COURSE SYLLABUS

The Power of Influence over Authority Course

Learn to lead with influence rather than title by building trust, credibility, and relationships that drive cooperation and results.

Group classes (Live Online) and onsite training are available for this course. For more information, email onsite@graduateschool.edu or visit: https://sdfm.graduateschool.edu/courses/the-power-of-influence-over-authority



CustomerRelations@graduateschool.edu • (888) 744-4723

Course Outline

Module 1: Defining Power, Authority, and Influence

- Define power, authority, and influence and explain their relationship to leadership and results.
- Compare Kipnis & Schmidt's six influence styles (friendliness, bargaining, reason, assertiveness, higher authority, coalition building) and when each is effective.
- Identify four sources of influence—expertise, personal attraction, effort, and legitimacy—and how to develop them.
- Differentiate short-term compliance from long-term commitment and why influence outperforms authority alone.

Module 2: Communication Skills Essential to Influencing Others

- Strengthen listening, speaking, writing, and critical thinking as core tools of influence.
- Practice active listening techniques and audience-centered speaking that build commitment.
- Apply writing guidelines (professional tone, plain language, “bottom line up front”) to persuade busy readers.
- Use critical thinking to analyze issues, present both sides, and translate ideas into clear actions.

Module 3: Influencing Through Responses to Others

- Distinguish non-assertive, aggressive, and assertive responses and their impact on commitment.
- Use assertiveness skills—eye contact, posture, facial expression, voice, and timing/location—to convey respect and clarity.
- Build habits that increase influence (self-monitoring logs, positive imagery, feedback from role models).
- Apply assertive responses to workplace scenarios to keep proposals moving forward.

Module 4: Influencing Through Positive Criticism and Feedback

- Deliver “mission-first” criticism that is thoughtful, tactful, and solution-oriented.
- Follow proven tips: focus on standards and issues (not people), avoid exaggeration/sarcasm, seek feedback, and secure buy-in.
- Respond constructively to criticism by mirroring, acknowledging, clarifying, and linking to points of agreement.
- Provide timely, specific, behavioral feedback using the SBI model (Situation–Behavior–Impact) plus clear requests and consequences.

Module 5: Case Study

- Analyze a realistic agency scenario and select appropriate influence strategies to build support across divisions.
- Design and present a plan that applies styles/sources of influence, communication, and assertive responses.
- Translate lessons into career-development actions that expand your influence without formal authority.
- Reflect on outcomes and “what’s next” to sustain momentum after the course.