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Increasing Your Influence

Are you perplexed because you can't get traction for your great ideas and innovations? Professionals commonly bump up against barriers that impede their ability to influence results. By answering three simple questions you can evaluate the most commonly reported barriers to powerful influence.

1. *Do you advance quality ideas?*

The ability to think critically routinely makes the Top 10 lists for predictors of professional success. The quality of your ideas increases with a range of intellectual skills, deep curiosity and the suspension of judgment. Barriers to quality ideas can arise when you self-sabotage, reach rash conclusions, display an unwillingness to listen, show a lack of respect for reason or evidence, display intellectual arrogance or exhibit complacency in the process.

2. *Are your ideas relevant?*

When your ideas are in alignment with those of your organization, your department and your specific role, you increase the probability of enrolling key stakeholders. The more stakeholders you can enroll the more traction your ideas will gain. Make it easy for others to see how your ideas move the organization forward.

3. *Are you able to convey your ideas effectively?*

When you are able to clearly and succinctly articulate your ideas you allow others to effectively evaluate and consider what you are proposing. Be prepared to explain your idea more than once. While it may be blatantly obvious to you why your idea is the clear way to go, it's the first time the other person is hearing your well thought out idea or the reason why it is a relevant idea.

Steps to Increase Your Influence

An action plan will help you strengthen your level of influence.

Step 1 - Get clear about the barrier(s) impeding the acceptance of your ideas.

- Based on your answers to the questions in the previous section, what is diminishing your influence? If you are not clear, ask your mentor or a trusted colleague for candid feedback in this area.

Step 2 - Choose where to start.

- Which barrier do you choose to focus on?

Step 3 - Get into action to break through this barrier.

- What will you do today?
- What will you do in the next 7 days?
- What will you do next month?

Removing the barrier(s) clears the path to advance your ideas. With a track record of innovation and creativity you will enjoy sustainable organizational influence and will be the person who is sought out on a regular basis for your stellar ideas.

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