

# GovCon Ideators: Influencing Without Authority

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# Influencing without authority definitions:

Driving change, shaping decisions, or persuading others without direct control or hierarchical power. (Chat GPT)

The ability to sway people's opinions, actions, or decisions without having formal power or control over them (Google AI Overview)

Even if you have authority,  
these skills will help you be  
a better leader and drive  
better business results.

“Winning in the Public Sector is a team sport – marketing, sales, BD, SDRs, executives, channel partners, and more. This requires cross-team collaboration – leading without authority (even when you have it) is key to success.”

-Lisa M. Sherwin Wulf

# Sources of Authority in the Workplace



## Relationships

Having strong relationships with colleagues helps build trust, which can inspire them to follow your direction.



## Organizational Understanding

Possessing knowledge of your firm's internal processes, stakeholders, and strategic initiatives can prompt others to follow your lead to accomplish goals.



## Expertise

Developing expertise in your specific discipline, industry, or both can result in your team turning to you for guidance.



Harvard  
Business  
School  
Online

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# Resources

- **Influencing without Authority: A Four-Part Formula:**  
<https://executiveeducation.wharton.upenn.edu/thought-leadership/wharton-at-work/2021/05/influencing-without-authority/>
- **How to Influence Without Authority in the Workplace:**  
<https://online.hbs.edu/blog/post/influence-without-authority>
- **How to Influence Without Authority:**  
<https://www.thnk.org/blog/influence-without-authority/>
- **How To Build Influence Without Authority At Work:**  
<https://www.forbes.com/sites/carolinecastrillon/2023/09/24/how-to-build-influence-without-authority-at-work/>
- **Building influence without authority: Be the change you want to see:**  
<https://www.betterup.com/blog/building-influence-without-authority>



# Tips to building influence without authority

- **Build relationships – internal to your organization and across your industry**
- **Understand how your organization (or the organization you are working with) works. Especially if you are trying to drive change. You need to understand the current state before you try to change it.**
- **Be an expert – credibility can lead to authority**
- **Ask questions - and encourage people to ask them and answer them**
- **Leverage emotional intelligence and listen to your gut**
- **Assume positive intent when issues arise**



# Tips to building influence without authority

- **Share the why – educate as you go**
- **Don't rely only on in-person interactions. You want a nationwide, and in some cases global team.**
- **Understand people's workstyles – and adapt to them**
- **Thank people for their work**
- **Give credit where credit is due**





# Group Discussion

How have you  
influenced without  
authority? For what  
type of project?

What are some common barriers you face when trying to influence decisions in your organization?

What strategies have been most effective for you in aligning cross-functional teams?

Can anyone share an example of a time they influenced a challenging stakeholder or team?

What advice would you offer to someone in government marketing who needs to influence without authority?