

Useful Tips For Influencing Key Decision Makers

If you can influence the key decision makers in your organisation, you can make a positive difference. By applying the following pointers, you will certainly become more effective in influencing important decisions.

- 1. When presenting ideas to upper management, realize that it is your responsibility to sell -not their responsibility to buy.**
 - Focus on contribution to the larger good - not just the achievement of your objectives.
 - Present a realistic cost-benefit analysis of your ideas – don't just sell benefits.
- 2. Focus on the Core Values**
 - An effective salesperson would never say to a customer, "you need to buy this product," instead they relate to the needs of the buyers, not to their own needs. In the same way effective upward influencers relate to the larger needs of the organization, not just to the needs of their unit or team.
- 3. Focus on the impact of the decision** on the overall company and link it to the idea you are presenting. If you fail to do this, don't assume that your managers can automatically make the connection between the benefit to your unit and the benefit to the company.
- 4. Take responsibility for the out come of the idea you present** - while the importance of taking responsibility may seem obvious, an amazing number of people spend a lot of time blaming management for not buying their ideas. We can become disempowered when we focus on what others have done to make things wrong and not what we can do to make things right.
- 5. Remember that every organisation has limited resources, time, and energy** - The acceptance of your idea may well mean the rejection of another idea that someone else believes is wonderful. Be prepared to have a realistic discussion of the costs of your idea.
 - VCS organisation have to work within the stipulated criteria of their funders, therefore ensure that you idea falls within your funders expectations.
 - Acknowledge the fact that something else may have to be sacrificed in order to have your idea implemented.
 - Present a realistic cost-benefit analysis of your ideas
- 6. Be Prepared & Factual.** Have sufficient subject knowledge and evidence to support you idea.
 - Prepare for objections to your idea before they occur.
 - Acknowledge the sacrifice that someone else may have to make
 - Point out how the benefits of your plan may outweigh the costs.
- 7. Appropriate techniques**

Present your ideas boldly and confidently, using the following techniques and apply them at the appropriate time.

1. Diplomacy	2. Persuasion	3. Referent power (contacts)
4. Charisma	5. Facts & Figures	6. Expertise & Experience