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The 360-Degree Influencer

Rob Campbell

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November 19, 2025

“The 360-Degree Influencer”

Ways to influence peers, subordinates, and superiors.



“Leadership is the art of getting someone else to do something you want done because he (or she) wants to do it.” Dwight D. Eisenhower

As adults we are constantly trying to influence those around us to do something, believe something, say something, or act a certain way. You influence your spouse on what or what not to spend your shared income on. You influence an auto mechanic to repair your car on the spot instead of making an appointment. At work you influence your boss to make the decision you believe he or she should make or you influence a subordinate to complete a task as you would want it done. You influence peers to see your point of view or to assist you with a problem you are trying to solve.

“Leadership is influence. Nothing more, nothing less,” states leadership author and speaker, John Maxwell. So true. So, who are the leaders? When I’m speaking to or coaching a group of people I state, “raise your hand if you are a leader.” Not all hands go up. I challenge those who didn’t raise their hands. We are all leaders – influencers in some form. All of us, including me, need to be better at it. Merriam Webster offers a great definition as you ponder ways to influence, “the act or power of producing an effect without apparent exertion of force or direct exercise of command.” With this clarity, here are my tips on how to be a 360-Degree Influencer.

You can ‘AI’ plenty of knowledge on this topic. One article I found by The Center For Creative Leadership has some good tips. Here is the [link](#). The piece begins by stating “leaders who inspire, persuade, and encourage can create a common goal and achieve results.” Inspire, persuade, and encourage is an effective influence recipe. You do those things by thinking about them deliberately, leveraging existing motivations, organizational vision and mission statements and by crafting your words and your approach carefully.

Before you influence establish a solid foundation. The ingredients to this foundation are self-awareness, a relationship built on trust, and selflessness. Know thyself before you influence others. For example, if you are a non-conformist trying to influence a conformist, you’ll struggle. Lacking self-awareness, you might approach influence like this; “Jack (a conformist) we need to turn this process on its head and develop something completely new.” That exercise of influence sounds and feels great to you, however Jack, the rule-follower, will resist. Guided by your self-awareness you could soften the approach. “Jack, in an effort to achieve compliance, is there a way to improve this process to achieve greater conformity and efficiency?” Now you are singing Jack’s tune and are able to influence him better. For more on trust read one of my previous [blogs](#) on this topic. Here is [one](#) on selflessness.

Superior.

Lead up or lead your boss. This concept is hard for many leaders to grasp - the central challenge being you have no authority. When trying to influence up, use your boss’s language back at them. This is not a devious enterprise – quite selfless if done right. You are trying to do right by him or her and the team. That’s noble. If the boss is one who watches every penny, try this influence approach: “Boss I have a suggestion which will save us money in the long run and I’d like a few moments of your time to share it with you.” Work to understand your boss, what is important to him or her. “Boss, I want to put your mind at ease on this and take this off your plate. Let me” Know your boss on a deeper level. In your initial meeting with him or her ask questions as to what motivates or demotivates them, what angers them, and how do they prefer

to communicate (written, interpersonal, etc.). Know when to influence. If you were influencing me for example. Friday afternoon is the least perfect time to do so.

Peer.

Demonstrate you are a team player. Know what is happening around you – what others are working on and how you might assist. Know your teammates on a deeper level through social interaction and curiosity. Step outside your job description and chip in. Be authentic. Don't put on a show just because you want their help in the future. Ask for the expertise of others – make them feel valued. Indeed, you'll need to demonstrate that you can perform in your role and as a team player. Once you do that, you'll be able to influence them better. Use the same approach you would with your boss. Show respect and demonstrate that you are sincere.

Subordinate.

Know them and love them. Understand what is happening in their world inside and outside of work. Practice people-centric leadership (read my [books and blogs](#)). Give your people well-crafted [intent](#) and autonomy to do their jobs. Teach, coach, and mentor them. When it comes to influencing, ask – don't tell them what you would like done. Again, use the same respectful approach you would with your superior. Give subordinates the *why* behind everything. Seek their input and feedback. Have hard conversations for sure but demonstrate that their wellbeing is of great importance to you. Make sure they know you have their back. Do this; "Mark, you have specific talent and expertise in this area. Can I ask for your help with this phase of the project?" Not this. "Mark, I need you to take on this phase of the project for me."

Think more formally about influence. You don't get good at it organically. You have to think about it and work on it as a leader no matter what direction you are pointed in – peer, subordinate, or superior. Lastly, remember, your influence is often just the way you carry yourself, how you show up, how you act and speak, because *you* are a leader!

Make it Personal!

About the Author:

Rob Campbell is a U.S. Army Colonel turned leadership and veteran author, coach, and keynote speaker. Rob shares his leadership lessons from the battlefield with organizations of all kinds. A staunch veteran and military spouse advocate, Rob founded Salutes and Handshakes, an Eastern Tennessee regional effort to attract and retain talent – military and non-military. Rob is a decorated veteran of our wars in Iraq and Afghanistan and served in relieve efforts during Hurricane Katrina in New Orleans, Louisiana in 2005. Rob is the owner and president of All About Blinds Window Fashions in Johnson City, Tennessee. Rob led organizations ranging in size from 24 to 5,000 people in an Army career spanning 27 years including three combat tours. Rob Published two books since his retirement from the Army in 2016 – one on leadership and the other on veteran transition. Today Rob shares his leadership lessons from the battlefield with organizations of all kinds. He is a staunch veteran and military spouse advocate. Rob is decorated with three Bronze Star Medals for his service in Iraq and Afghanistan.

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