

# Competency: Persuading and Influencing

## Activity 1

In discussions or conversations, identify the appropriate influencing strategy. If there are clear rules that must be adhered to, for example relating to safety, if time deadlines are short or it is important that you win the argument, use a “push” strategy. In these situations, be assertive and positive. Show confidence and conviction, and be logical, clear and enthusiastic. Use the words “I” and “No”. When working on improvements and there is time to work through issues, when you need the commitment of others or when dealing with uncertainties, use a “pull” influencing strategy. Use open questions and listen actively to the responses. Support others and encourage a team spirit to seek common ground.

## Activity 2

Try to discover colleagues’ personal and political drivers, to help you understand what would make them sympathetic to your point of view. Look for areas where you can reach a satisfactory compromise, where both parties benefit rather than one party winning at the cost of the other.

## Activity 3

Practice introducing yourself to potential customers or new business contacts. Consider your body language and tone of voice. Look carefully at how you open a meeting with someone you meet for the first time. Ask a trusted friend or mentor how you can improve the first impression others get of you.

## Activity 4

Before entering a negotiation situation, identify the key stakeholders that you have to influence and try to anticipate their needs. Ask yourself “what’s in it for them” and tailor your arguments accordingly. Conducting a good stakeholder analysis can be extremely helpful.

## Activity 5

When trying to close a deal, get confirmation that you have the other person’s commitment: ask questions like “if it was within your budget would you move forward with this project?” Openly identify objections they may have, with questions like “what is stopping you from saying yes?” Get confirmation of the deal, for example, “so will we begin the work next week.” Link your offering to their stated needs, for example, “this proposal will save you 5%, which is your key objective.” Don’t wait for the other person to close.

## Activity 6

Before defending a position, check the accuracy of critical facts and details and examine any assumptions (yours or others) behind your information. Do not substitute force of personality for well-reasoned thoughts and ideas. Always seek to make contributions of substance and build your personal impact and credibility on firm foundations of integrity, expertise and care.

## Results: