



LEADERSHIP insights

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professional coaching
on increasing your ability
to influence others?

Contact me, jpreston@rwhc.com

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INFLUENCE WITHOUT AUTHORITY

If you have siblings, did you ever say to each other as children, "You're not the boss of me!" Meaning, Mom & Dad can make me do this but you can't. So how do you get people to do things when you don't have "position authority" but yet you need others to deliver?

Let's start with what DOESN'T work:

- Pressure to do something without understanding the rationale behind the request
- Feeling like the door is closed to any of my thoughts or input
- When someone else's deadline has become my problem
- Being asked last minute when I won't do well because there wasn't time to prepare
- Having done things for someone before that was not used, recognized or even acknowledged
- Having done things for someone who took all the credit
- Vagueness, jargon, scare tactics, such as "JCAHO requires it"
- Not having a sense of trust, or any kind of connection with the one who is requesting my effort

Honestly, this list won't help even if there is position authority! In talking with those who have a knack for getting what they need from other people, **the biggest single factor in their success was their ability to create and maintain RELATIONSHIPS.** Think relationships shouldn't matter so much? This is work after all, so why can't we just keep it all business?

Because it is about being smart about what motivates people, which involves both head AND heart. We deliver when we care enough about the other person to not want to let them down, no matter what their title is. **When you struggle to get results you need from others, your best results will come from focusing on building a trusting relationship with them.**

My lovely colleague Carrie Ballweg, RWHC Education Coordinator shares these thoughts... "Long before you need to 'influence without authority' you must make it a priority to foster good relationships with everyone you work with. It's helpful if you work in a team climate but realistically those you need to rally may feel 'why should I?' when their plate is already full. Sincerity and trust will serve you in your time of need."

Carrie's Tips

To engage them:

- Be upfront and honest
- Explain what is needed so they understand
- Acknowledge, thank and recognize the contribution they make (and copy their supervisor!)
- Allow them to have a voice in the solution
- Ask nicely
- Use the "all I really need to know I learned in kindergarten" stuff
- Reciprocate

Additional tips:

- Use icebreakers at meetings to help others connect too
- Have and use a sense of humor
- Listen well when someone disagrees without getting defensive-be unafraid to be challenged
- Balance passion with data (do your homework)
- Diligently treat people with respect (no gossiping, triangulating, backstabbing-all of which destroy trust)
- Walk your talk
- Be strategic-act with a plan, not crisis to crisis
- Communicate well
- Smartly engage others who have influence (use relational skills to build allies who are directly impacted by your efforts and who can help you influence others)

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