CONCEPT

Influencing Without Authority: Cross-Functional Influence Skills



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Technical depth: Practitioner · **Practical mode:** Role-play

Introduction

Much of the work that matters in modern organisations crosses reporting lines. Projects rely on specialists in other departments, shared targets depend on peers, and good ideas need sponsorship from leaders who owe the proposer nothing. When managers lean on formal authority they do not have, requests stall and escalations damage relationships. This Core Concept course gives managers proven influence models and behavioural tools to win cooperation across the organisation. Through role-plays with observer feedback, participants build an Influence Action Plan for a cross-functional objective in their own organisation.

Course Objectives

- Diagnose the sources of power and informal influence available in a matrix or cross-functional setting
- Apply the Cohen-Bradford Influence Model to identify allies and the currencies each one values
- Select influence tactics from Yukl's research that fit the person, the request and the relationship
- Build credibility and trust with peers and senior leaders using the Trust Equation and adapted communication styles
- Reduce resistance by recognising SCARF threat triggers and handle politics and escalation without damaging relationships
- Produce an Influence Action Plan for a cross-functional objective in the participant's own organisation

Target Audience

- Programme and project managers who depend on people outside their reporting line to deliver
- Functional and technical leads who need support from peer departments to implement change
- Managers in matrix organisations accountable for results shared across units
- Internal consultants and business partners advising leaders they do not manage
- Newly appointed managers leading initiatives across established teams

Course Outline

Day 1: Influence in Matrix and Cross-Functional Organisations

- Positional Versus Personal Power Using French and Raven's Bases of Power
- Matrix and Cross-Functional Structures: Where Authority Gaps Arise
- Influence Style Self-Assessment Using Yukl's Influence Behavior Questionnaire
- Organisational Network Analysis for Mapping Informal Influence
- Current-State Review of a Stalled Cross-Functional Request

Day 2: Influence Models and Behavioural Science

- Cohen-Bradford Influence Model: Allies, Currencies and Exchange
- Yukl's Proactive Influence Tactics: From Rational Persuasion to Coalition Tactics
- SCARF Model: Status, Certainty, Autonomy, Relatedness and Fairness
- Trust Equation: Credibility, Reliability, Intimacy and Self-Orientation
- Social Styles Model: Driver, Analytical, Amiable and Expressive

Day 3: Building Credibility and Making the Ask

- Currency Analysis: Inspiration, Task, Position, Relationship and Personal
- Ally and Blocker Map for a Cross-Functional Objective
- Request Framing Around the Other Party's Priorities with a WIIFM Canvas
- Ladder of Inference for Surfacing Assumptions in Influence Conversations
- Upward Influence: Pitching Ideas to Senior Leaders with a One-Page Proposal

Day 4: Resistance, Politics and Difficult Influence Situations

- Resistance Diagnosis Using SCARF Threat Triggers
- Organisational Politics Mapping and Ethical Boundary Checklist
- Escalation Criteria and Escalation Conversation Structure
- Trust Repair Plan for Damaged Working Relationships
- Remote and Cross-Cultural Influence Using the Culture Map Persuading Scale

Day 5: Influence Role-Plays and the Influence Action Plan

- Peer Department Resource Request Role-Play
- Senior Stakeholder Pitch Role-Play with Challenging Questions
- Resistant Subject-Matter Expert Role-Play Using Currency Exchange
- Influence Action Plan Drafting for an Own Cross-Functional Objective
- Observer Feedback Round Using an Influence Behaviour Checklist

Skills You Will Gain

- Power Base Diagnosis
- Ally Mapping
- Currency Exchange
- Trust Building
- Upward Influence
- Style Flexing
- Political Awareness
- Constructive Escalation

Why Attend This Course

- Leave with an Influence Action Plan for a live cross-functional objective, tested in role-play
- Gain commitment from peers and senior leaders without relying on escalation
- Understand why a colleague is resisting and what they would value in return for support
- Practise with managers from other sectors who lead through matrix structures and partnerships

Conclusion

Influence without authority rests on understanding what others value, building trust before it is needed and choosing the right tactic for each person and request. This course moves from the sources of power in matrix organisations, through the principal influence models, to the resistance, politics and escalation that test cross-functional work. The final day applies those methods in role-play, and the Influence Action Plan each participant completes gives them a clear route to the cooperation their next objective depends on.