

5 laws of influence

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We are all subject to influence - we're either being influenced, or we are influencing, there simply is no middle ground. Understanding influence and how to positively leverage it enables us to be better leaders and entrepreneurs.



Image source: Gallo/Getty Images.

Here are 5 laws of influence that have helped me remain a positive influence in business and in life:

1. You cannot influence what you do not understand: It makes sense really... no person, situation or outcome can be influenced by haphazard attempts. If you really want to have a lasting influence, you need to seek to understand your people and their situations first, and then second to be understood (if it even matters). Only once you have a relationship, can you influence - even if that relationship is through a social media platform, you need to know your audience before you can add any value.

2. People can smell inauthenticity: That's right – here is the one realm where 'fake it till you make it' simply won't work. If how you act when no one is 'watching' doesn't match up to what you say, people will soon realise that you're not being real. We are all equipped with our sixth sense and quickly weed out agendas or subtle disconnects in what people say and how they operate. True influence comes from a sincere desire to create positive change for others – nothing less.

3. Influence takes time: In an era of immediate gratification, we all want to see results – fast – but forcing relationships

and forcing trust will ultimately undo any possibility of influence. People need to understand your personal context for wanting to influence before they will be open enough to receive your input. Being consistent and developing staying power will strengthen your influence over time.

4. Influence is invisible: In so much as we would like to be transparent and always should be – walking up to a person and saying 'hey, I'd like to influence this situation' isn't the most effective strategy. People want to feel like they are a part of something bigger and a big part of influence is creating a space where people contribute while you drive the conversation. Influence shows up in the quiet spaces in-between conversations.

5. Pick a side: We can either be influenced, or we can influence. The choice is ours. If your organisational culture needs to change or if the status quo needs to be challenged, you can either lead the way or you can stay at the water cooler with all the other people moaning about the injustice of it all. The choice will always be ours.

Influence is one of the most powerful gifts of great leadership and a forceful driver in business. Understanding this and the working to grow and enhance your influence will set you and your business up for success later on.

ABOUT JACQUELINE RAW

Jacqueline Raw is a Sales and Marketing Strategist. She is the founder of Ycagel, a Marketing consulting and services firm and SkillX an online skills incubator for entrepreneurs and professionals. As a thought-leader and influencer in her markets, she is passionate about driving change and equipping people with the skills they need to grow successful businesses and brands.

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