, the more they will be on your side. Also remember one of the key skills of a influencing is the enthusiasm you convey when delivering any message.

A passion, energy and strong belief in what you are trying to achieve can be contagious and the best way to positively impact on and influence others.

Recommended Reading on Impact & Influencing

Persuasion – The art of influencing people by James Borg

Personal Impact: What it Takes to Make a Difference by Amanda Vickers, Steve Bavister, and Jackie Smith

21 Dirty Tricks at Work – How to Win at office Politics by Colin Gautrey & Mike Phipps

Influence – The Psychology of Persuasion by Robert B.Cialdini

Influencing within Organizations by Andzrej Huczynski

Impact and Influencing - Useful Tips

- Be enthusiastic and positive.
- Be confident, energised and assertive.
- Be patient; influencing is a process
- Listen actively, to gain knowledge
- Be flexible and adapt to other peoples' ideas
- Build, link and develop ideas together
- Show understanding for others in order to establish common ground
- Express yourself fluently – with passion and facts
- Check everyone has understood – to ensure people are with you
- Plan and be well prepared

Life is what YOU make it!

The above article is an extract from *The Happy Handbook - A Compendium of Modern Life Skills*



by Liggy Webb which is out now.

Liggy Webb is widely respected as a leading expert in the field of *Modern Life Skills and Workplace Wellness.*

As a presenter, consultant and author she is passionate about her work and improving the quality of people's lives. She is the founding director of The Learning Architect a consortium of niche industry experts. Liggy has developed a range of techniques to support individuals and organizations to cope more effectively with modern living and the demands and challenges of life in the twenty tens and beyond.

As a consultant with the United Nations she travels expensively and has recently returned from Afghanistan which she describes as biggest life education to date!

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