9. Influencing and Negotiating

9.1 Introduction

Influencing and negotiating are important skills in managing development activity. This chapter discusses how you can use these skills in working with others to achieve DFID’s objectives. This chapter is based on, and provides key concepts from, the Management Development Programme, implemented by Sheppard Moscow for all Band A/B managers in DFID.

9.2 Untying the nots

Influencing and negotiating are not about imposition. DFID’s aim is not to devalue other people’s value-systems, but to establish how those values can be successfully incorporated into the design and management of development activities and interventions.

Influencing is not about motivating or obliging others to do what you want them to do. In particular, it is not about turning a potential or actual partnership into a relationship of subservience by virtue of the resources which one partner happens to bring into play. In development, assistance is transferred, not sold.

Nor is negotiating about creating sides, in which one participant waits for another to give way. There may be circumstances in which it is necessary to make clear how much value can be added to a development process by extending, or possibly limiting, the range of an activity’s scope. However, the principal driver for donor engagement in influencing and negotiating is the developmental progress that can result. And the recognition that progress may be made greater or constrained by virtue of what arises from the partnerships entered into.

9.3 Relationship behaviours

The core behaviour skills that we use in managing relationships and the climate of meetings is called relationship behaviours. They are used in formal and informal meetings, workshops, and negotiations at every stage of work. Used carefully, these key behaviours enable effective influencing and management of relationships in meetings. Inappropriate use of these relationship behaviours (e.g., under-use or over-use) is likely to reduce the effectiveness of meetings.

9.4 Behavioural skills models

There are many approaches to understanding human behaviour, and many seek to organise behaviour into types. In this chapter, different approaches to categorisation are discussed: they may be complementary or competitive, and you may find them useful in some situations more than others. The trick is to find what works for you in any given circumstance.
9.5 Behaviour skill sets: PUSH and PULL

In this model, there are two categories of positive or empowering behaviours - Assertive or PUSH and Responsive or PULL. Each of these categories has two associated types of behaviour, as is shown in Boxes 1 and 2.

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**Box 1: Categories of behaviour**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Behaviours</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assertive (PUSH)</td>
<td>Rational Persuasion</td>
<td>Expressing your views and opinions backed up with reasons with enough conviction to be taken seriously, with the objective of moving things forward.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stating Expectations</td>
<td>Making it clear what you want/need/expect from another individual and, where appropriate, making explicit the consequences of meeting or not meeting your expectation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Responsive (PULL)</td>
<td>Listening</td>
<td>Listening to others in order to understand their ideas, opinions and feelings, and to demonstrate actively that you have done so.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Openness</td>
<td>Openness is the disclosure of relevant facts, thoughts and feelings that you believe will be useful to the other person.</td>
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**Box 2: Behavioural skills model**

9.6 Verbal and non-verbal communication

Effective influence involves the consistent use of verbal and non-verbal forms of communication. Or, to put it another way, the consistent use of words, the voice and body language. To influence effectively, you do not just need a good message: you need to know how to influence others to your point of view by effective use of your voice and body language.

A key secret of effective influence is to pitch your voice and body language at levels that match the needs of the
situation and reflect your needs and those of the other people being influenced.

In PUSH situations you aim to take charge of the space and time around you. High energy verbal and non-verbal communication will ensure high influence provided they are not overdone.

In PULL situations the aim is to play down your energy and match it to the needs of the other person. Here you let the other person take charge of the space and time, while you respond to their energy. Both Assertive and Responsive behaviours can be used to influence others.

Box 3 offers advice with regard to the use of verbal communication.

9.7 Persuading and influencing

The myth of persuasion is that great persuaders are born that way, that they are smooth talkers. In fact, what is of greater importance is the fact that they are great listeners. Listening is vital in order to persuade:

- People feel good and are more likely to listen to you if they feel you have really listened to them. Being heard is a special experience that we all like and want more of. Most of us are rarely listened to - or believe that to be the case.
- Listening is the best way to find out what is important to a particular person. From listening comes the information that tells you whether someone else need or could want what we have to offer. When you know what a person wants and needs, there are two possibilities; either the skills or resources you have to offer fits those needs or it does not.

If you want to be effective at influencing others you cannot do it with techniques alone. You have to build trust and openness and create relationships. Doing so has to be based on individual regard, an acknowledgement of the worth of an individual irrespective of his/her actual or perceived status (i.e., what others think or what you think of them). Individual regard cuts both ways, however: you cannot expect it, if you do not offer it, but, whether as a team member or team manager, you should offer it equally.

The key to influencing is establishing common values, ones that may not initially be yours, or even theirs. What are those common values? They include, for example:

- The task that needs to be done;
- The way(s) in which it can be achieved;
- The way(s) in which it can be achieved;

Box 3: Using language to convince

To communicate with influence it is vitally important to use language which engages the hearts and minds of your listener. Skilled communicators use language which creates a climate of trust. Analysis show that effective communicators have an ability to adapt their language to match the language of the person to whom they speak. Your speech is an expression of the way you think and the values you hold.

Everyone has specific means by which s/he becomes convinced. Part of what convinces is the channel through which they receive information and which they interpret and associate with it.

We interpret and associate in several ways:

**Visually:**

- I get the picture
- I see what you mean
- I can see it clearly now
- It’s clear to me
- Show me again.

**Auditory:**

- That sounds good
- I hear you
- I’m pleased you said that
- Tell me again
- It rings a bell.

**Feelings:**

- That feels right
- It made an impact on me
- I was really moved
- That’s sad
- I know how you feel.

We all have the ability to interpret and associate in these ways, however most of us use one way more predominantly than another. By listening to others it is easy to detect which method a person chooses most and to match your language to it.

Appeal to people’s senses by using the appropriate style and you have their attention.
The roles that team members need to play in order for the task to be achieved; The establishment of a fitting partnership between different stakeholders.

Persuasion can also be seen as motivating others. In some cases, you may be motivating others to do what they want, what is in their best interests, and what will satisfy their values. In other cases, establishing that common ground may be the first task, through the creation of a shared vision (see Chapter 4).

### 9.8 Influencing and negotiating strategies

#### 1: Identifying styles and adapting yours

We use language in the same way and in different ways: we are precise in the use of some words, and diffuse in the use of many.

People comprehend different meanings from the same sentence, or read subordinate — even subliminal — messages into sentences. They may do so for positive or negative reasons, and one of the reasons for establishing trust among members of a group is precisely to avoid counter-productive over-analysis of meanings from any given group of sentences delivered, decisions taken, or options proposed or explored.

How people listen is crucial to understanding what others read into what you say. Your own behaviour, and the ways in which you interact with others, has a bearing on how easily - or not - you will be able to convey the truth of what you wish to say, and reduce misunderstandings.

Without being over-prescriptive, it is possible to determine four principal ways in which individuals interact within a group. They are not exclusive, but recognising where and how they arise within a group enables you to develop a means of achieving the best results for the individuals and the group. The proposed strategies are designed to apply whether you are a team manager or a subordinate member.

**Style One: Supportive**

Here, people likely to believe in the importance of personal relationships. They tend to approach problem-solving from a collaborative point of view and are supportive to others who are less experienced. They enjoy working with others and will share responsibility and resources readily. Trust is an important issue for the supportive person and they are likely to build long-term relationships.

**How to influence:**
- Stress the worthwhile nature of causes in the long term, emphasising the relationship between your objective and their personal development;
- Ask for their help in tackling a problem;
- Be careful of criticism; they are particularly likely to fear ridicule and failure.

**How to manage someone who has this style:**
- Give them recognition for their ideas, achievement and contribution;
- Provide opportunities for them to work with or alongside others;
- Share information and be open;
- When setting goals and targets, both parties should be involved, and the manager should make opportunities available for the subordinate to achieve these targets.

**How to influence a team manager who has this style:**
- Demonstrate your value and contribution to the organisation;
- Sincerity and honesty will be particularly respected. It will be better to admit mistakes and seek help rather than cover them up;
- Be willing to participate in activities and tasks.

**Style Two: Competitive**

This person tends to rely on power based on authority and position and approaches tasks in a strongly competitive manner. The main aim of the competitive person is to achieve results, challenge others to get on with doing things.

**How to influence:**
- Emphasise the opportunities being offered to the person and the ways in which they can personally raise their profile;
- If it is possible to give authority to this person, they are likely to respond favourably;
- Responds well to direct approaches and will be intolerant of woolly approaches which might be seen as weakness.

**How to manage someone who has this style:**
- Provide challenges, autonomy and individual responsibility;
- Recognise his or her achievement;
Define clearly the demarcation of the role so they do not undermine or encroach on the responsibility of others;

Provide the opportunity to take initiative within given boundaries.

How to influence a team manager who has this style:

Take a direct approach;

Demonstrate your capability and independence, but don’t be afraid to recognise the boss as a resource to draw on for assistance when required;

Stick to your views and meet objections head-on when you know you are right;

Don’t take a submissive stance. They enjoy a challenge and the cut and thrust of a strong argument: you may need to mirror the direct and straight-talking approach.

**Style Three: Restless**

People who enjoy change and thrive on opportunities to be in the spotlight. Tendency to be optimistic, active and sociable. Like to deal with new and different people and situations.

How to influence:

Emphasise the benefits of change: they like new ideas;

Stress the excitement and emotion associated with any proposal.

How to manage someone who has this style:

Be flexible. Accept that this person does not like routine, firm scheduling or close supervision. They will respond best to variety rather than routine tasks;

Offer supportive responses and do not underestimate the impact of humour.

How to influence a team manager who has this style:

Emphasise the eagerness and positive open attitudes to new ventures;

Be wary of going into too much detail when explaining things. This person will tend to have short attention span;

Make an impact quickly and express yourself succinctly and clearly;

Offer to take on some of the more routine responsibilities in order to relieve the manager of them.

**Style Four: Consolidative**

This style tends to be biased towards order, routine and detail. They are comfortable with policy and doing things that are in the best interests of the organisation or authority. This will often mean a suspicion of change and preference for consistency.

How to influence:

Demonstrate a careful and cautious approach.

How to manage someone who has this style:

Provide high levels of detail and planning;

They need time to make considered decisions, and don’t like being rushed or pressurised;

They like to be treated fairly with pragmatic management style.

How to influence a team manager who has this style:

Be careful in making recommendations for change. A useful tactic is to stress how your recommendations are similar to or build on historical methods and systems;

Stress conformity and logic;

Respect organisational norms and standards and be well prepared with relevant facts and information to hand. This person will want to be confident that you have explored all possible options before agreeing to your proposal.

**9.9: Towards / Away from motivational strategies**

Towards / Away from is another form of analysis which may prove useful.

Towards people are motivated by what they want and move towards their goals. At the extreme, they may not recognise problems or consider potential obstacles.

Typical Towards expressions: attain, have, get, achieve, benefits, advantages, enable, accomplish.

Towards people want to attain goals and want to know benefits of doing a particular task.

Away from people are motivated by what they don’t want, they move away from or want to solve problems; the result may be problem avoidance. At the extreme, they tend to concentrate on crisis and can be seen as cynical and negative.

Typical Away from expressions: won’t have to, solve, prevent, avoid, fix, not have to deal with, what went wrong, eliminate.

Away from people look at problems, at what’s gone wrong with proposals. Give them problems to solve and task to fix. They are very good at picking out spelling errors.
Determining whether a person falls into the Towards or Away from category is a matter of entering dialogue. What follows are examples of questions to elicit Toward / Away from strategies and values:

¥ How did you decide to take your present job?
¥ What’s important to you about your job?
¥ What was the basis of your decision to take your job?
¥ Why is that important to you?
¥ Why bother?

9.10 Making your case

At some point you will seek to persuade others of a course of action. The following guidelines may be helpful in focusing on how to achieve the best results from a given situation. As usual, there’s an acronym involved: PROEP.

¥ Proposition: State your proposal in a concise and bold way.
¥ Reason: Give your best one or two reasons for your proposal.
¥ Other view: Give the downside, counter arguments (not too many), and show you have considered the alternatives.
¥ Examples: Prove your case, give your best examples (not too many), give benefits and successes.
¥ Proposition: Restate your proposition and visualise your outcome

Presentations need information, variation in pacing and body language, and vivid verbal and visual images to make it compelling. They also need to appeal to both logic and emotion.
Box 6: Tactics for working with an international organisation

This document, which includes extracts from *Negotiating in the EU* by James Humphreys, explores team-working options with particular relation to the EU.

It is in many areas applicable to any partnership activity within the context of an organisation-to-organisation relationship, as opposed to working with a collection of individuals, but will still have applicability in the latter case.

**Before the negotiations**

Consult relevant staff within DFID and outside if appropriate.

Set objectives which are clear and realistic. Make sure you know your main priorities, your chances of getting them agreed and any compromises you could accept. If you are providing briefing for someone else, you may find the guidance on briefing helpful.

Plan your influencing. What are the various stages of the negotiations? Who do you need to influence, and when?

Network with the relevant staff in the Commission and other member states. This is a far more important skill in Brussels than in the UK. The more people you know, the more likely you are to see an early draft of a particular document. Remember to return such favours to your allies when you can.

Influence early. Don’t be embarrassed about influencing — everyone else does it in Brussels. The earlier you try to do it, the more likely you are to achieve your objectives. You might offer to help an understaffed section of the Commission with the drafting of a particular document, for example. The longer you wait, the harder it becomes to secure changes to such documents.

Build alliances with other member states on issues of mutual concern, and try to convince the waverers. This may mean making concessions on points which are less important to the UK. Our natural allies on development issues are called the like-minded.

At the negotiations

Know your brief. Be aware of how far you can commit yourself, what type of reserve you might need to apply and on what you can compromise.

Arrive on time. Meetings invariably start late, but you can use the time to network and plan any last minute strategies.

Use your negotiating capital sparingly. There is an unstated assumption that each member state may raise a certain number of points of objections. Those who raise too many objections will not win all their points, however sensible they are, because others will get tired of listening to them. Keep your negotiating capital for your key points.

Speak clearly and concisely. On a small number of points. Avoid rambling on, using language which is hard to translate (such as colloquialisms, irony and puns) and undermining your strong points by making weaker ones.

Speak early. If you want to steer the debate along particular lines, convince waverers or spoil someone else’s intervention. Speak later if you think others will make your point for you, if you want to hear the arguments of others first so you can counter them or if you want to summarise the debate and draw conclusions (although it is usually the Presidency which summarises).

And for the card players amongst you:

- Keep a poker face. If a point made and secured by another delegation helps the UK, try not to show this by smiling. Others may assume you still need to be given something to balance the deal.
- Don’t overbid. If you have secured your main points, don’t risk your goodwill by quibbling on minor ones.
- Don’t fold too soon: There is usually pressure to agree a deal, and not doing so may be seen as failure, but it may be worth holding out for the right package.
- Never deal from the bottom of the pack. Your best asset is your trustworthiness.

**After the negotiations**

Check any minutes or conclusions reflect the discussions you had.

Guard against backsliding on your hard-won points.