Influence Tactics: The Specific Strategies

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Overview

- Influence tactics are the specific ways people attempt to exercise influence
- Hundreds have been identified
- Classified into 11 types of tactics
- Considerable research has examined which are most successful and under what conditions are they successful
The Eleven Tactics

- Rational Persuasion
- Apprising
- Inspirational Appeals
- Consultation
- Exchange
- Collaboration
- Personal Appeals
- Ingratiation

Legitimizing Tactics
- Pressure
- Coalition Tactics
A Look in Depth

- Can be further divided into soft and hard tactics
- All are appropriate in some situations
- Generally soft tactics are more effective than hard tactics
- Managers often start with soft tactics and then move to hard tactics if they encounter resistance
Continuing In-depth

- Hard tactics often result in compliance rather than commitment
- Soft tactics are more likely to result in commitment
- Too much dependence on any one tactic may lose its effectiveness
- Keep in mind what kind of attitudes and behaviors you desire when using tactics
Rational Persuasion

- Use of logical arguments and factual evidence
- Common in proposals for resources and program planning
- A “T” (thinking) strategy in the MBTI
- Just the facts kind of orientation – reasonable and logical because…..
Apprising

- Explain why the proposal or action will benefit the targeted person.
- Often involves some aspect of enhancing the person’s career – new skills, connections or perspectives.
- Benefits are a by-product of the action not a direct exchange.
- Have to understand the person’s needs to be successful.
Inspirational Appeals

- Involves appeals to values or ideals
- Appeals attempt to raise strong emotional responses
- Taps into the desire to be a part of something important or to be the best
- Examples of appeals to ideals are loyalty, justice, patriotism, excellence, and humanitarianism
Consultation

- An invitation to be involved in the planning or discussion of options
- Often used to gain support for a decision already made by the leader
- Common format is something is presented and then a negotiation occurs to reach an agreement
- Can take a variety of forms
Exchange

- An offer of providing something in exchange for the target doing something
- A transactional (quid pro quo – this for that) kind of interaction
- Benefits may be tangible or intangible
- Offer may be explicit or implicit
- Have to have control over the reward
Collaboration

- Offer to provide the resources or support if the target will carry out the request
- Similar to exchange in both expect doing something if something else is provided
- More often a joint venture in which the parties are working together on the effort
- Exchange is more often just a trade of unrelated benefits
Personal Appeals

- Asking for a favor based upon friendship or loyalty
- Stronger the relationship the more effective is this tactic
- Most frequent when the appeal is beyond the work expectations
- Would expect this would be effective with “Fs” in the MBTI (if they like you)
Ingratiation

- Tactic that makes the target feel better about the agent
- Must be perceived as sincere to be effective
- Examples include compliments, doing unexpected favors and acting deferential
- Less effective if used for an immediate request
Legitimating Tactics

- Using authority to indicate the legitimacy of a request
  - Effective if in the realm of a normal request
  - Less effective if in new area or person thinks it exceeds your authority or doesn’t know your authority
- Examples include a prior precedent, approved by someone with authority, and consistent with the organization’s rules and expectations
Pressure

- Tactic includes threats, warnings and other assertive behaviors
- One of the hardest tactics
- Unlikely to gain commitment and has serious side effects (undermining the relationship, builds resentment, and behind the scenes sabotage)
- Can be appropriate in ethical and safety situations
Coalition Tactics

- Involves getting help from others to influence the target
- Strategy suggests that since these people are for something then you will want to be too
- Coalition may include peers, subordinates, superiors and people outside
- Often used in concert with other tactics
Other Less Researched Tactics

- Modeling proper behavior and attitudes
- Coaching
- Setting performance expectations
- Other???
Summing Up

- Use a range of influence tactics
- Sincerity is crucial
- Some overlap
- Often more than one tactic is used
- Soft tactics are preferred but at times hard tactics are necessary
- Need to know the target’s needs to be effective
Some Questions to Consider

- Which tactics do you use?
- Why do you use the ones you do?
- If you were going to approach your boss, what tactic/s would you use?
- Do you see any cultural influences in the tactics you would use?
- What concerns would you have using tactics you have not used?
References