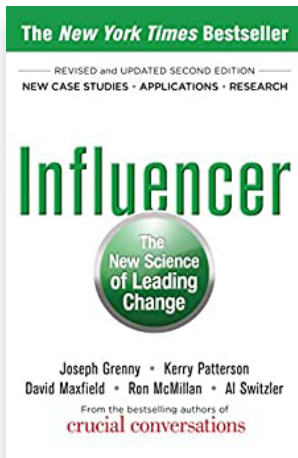


# EXECUTIVE BOOK SUMMARIES

[convenenow.com/executive-summaries](http://convenenow.com/executive-summaries)



## ABOUT THE AUTHORS

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*Joseph Grenny, Kerry Patterson, David Maxfield, Ron McMillan, and Al Switzler are the leaders of VitalSmarts, and innovator in best practices training and services.*

## Influencer THE NUTSHELL

McGraw Hill Education 2013

### Leadership is Influence

Influencers exist, and what they know and do is learnable. In fact, hundreds of thousands of people have read what we learned from them, applied the principles and skills to their own challenges, put the ideas to work on their own aspirations and made remarkable progress. So can you.

### Three Keys to Influence

Influencers don't randomly succeed at creating impressive and lasting changes in human behavior. They count on three keys to success—keys that all influencers adhere to and that you can use to your own benefit.

- 1. Focus and measure.** Influencers are crystal clear about the result they are trying to achieve and are zealous about measuring it. Start every change project with a clear and compelling statement of the goal you're trying to achieve. Measure your progress. Don't leave it to intuition or hunches. Measure your measures by the behavior they influence. Finally, measure the right thing, and measure it frequently.
- 2. Find vital behaviors.** Influencers focus on high-leverage behaviors that drive results. More specifically, they focus on the two or three vital actions that produce the greatest amount of change.

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**3. Engage all six sources of influence.** Finally, influencers break from the pack by over determining change. Where most of us apply a favorite influence tool or two to our important challenges, influencers identify all six of the varied forces that are shaping the behavior they want to change and then get them working for rather than against them.

Master influencers know that it takes only a few behaviors to create big changes in the results they care about. To do so, they look vigilantly for one or two actions that create a cascade of change. They look for obvious but often underutilized actions. They then seek confirmation of what seems obvious to them by examining the advice of experts. When tailoring their own change program and trying to see what will work for them (given their unique circumstance), they look not at the 98 percent of the time they're successful but the 2 percent of the time when they fail. They then use these crucial moments to inform the actions that need to follow. Often successful influencers surface these high-leverage actions by studying individuals within their organization or circumstances who face similar problems and yet have found a way to succeed. Finally, they watch for behaviors that might be needed to break free of a culture that sustains past problems.

## The Six Sources

### Personal Motivation

We often don't act in our long-term best interest because the short-term actions we currently enjoy are far more motivating than the remote and distant likelihood of suffering in the future. With persistent influence challenges, bad actions are generally real, fun, and now, whereas negative consequences are often fuzzy, maybe not so bad after all, and most certainly a long time off. To turn this around, influencers learn to help others love what they currently hate by allowing them choices, creating direct experiences, telling meaningful stories, and turning the tedious into a game.

### Personal Ability

Overcoming habits or developing complex athletic, intellectual, and interpersonal skills are not merely functions of motivation, personality traits, or even character. They all tie back to ability. Develop greater proficiency at deliberate practice as well as the ability to manage your emotions, and you significantly increase your chances for turning vital behaviors into vital habits.

### Social Motivation

Smart influencers appreciate the amazing power humans hold over one another, and instead of denying it, lamenting it, or attacking it, they embrace and enlist it. They use the power of social influence to support change by ensuring that the right people provide encouragement, coaching, and even accountability during crucial moments. Savvy people know how to tap into this source of influence in hundreds of different ways, and they do so by following one rather simple principle. They

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ensure that people feel praised, emotionally supported, and otherwise encouraged by those around them every time they enact vital behaviors. Similarly, they take steps to ensure that people feel discouraged or even socially sanctioned when they choose unhealthy behaviors.

## **Social Ability**

Since rarely does any one of us have all that's required to succeed with the complex tasks we face every day, we desperately need to build social capital. We need to provide concrete assistance during crucial moments in order to help people change. Influencers know better than to turn their backs on social capital. They're quick to consider what help, authority, consent, or cooperation individuals may need when facing risky or daunting new behaviors. Then they develop an influence strategy that offers the social capital required to help make change inevitable.

## **Structural Motivation**

When you do choose to tweak the economy, make sure the extrinsic motivators are immediately linked to vital behaviors. Take care to link rewards to the specific actions you want to see repeated. When choosing rewards, don't be afraid to draw on small heartfelt tokens of appreciation. Remember, when it comes to extrinsic rewards, less is often more. Do your best to reward behaviors and not merely outcomes. Sometimes outcomes hide inappropriate behaviors. Finally, if you end up having to administer punishment, first take a shot across the bow. Let people know what's coming before you impose the punishment.

## **Structural Ability**

Much of what we do, for better or for worse, is influenced by dozens of silent environmental forces that drive our decisions and actions in ways that we rarely notice. So, to make the best use of your last source of influence, take your laser like attention off people and take a closer look at their physical world. Step up to your persistent problem, identify vital behaviors, and then search for subtle features from the environment that are silently driving you and others to misbehave.

## **Become an Influencer**

It's time to get started. Identify what you really want and how you're going to measure it. Discover the handful of high-leverage behaviors that will help you reach this objective. Then identify and get working in your favor not just one or two but all six sources of influence. As you apply each source carefully study the results, learn what is working and what isn't, and then make changes. As you learn how to keep the right focus, adopt the right actions, and master the six sources, you too will become an influencer.