

## Effectively Influencing Decision makers

The ten guidelines listed below are intended to help you do a better job of influencing decision makers. In some cases, these decision makers may be immediate or upper managers --in other cases they may be peers or cross-organizational colleagues. I hope that you find these suggestions to be useful in helping you convert your good ideas into meaningful action!

1. When presenting ideas to decision makers, realize that it is your responsibility to sell --not their responsibility to buy.
2. Focus on contribution to the larger good - not just the achievement of your objectives.
3. Strive to win the 'big point' - don't waste your energy, and their time, on trivial points.
4. Present a realistic 'cost-benefit' analysis of your ideas --don't just sell benefits.
5. 'Challenge up' on issues involving ethics or integrity --never remain silent on ethics violations.
6. Realize that your upper managers are just as 'human' as you are --don't say, 'I am amazed that someone at this level...'
7. Treat upper managers with the same courtesy that you would treat co-workers or customers - don't be disrespectful.
8. Support the final decision of the organization --don't say, 'They made me tell you' to direct reports.
9. Make a positive difference --don't just try to 'win' or 'be right'.
10. Focus on the future --'let go' of the past.

Successful people love getting ideas aimed at helping them achieve their goals for the future. They dislike being 'proven wrong' because of mistakes in the past. By focusing on the future you can concentrate on what can be achieved tomorrow, as opposed to what was not achieved yesterday. This future orientation may dramatically increase your odds on effectively "influencing up". It will also help you build better long-term relationships with people at all levels of your organization.

Source: Marshall Goldsmith, <http://www.marshallgoldsmith.com/>