



Course Name: Principles of Influence: Part 1

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Course description:

This course discusses principles of influence that are part of influencing others. The intent of this class is to address several needed components in leadership today to help guide the direction of the church toward the body God intended. The material is based out of Dale Carnegie's book, *How to Win Friends and Influence People*.

Course Objectives: By the end of the class students will have:

- A. Identified and discussed four principles of influence that relate to our leading others.
- B. Listed out ways to accomplish each principle.

Outline of the class:

- A. Divide the class into groups of four. Several discussions will occur as each of these principles are described and contemplated for our leadership.
- B. Four areas we want to dig more deeply into today include the following.
 - 1. Avoid arguing
 - a. It has been said, the best way to get the best of an argument is to avoid it.
 - b. Too often, we fight to win the battle, but fail to realize how we lose the war. We need to ask ourselves a couple of questions:
 - i. What are we really trying to prove?
 - ii. Does being right and proving someone else wrong mean that much to us?
 - iii. Is the final price worth the effort we put forth to be right, or win?
 - c. Ask the class to take a couple minutes to discuss what we can do to avoid arguing with others and write down their answers on the whiteboard. A few areas to add if they are not listed by the class.
 - i. Avoid specific subjects that tend to lead toward arguments. Discuss what some of those subjects might be and list them.
 - ii. Be aware of our own issues that tend to make us angry or confrontational, and avoid them.
 - iii. Show greater interest in the other person's point of view.

- iv. Learn to ask questions that lead to clarification instead of inserting our thoughts, feelings, or opinions.
 - v. Don't raise our voice.
 - vi. Talk about our feelings before we get angry.
 - vii. If we learn we have offended the other person, learn three powerful words, "I am sorry."
 - viii. We can also ask for time to think about the situation before engaging in further discussion.
2. Show respect
- a. Learning to demonstrate respect for the other person—including their opinions—is vital to influencing others to our way of thinking.
 - b. Without respect, there is no chance of entering the discussion. The key word to remember is "opinion."
 - i. Never tell people their opinions are wrong. They are just opinions, and we all have them.
 - ii. People only discover through learning that their opinion may need to change. Oddly enough, we may learn through the process that our own opinion is the one that needs to change. We will never know without respect.
 - c. Ask the class to share their thoughts on how we can show respect to others. Review the lesson of respect in the Leadership course under "Character." This will provide areas to consider with regards to how we gain and lose respect.
3. Admit wrong
- a. Admit it quickly and emphatically. When we are wrong and do not admit it, we lose every opportunity to influence others. We are seen in a negative light and others are unwilling to listen to what we have to say.
 - b. The reason this is important to understand is because no one is perfect, including us, and everyone knows it.
 - c. Ask the class to list out the reasons it is so hard for us to admit it when we are wrong. A few additional areas to consider if they are not mentioned include the following:
 - i. Pride or arrogance / lack humility
 - ii. No one wants to be wrong
 - iii. We are in denial that we are wrong
 - iv. We don't believe we are wrong

- v. Our dislike for the other person
 - vi. We possess an attitude of rudeness, disgust, or meanness
4. Be friendly
- a. This is a principle that is so simple, yet so often overlooked, when it comes to influencing others.
 - b. We need to learn that we can disagree on many matters, but still be friendly and respectful. There is no reason to drive a wedge or create feelings of anger and anxiety: be friendly.
 - c. Ask the class to describe ways we can show friendliness. A few additional suggestions if they are not listed by the class include the following:
 - i. Do not criticize, condemn, complain, or be negative.
 - ii. Give honest and sincere appreciation (not flattery)
 - iii. Arouse in others an eager desire: How? Do not overwhelm them with our attention, but be eager to be with them. Enjoy doing things together. Be a friend.
 - iv. Become genuinely interested in the other person. Be real, not phony, people see through insincerity (kids especially, they look at what we do; they do not listen what we say).
 - v. Smile – do not be phony, but comforting and warm.
 - vi. Remember the person’s name (are we really a friend if we can’t remember their name?) – Do not let “brother” or “sister” become a title we use.
 - vii. Be a good listener – encourage others to talk about themselves.
 - viii. Talk in terms of the other person’s interests. Be interested in them, their likes.
 - ix. Make the other person feel important and be sincere.

Conclusion:

- A. We all want to influence others, especially as we consider the spiritual needs of the soul. These principles are the beginning point to help us in this influence.
- B. In order to achieve this task, we need to apply these principles in ways that will help us bring about positive results.
- C. Next week, we will consider four additional leadership principles that add to this winning combination of influence. Take time each day to focus on each of these areas and how to better develop them in your life.

Recommending Reading:

Carnegie, Dale. *How to Win Friends and Influence People*