

Simple Steps to Increase Your Power to Influence

By Bonnie Budzowski

President, inCredible Messages, LP

In today's organizational environment, credibility and influence are more important than ever. That's why we should pay attention by research done by authors Kouzes and Posner over a 25-year period. These authors asked people to give specific examples of what their most admired leaders did to gain their trust and respect. They asked what leaders did that caused others to be willing to follow their lead, to be influenced by them. Here are some of the most frequently mentioned behaviors:

- Supported me
- Had the courage to do the right thing
- Challenged me
- Acted as a mentor to others
- Listened
- Celebrated good work
- Followed through on commitments
- Trusted me
- Empowered others
- Made time for people
- Admitted mistakes
- Advised others
- Taught well

Chances are you aren't surprised by the answers—you already knew them. Even so, it's worth reflecting on the fact that these behaviors are all about service and integrity. A significant component of the power to influence comes from supporting others and helping them grow and develop.

A root of influence is the realization that "it's NOT all about me." A second component of influence is connected to principled behavior. People who do the right thing and deliver what they promise are likely to get cooperation when they make a request.

Perhaps now is a good time to make an assessment. Think about your allocation of time in any given week. How much time to you devote to the behaviors on this list versus the time you spend on technical aspects of your job? Is it time for an adjustment?

© 2007 by Bonnie Budzowski, InCredible Messages, LP.



Permission is granted to reprint this article when the following contact information is included: © 2006 by Bonnie Budzowski, President of InCredible Messages, LP. For more free articles, go to www.IncredibleMessages.com or contact Bonnie at info@IncredibleMessages.com.