

Member's Quarterly

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Feature

What you Need to Become an Influencer

It all starts from within



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Influencers can significantly impact their colleagues by sharing their knowledge and recommendations regarding workplace activities. By becoming an influencer, you may see benefits for your profession and network, but achieving influencer status requires establishing yourself as a known authority or expert within your area of proficiency.

What is an influencer? An influencer is a person who has a high level of acceptance or expertise within their workplace. They often obtain their following because they have substantial experience, success or expertise in a particular field. Influential people stand out by easily taking attention. They can convince others to agree with them and gain respect from others around them.

Others in the workplace may look to you for your opinions, knowledge and even advice. Some organizations may establish partnerships with influencers hoping that their clients will be influenced to purchase the companies' services or products.

An influencer does not necessarily need to be known on a large scale.

There are many types of influencers, but this article will focus on how to be an influencer at work.

To be an influencer at work, you need to:

- Let others speak but have an opinion yourself
- Check your intentions
- Show tact and be consistent
- Make others feel included
- Encourage contributions, provide recognition and engage your audience
- Constantly build relationships and your network

Influential people stand out by quickly capturing attention. They can sway others to side with them and gain respect from others.

A strategy for gaining power and influence is to build those connections. Listening first before you have an opinion to share will make others feel heard and acknowledged. Check your body language and tone to ensure you are projecting what you intend to show. Be consistent in your manner. Make yourself essential in meeting organizational goals by being trustworthy and reliable. Be assertive, not forceful and always be open to other ideas from your employees. Be true to who you are. Be authentic, transparent and open with your colleagues. Employees appreciate some vulnerability and genuineness in others. Be flexible and always follow through on what you say you will do. Actions speak louder than words. Do not just express your opinions, follow through.

To be that leader in the workplace with followers and respect, you need to provide opportunities for wins. Always believe in your employees. Being known as someone who serves others before serving yourself dramatically impacts how others see you. By giving trust, you can earn that trust back. Assign more significance to others, even more than they think of themselves. Truly connect with people and invest in the

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success of others.

Ways that you can influence others in the workplace could include: getting people to accept change; encouraging an individual to change behaviour or actions; getting a project approved; getting an idea or recommendation accepted and convincing someone to see things your way and reaching an agreement.

Why are influencers necessary in a workplace? On any workplace team, you need a certain amount of influence. Often it is people who are leaders that have the most influence. They are the ones that affect employee behaviour.

Some of the benefits of being an influencer at work are:

- They gain recognition in promotion or other rewards. Employees with influence stand out in a group.
- Their capability in working with a team improves. Leaders with influence help others in the group feel that they fit in. When everyone feels included, they work better together and are happier at work.
- Stronger relationships are developed with colleagues and supervisors. Influential leaders have more respect at work. This makes forming and maintaining relationships easier.

Part of influencing others is being willing to be there for them. Look for opportunities to do favours for your colleagues. Being generous when someone requests your viewpoint, words of reassurance or direction. Connect employees to resources, groups or leaders within the organization that might be able to assist them.

As an influencer, you should not close yourself off to criticism or take things too personally. Always be available. The more interactions you have with colleagues at work, the greater your range of influence will be.

Stay focused. Put down the phone and turn away from the computer screen. Pay attention to your surroundings.

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