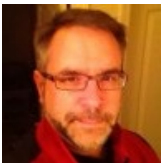


Be the Influence - IO



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IO Blog



Be the Influence

July 22nd, 2013 / Keith Carnes / 0 comments

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These thoughts are based on my personal experiences, and I would love to hear from anyone that has additional perspectives in the comments section below.

According to Google, the word "**influence**" can be defined as, "The capacity to have an effect on the character, development, or behavior of someone or something, or the effect itself." When you search on Amazon.com using the term "How to influence" it returns 128,460 search results in the Books category alone. Clearly, influence is a key concept and viewed as critically important to a great many people, as it should be to each of us.

I believe that it is when we each reach the point where we realize that we are not simply "actors" in the "play" that is our life, but the producer and director as well, that we are able to achieve the realization of just how much influence and clout we possess. *We all have the power to affect the world around us in profound ways.*

However, influence requires resources. Whether you are seeking to promote positive change in your own person, family, neighborhood, city, business or the world, fuel is necessary. Sir Isaac Newton influenced everything scientifically that would come after him by introducing an idea that would become a foundational cornerstone to the natural laws of physics. His concept was that in an object, velocity is constant. Therefore, an object at rest tends to stay at rest, and an object moving in a straight line will tend to stay in a straight line, unless acted on by an external force.

Similarly, this appears to be the natural law of society – culture, whether it be in one's personal or professional life, will continue on its current trajectory unless a new influence begins to change the direction of the existing path. But this new influence must always find its source somewhere. It will always



require the expenditure of resources for its fuel.

Unfortunately, too many people make the mistake of equating “resources” with financial assets or means. Don’t get me wrong... cold, hard cash is indeed a valuable resource for influence;

But money is neither our only nor our greatest resource for creating influence. I would argue that our time, energy, intelligence, skills, creativity, and will-power —when directed towards the change we’d like to see — is even **more** impactful than money.

Have you ever sat down and listened to someone relate an impactful event in their lives to you and do it in a way that had you hanging on every word?

Or have you ever met an individual who spends a tremendous amount of time and energy volunteering to help others because they want to make a difference?

These are amazingly important and meaningful types of actions that serve to build trust, respect, and credibility. When it comes to influencing change, the time you take to get out, have conversations, tell stories, listen to and acknowledge the perspective of those around you, and generally give of yourself is vitally important to what you are trying to accomplish.



Money, without these other actions, just doesn’t cut it.

There is no sustainable shortcut that allows you to use purely monetary resources to bypass putting in the time to do the work and build the foundation for the changes you seek to influence.

The effort and creative energy you put into forming the “story” of what you are working towards is more important to

getting traction and influencing change than a fat wallet. While money is a vital resource, it is only a small piece of a successful formula, and I would propose that you focus on channeling your financial resources into better positioning yourself to best tell your story and broaden your reach.

Remember, it doesn’t have to cost a penny to spread the ideas of hope, charity, honesty, compassion, teamwork or the concept of communities working together for change.

So, what are YOU influencing today, and why? What is the combination of fuels that you are using to power it? How could partnering with others increase the power of your influence?

Keith Carnes, MHRM, is Senior Training and Development Program Designer at IO. He has managed the culture and designed workforce development inside Home Depot, Apollo Group, and Intel.

Tags: culture, influence, Keith Carnes, resources

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