



TRAINING

PERSUADING AND INFLUENCING AT WORK

Tuesday 22nd September 2020

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Take a moment to think about last week at work. I use the term 'at work' loosely as in the present climate the likelihood is you were 'working from home'. How many times did you want to shape the way that somebody saw something? Needed to motivate others to act or perform? Attempted to promote an idea or an approach? Wanted to get buy-in to a policy or strategy? I suspect the answer is probably more than once.

The ability to influence your manager, your peers, your staff, external partners, stakeholders, or the public, is an essential skill for leaders at all levels. Persuasion and influencing skills aren't just 'nice to have', they are essential leadership skills in today's unpredictable, fast-paced, changing work environment.

You will often see these skills as requirements for senior management positions particularly in policy, marketing and PR roles. However, they are equally important for all management and leadership roles. If your job requires you to work as part of a team, to lead a project, to achieve buy-in to a vision or strategy, to be able to affect a change in culture, to implement organisational change, to sell a service in a competitive business world, to bring people together in challenging times or take them forward into the unknown; then you need these skills.





So, what is the difference between persuading and influencing, and why are they essential skills?

Although these words are often used interchangeably, they do have quite distinct meanings. Influence and persuade are in and of themselves neutral – they are neither positive nor negative. In short, persuasion is about achieving a quick win and generally leads to a short-term outcome but it is an important skill in high-risk situations.

Influencing, on the other hand, requires a longer-term strategy and aims to achieve lasting change.

If we look a little deeper, we see that influencing is about creating a context in which people behave, act or perform in a desirable way, because they want to, because they see the benefit of it, or because they believe that it is the right thing to do (even if the outcome is not favourable to them, such as with restructuring). Influencing concerns, the capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behaviour of someone or something.

Persuasion is generally used in situations where there is a higher degree of immediacy or risk, where there are time constraints, where the person possesses specific expert knowledge, or where compliance is critical.

It is true that influencing requires more time and planning but it does lead to long-term positive outcomes. It encourages people to do something and to keep doing it, based on a voluntary commitment.

Influencing requires the conscious application of a well-planned strategy whether you trying to influence one person, a group, or the general public. It requires excellent communication skills, interpersonal skills and a high degree of Emotional Intelligence. When done well it is natural and invisible. There is no manipulation or coercion just a well-planned strategy delivered authentically using a range of effective skills.

On this 1-day remote training programme, we offer you the opportunity to explore, reflect and develop your persuasion and influencing skills. The group size it keeps small to allow for a high level of personal 1:1 support from the facilitator who is an experienced senior officer in the public sector, a skilled leadership development facilitator and a progressive coach.

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**Contact the Dods Training
team for more information**

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