

articles

This article explains the importance of influence in fundraising and introduces =mc's systematic approach.



The Influential Fundraiser

Influence... it's what *donors* want

The world of fundraising is changing. More and more supporters are being turned off by clichéd direct mail packages, their in-boxes are filled to bursting with bland e-newsletters, and they can't bear to listen to another dull speech over a bad chicken meal at a crowded fundraising gala.

Instead supporters want authentic, one to one, personal contact that inspires and motivates them to support a cause. They want messages targeted to them that match the way they think and feel. They want emotionally intelligent fundraisers who understand the way they make decisions.

In our book *The Influential Fundraiser* (Wiley 2008) we explain how you can give donors what they want. It details lessons gleaned from our 15 years of practical fundraising experience plus leading edge research in psychology and neurology. We now accompany that book with seminar that's been run in almost 20 countries from Australia to Argentina and from China to Canada. Together the book and the seminar can provide you with the skills to inspire and motivate – to influence.

To find out more contact Clare Segal at c.segal@managementcentre.co.uk

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The book and seminar isn't just about work with donors. It's also for you if you have to win over colleagues, board members, or uncertain supporters to your mission. Above all it's for you if you are being asked to achieve challenging results and so need access to higher-level skills to communicate and share your important cause.

This download is designed to offer you an overview of the model we've developed.

A systematic approach to influence

We've tested all the ideas and tools through our work coaching fundraisers worldwide. This work, plus our wider researches, has enabled us to develop a *systematic approach* to influence that's suitable for fundraisers.

Although the model is systematic it's not a simplistic or mechanistic. Instead it's built around a flexible and powerful approach that takes you through five stages in influence. These involve what we call the **5Ps** – Passion, Proposal, Preparation, Persuasion and Persistence.

You'll notice that we represent the model as a set of cogs. The cogs metaphor illustrates the point that:

- the elements are all interrelated and inter-dependent on each other – none is effective by itself – *influence* is a process.
- a small movement in one cog can result in a significant movement or impact elsewhere – influence involves *flexibility*.



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Below we take you through this interlocking model outlining the purpose of each stage and the skills and abilities you'll need to develop. We also offer guidance on where in the book you can find the answers to specific challenges for example, how to decide exactly what you want from a situation, how to build rapport with 'difficult' people, how to handle 'no' and how to create an impact with a group of 5,000. You can use this section as a reference source if you're not sure where to look for an insight into a particular issue.

Exploring the 5Ps of influence

Our work on influence suggests there are distinct stages to go through on the way to successful influence. We've clustered these under the 5Ps.

Passion

Proposal

Preparation

Persuasion

Persistence



1. Passion

Success in influence begins with your **Passion** for the cause. One element of this is *emotional engagement*. If the cause doesn't excite and enthuse you why should it work for anyone else? An *anchor* is a great tool to help you recall and use a suitable emotional state. You can find out more about that here: [Anchors: gaining resourceful states](#)

And you also need *emotional intelligence* to focus and organise your engagement. [See Emotional Intelligence in Fundraising - part 2.](#)

Your own passion is, however, only half the battle. You need to also enlist *donor passion*. This involves understanding their *motivations* and addressing their *concerns* – technically called hygiene factors.

Finally think about your personal brand. How do you need to come across in this situation with this donor or audience- calm, passionate, thoughtful, senior? What behaviour would convey that brand?

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2. Proposal

A **Proposal** is a way of defining both the problem you'd like the donor to help with and your preferred solution.



Your **Proposal** should be one that people can *engage* with and respond to. A starting in fundraising is often a written document – a case statement or case for support. You can consider four key ways to present your case. These relate to different psychological preferences we all have.

	Present	Future
Positive	opportunity	vision
Negative	crisis	risk

3. Preparation

Influence is a messy process. Even so, that's no excuse for woolly thinking. **Preparation** allows you to plan ahead for different eventualities and possibilities. That way you minimise the need to think on your feet in possibly mission-critical situations.

Preparation involves lots of hard work. To prepare well you need:

- To establish a well-formed outcome. If you want to clarify *exactly* what you want to achieve in an influence setting
- To decide what might be an acceptable range of possible outcomes try working out your LIM-it. (**L**ike to get, **I**ntend to get, **M**ust get.)
- To eliminate potential negative thoughts or concerns that might get in the way of successful fundraising influence.



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4. Persuasion

Persuasion is about understanding the psychological preferences and filters that will encourage your donor to say “Yes.” (Or reinforce their possible “No.”) The key is to respond flexibly and creatively to donors’ needs and interests. The three chapters that might help here are concerned with:

- *Rapport*: we are often very different from the people we are trying to influence. By understanding the main communication channels and especially the importance of body language and voice we improve our ability to influence. For more info read this article on [Building Rapport](#).
- *Language*: there are distinct ways people use language to frame and express ideas. By understanding our own language preferences and those of donors, we can become more effective influencers. Notice especially a preference for language that’s visual, kinaesthetic or auditory.
- *Perception*: everyone perceives the world from a different point of view – in fact from three different points of view. Reframing your proposal to match the donors’ point of view can make a massive impact to the effectiveness of your ask. Try switching positions: [Influence Positioning for Success](#)

5. Persistence

To be a successful influencer you need to know when to keep going with a course of action – and when to change and adapt. **Persistence** involves developing the ability to demonstrate this intelligent flexibility.

You’ll soon notice that people say “No” in one of nine different ways. Here’s a list and how to deal with them: [Nine Fundraising Nos](#)



You might also need help when you feel low energy and disheartened. Try contacting your **mental mentors**. Who would you have as your mentor if you could have anyone? And what advice would they give you?

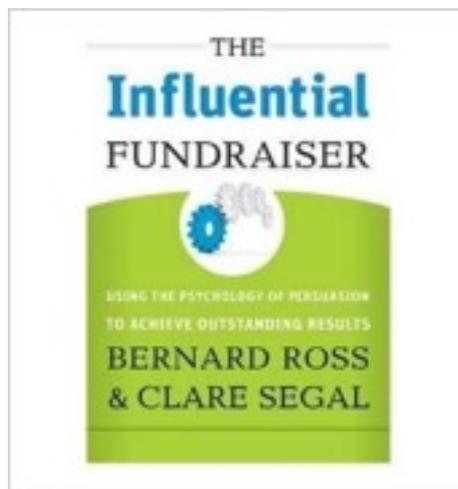
Finally review every transaction with a simple framework:

- What went well?
- What went less well?
- How could I improve?

More help?

For more on influence visit The Management Centre site at www.managementcentre.co.uk. Or email Clare Segal, Director at c.segal@managementcentre.co.uk.

You can also [buy the Influential Fundraiser book on Amazon](#).



We also run the following training programmes at =mc that may be of interest:

[Influencing & Negotiating for Results](#)

[The Influential Fundraiser](#)