

Influence is a powerful relationship-building tool. The beauty of influence is that it only requires us to be our best, authentic self. We often think that influence and persuasion are one in the same, but they aren’t, as you can see from the table below. As leaders the degree to which you have a positive influence on your staff has the potential to change the trajectory of their career and can have a huge impact on their workplace development and growth.

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| **Influence** | **Persuasion** |
| The power to cause changes ***without directly*** forcing them to happen | The act of causing people to do or believe something |
| Silent – doesn’t require communication | Verbal – requires communication |
| Changes others actions based on someone personality | Changes others actions based on what someone says |
| Based on modeled behavior | Based on appealing to another person’s emotions |
| Usually unconscious/unintentionally – fortuitous | Usually conscious/intentional – deliberate |

**November 2016**

**Coaching Tip of the Month for Supervisors**

Relationship Building through Influence

As you coach your staff remember that relationship-building is a core coaching concept and that your “sphere of influence” extends to them and beyond. Keep the following tips in mind:

**Personal:** Have personal exchanges and interactions with your staff. Find out what matters to them, what they value/care about. Get to know them and let them get to know you to the extent that you both are comfortable and that it does not cross appropriate workplace boundaries. Although you are interacting within a professional environment, staff are people with lives that exist outside of the workplace.

**Reliability: Staff /Consistency:** Action speaks louder than words! Your staff may hear what you say but what matters more is what they ***see*** ***you do***, and they are undoubtedly watching. They observe how you respond to situations, especially in times of stress, and whether or not your actions correspond with your words. Staff need to know that you are reliable and consistent. They want to know that they can count on you and count on your behavior to be familiar and reliable.

**Authenticity (Be Real):** It’s much easier to be who you are, than it is to be someone else! Let staff get to know the “real” you! People respect and appreciate those who are comfortable in their own skin, even if they don’t always care for some of the character traits. Be honest and truthful in your communication, interactions and behavior. *“Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.” - Oscar Wilde*

**Trust:** Trust is the key that unlocks the door to influence. When your staff trusts that you sincerely care about them, you will be true to your word and your actions will support what you say, and most importantly, you are operating from a place of authenticity … that is when your influence will have the greatest impact.

This month commit to spending time reflecting on the type of influence you want to have on your staff. Identify where and how you may need to make adjustments in your actions, conversations, or other areas in order to positively influence others. Make a concerted effort to do things differently.