

# How to Grow Your Influence through Insights

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"Hi, Preston. Guess what? I got the job!" Linda said with a glow in her voice.

"That's awesome, and congratulations." I asked, "what was the deciding factor?"

"Influence. It was my demonstrated ability to influence and drive results," Linda replied.

She continued, "I told them about the blueprint you taught me: 1) Know your business, 2) Know your partner's business, and 3) Have an assertive agenda. I walked them through specific examples of how I applied the blueprint and the positive results the team achieved."

I was thrilled. "Fantastic Linda! I knew you'd begin to realize your potential if you learned how to influence others."

Linda replied, "I can't thank you enough. I appreciate your help in developing my analytical skills and ability to lead well. I'll never forget it."

"My pleasure," I said. "You've got what it takes. Best wishes in your new role."

When I hired Linda, I saw tons of potential. She had great people and communication skills, but she lacked an essential ingredient... Analytical skills. To grow her influence and differentiate herself in the industry, Linda needed to learn how to evaluate market data, develop impactful insights, identify value-creating opportunities, and solve problems.

Why are analytical skills so essential and a critical part of influencing? W. Edwards Deming, the father of Total Quality Management, once said, "Without data, you're just another person with an opinion." I agree. Over the years, I've observed many sales associates or company representatives rely heavily on relationships to influence others without the use of facts. Relationships only go so far. Don't get me wrong. I believe the ability to connect with people and develop lasting relationships is paramount.

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*W. Edwards Deming*

But, I also believe that you can move beyond relationships and develop strategic partnerships by leveraging analytical skills. You'll have a more significant influence on others if you demonstrate how to make more money, solve problems, or become more productive. One must develop analytical capabilities and turn insights into action. You'll become a valued business partner if you couple relationships and analytical skills. Without this differentiating combination, you'll just be another salesperson, consultant, or company representative without a seat at the table.

Linda and I invested time walking through internal and external reports to develop her analytical capabilities. I taught her the metrics and measurements critical in evaluating business performance and identifying opportunities. Then, I showed her how to translate the information into valuable insights and turn the insights into action. Lastly, Linda was assigned projects where she was required to review data, draw conclusions and develop solutions.

As her confidence grew and skill developed, she began sharing her insights and potential revenue-generating solutions with her business partners. Over time, her insights, ideas, and solutions were adopted, and the team started delivering

results. Linda's credibility and influence grew as she moved from a business relationship to a strategic partnership.

What was Linda's blueprint for success?

1. **Know your business.** Understand your organization's strategies, plan, priorities, and business performance.
2. **Know your partner's business.** Understand your business partner's strategies, plan priorities, and business performance.
3. **Have an assertive agenda.** Identify gaps in your collective business plan, develop solutions, and create action plans.

Linda's influence grew over time. She made a difference and helped her business partner deliver positive results. You can do the same by coupling relationships and analytical skills. In the context of your ability to connect with people, you'll be able to help businesses make more money, solve problems or become more productive. You'll become a strong influence and always have a seat at your business partner's table.

Want to discover more about developing strategic partnerships and becoming a leader others will gladly follow? Visit my website, [prestonpoore.com](http://prestonpoore.com), today!

Cheers,

Preston