

Influencing Context Map



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Introduction

In order to influence someone successfully, we need to understand the world from their perspective.

In this document we will introduce a tool called the context map to test what you know about your target individual and, if necessary, encourage you to find out more.

Successful influencing often relies on how much you can empathize and 'see' the outcome you seek from the other party's perspective.

Capturing all the useful information you have - and focusing your effort to gather other important information to fill the gaps – will greatly increase the chances of developing a successful influencing strategy and plan.

You might find it useful to talk to other people who know the individual to check your perceptions or to fill in the gaps.

Understanding the world from the point of view of the person you are trying to influence will help you to choose the right approach and style as well anticipate motivators and objections.



The Tool

Start by choosing a specific person you would like to influence better.

If you have completed the previous module on Influencing Goals then you can use the specific influencing goals you have already set to define **what** you are trying to achieve and this tool to focus on **who** you want to influence to achieve this goal.

Write whatever information you can about the specific person they are thinking of in the boxes on the context mapping tool.

Feel free to add any other information you think would be useful in influencing this individual such as anything you know about their style or preferences in receiving information.

You are trying to understand, from their perspective, WIIFT (What's In It For Them) to help you achieve your goal.

When they first use this tool, people often find that they don't know the answers to many of these questions. This is a key learning point; often we don't know enough about someone to influence them successfully. If you genuinely don't know, then spend some time thinking about how you can find out.

If you need to find out more, then one approach is to go and ask them. Explain what you are trying to achieve them and ask how this looks from their perspective, what they would like to get out of the project or activity, what their concerns might be etc.

You can also talk to people who know or influence this individual to get some ideas on their style and preferences.



The Tool *continued*

Influencing context map

What are their objectives?

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What are their priorities and problems right now?

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How do you fit into their world?

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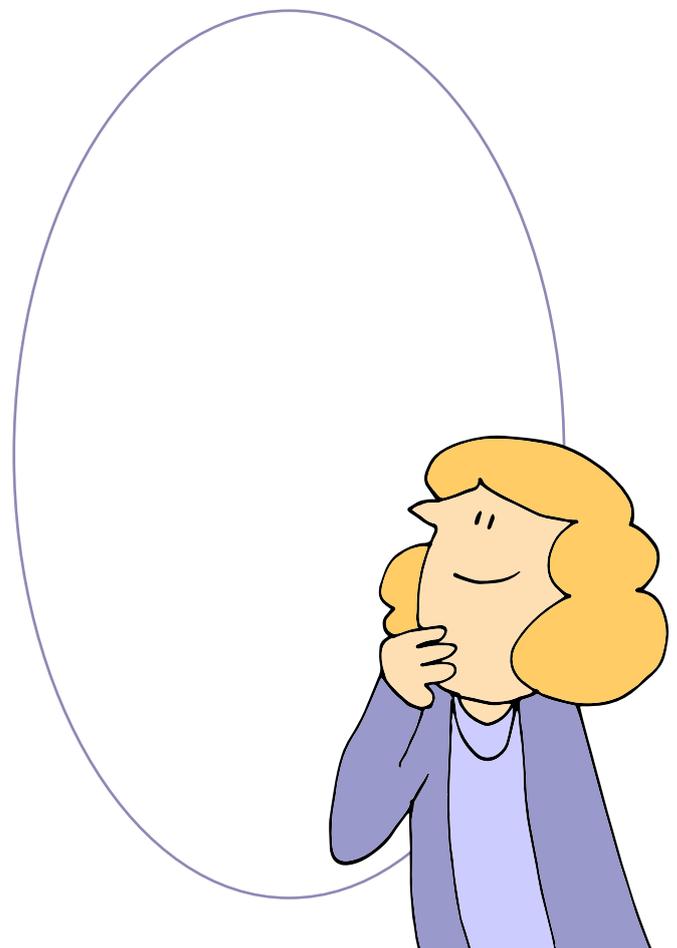
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What is their style and personality?

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Conclusion

One of the biggest challenges in influencing people at work is to know them well enough to work out what they value and need.

If you have identified significant gaps in your understanding of the person you are trying to influence, you need a plan for finding out more, either by talking to the individual or people who know them.

Don't take your own perceptions as facts, make sure to validate important pieces of information.

It's only by understanding other people's worlds and what's in it for them that we can really craft a compelling influence strategy.