

Fire up your influencing skills

Presented by: Hilary Bryan
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Three parts to this Tea & Toast

1. Three basics.
2. Two new ideas: Carmen Simon on memory and Zoe Chance - her take on behavioural economics and more.
3. A collection of odds and ends.

Three basics

1. Ron Carucci's four approaches

You need all four to influence.

Context

This means being in tune with the environment the people you're trying to influence are working in.

Breadth

This is about seeing the big picture. Do you see the whole and where your issues fit in?

Choice

Do you focus on trying to influence over too many areas? You may have to make hard choices about who you influence and about what.

Connection

If you don't connect, you don't influence.

2. Be a Happy Warrior

Cuddy, Kohut and Neffinger developed this idea. They asked: do you influence others because you're loved or because you're feared? Love comes first, followed by strength.

The lovable elements are warmth, trust, and how well we connect with others.

The fear-based elements are about your strength, competence and the degree of control you have over the other person.

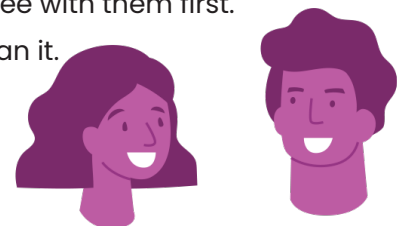
Being lovable and feared are the two traits that account for more than 90% of us forming positive or negative impressions of others.

So begin with warmth

Build trust and connect: people pick up warmth faster than competence or strength.

With warmth first, you can try to change attitudes and beliefs, not just behaviour. How?

- Vocal warmth: lower your pitch and volume.
- Validate feelings and demonstrate you hold the same world view as the other person. *That's right* is a useful phrase to use.
- People judge you before they judge your message.
- Listen and agree with them first.
- Smile and mean it.



3. Be an engaged toolmaker

1. Trailblazer

Find new opportunities to use the knowledge or expertise you have. This means you need to:

- network and talk to people and build relationships at different levels
- understand the story / context of your sector or organisation
- follow what goes on
- relate what you're saying to the bigger picture story.



2. Toolmaker

Then, become a toolmaker, i.e., develop new tools or ways of presenting information and your ideas that add value.

3. Teamwork

Develop teamwork at the start. When you want to influence with a new idea, collaborate with others early on. Don't present them with a fait accompli.

4. Translator

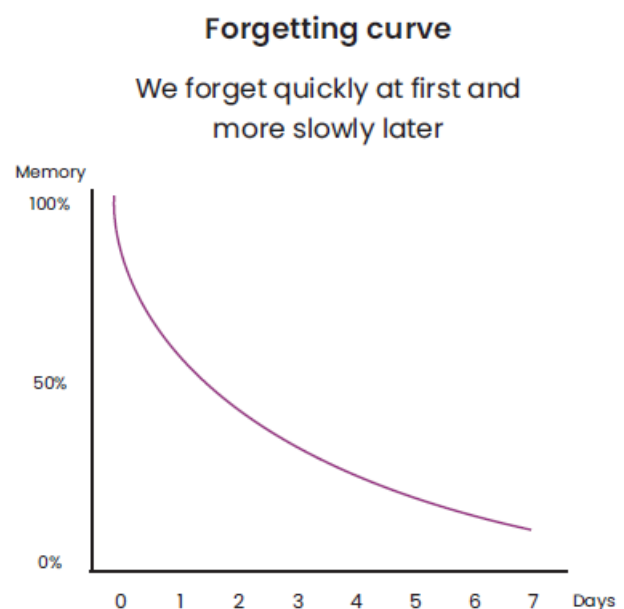
Translate your complex ideas into simple and clear communications. Visuals, mindmaps, simple and clear language all work well.

Impossible to ignore

Carmen Simon's research on influencing is all about memory. She argues that we forget most things very quickly. And if we forget them, we're not going to act on them. 60 – 80% of memory problems are about forgetting to execute on future intentions.

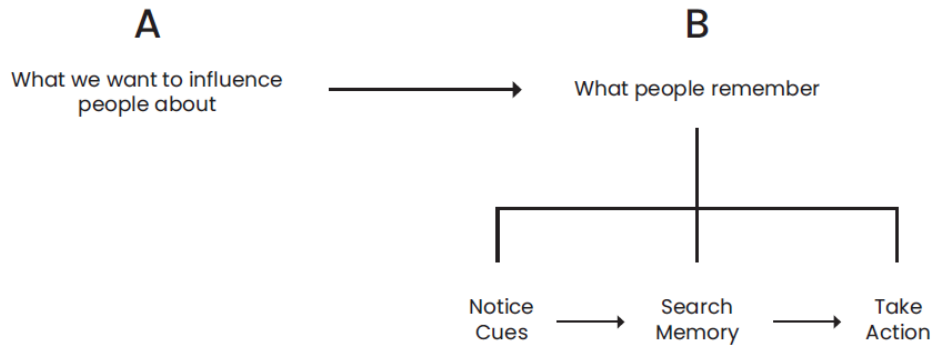
Let's think of memory as not just thinking about the past, but also the future – our brains are prediction machines. Our brains also tend to look to the future to identify value in our present actions. Also, when we are sharing an idea or information to influence, we often need people to act, not just agree.

So getting people to act on what they remember starts with their intention to act.



Prospective memory is remembering a future intention

But how do we influence people to remember a future intention we've influenced them will add value? It takes fractions of a second and involves three steps:



1. Notice cues

We need reminders – layers of messaging from different sources that remind us to take action. So, to influence you need to create cues that remind people: *oh yes, I need to do that.*

It's why we're fans of the Learning Transfer System Inventory (LTSI).

That's because learners need a huge number of cues (16 in this model) to translate learning into action.

2. Search memory

Make your message easy to recall. *You're gonna need a bigger boat. You had me at hello. Life is like a box of chocolates, you never know what you're gonna get.*

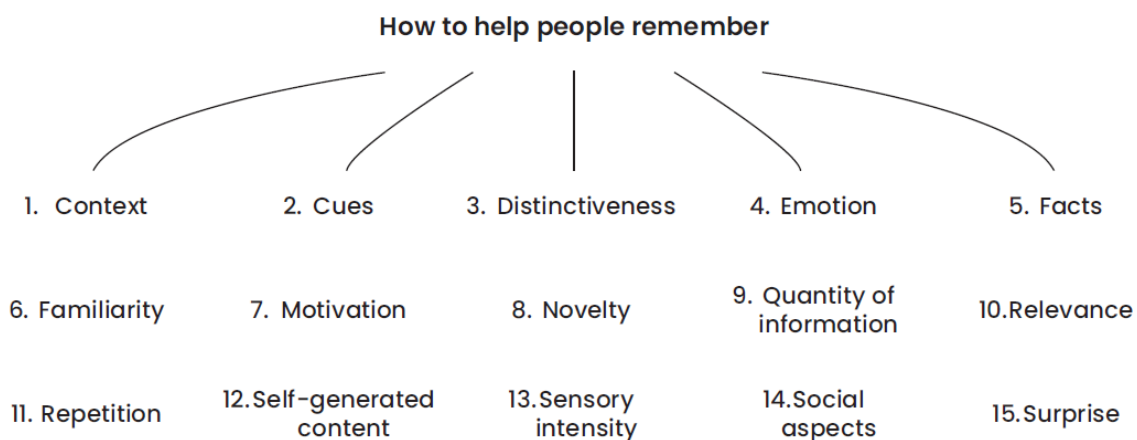
All three memorable movie lines have three critical elements:

1. They address human problems.
2. They build a mental picture in your mind.
3. They're repeatable and memorable in different situations.

See 15 other ways to make your idea or message memorable. Simon reckons you need nine of the 15 for someone to take action.

3. Execute on intentions if the reward is great enough

One way to do this is to link the action to an existing habit. Secondly, you can link the action to



According to Simon you need nine of the 15



Influence is your superpower

Chance brings together a variety of influence ideas and I'm including some of our favourites.

Just ask

The most simple is: **just ask**. We may tend to focus on obstacles for the person to comply with our request. But those being asked may get a surge of dopamine by helping out and satisfying someone else's need. Also, we're more likely to say yes to a smaller request after saying no a bigger one.

Cut out diminishing language

I thought maybe...

I was just wondering...

I'm sorry, but...

They make you sound cautious and vague. If you want to see an extreme example of this watch [Amy Shumer's skit on women saying sorry](#).

Using *I*, the first person pronoun, may sound confident. But Chance refers to Pennebaker's work on pronouns. (He's great and we're fans.) He says using *I* a lot reflects a focus on yourself, not others. When you're feeling vulnerable physically or emotionally and you're not confident, it's difficult to get out of our own head. So, it's hard to connect with others and be a happy warrior.

Use great frames

Think about the book titles we've mentioned so far:

- Impossible to Ignore
- Influence is your Superpower
- The Secret Life of Pronouns.

How about: *The Life-Changing Magic of Tidying Up*

They're great frames for your influencing message.



Chance argues three elements make a great frame:

1. Monumental

Large: *everyone, everything, universal, planet*

Extreme: *always, crisis, epic, million, revolution*

Dramatic: *army, battle, fearless, threat, explode*

2. Manageable

Simple to do: *habit, hack, game, tweak*

Small amount of time: *day, moment, instant, minute, moment*

Effectiveness: *be, can, DIY, help, how to*

Small numbers: *1, 2, 3, top 10*

3. Mysterious

The uncertain: *if, impossible, improbable, why*

Changing: *kindle, new, spark, transformation*

Creative: *imagine, innovation, original, unique,*

Secrets to be revealed: *confession, dark, myth, secret, surprise*

The empathy challenge to find common ground

We talk a lot about listening skills and the importance of listening without judgement. Chance uses something called the empathy challenge. We're back to connection again. Choose someone you fundamentally disagree with, politically, values – anything in fact.

Then listen to them without judgement and label their emotions. It seems like you really care about freedom, choice, accountability. Then find some common ground. The aim of this activity isn't for Green and ACT voters to agree, but to listen and overcome the false polarisation bias. It has two elements. First, we assume those who oppose us have a more negative view than they actually have. Second, we assume the views of our opponents are more vehement than they actually are.

This is hard and you may have to bite your tongue, but a fascinating exercise in being a happy warrior.



Odds and ends

Present weaknesses up front

If you have a choice of presenting a weakness up front or at the end of an interaction, choose the former. Why? It's seen as a sign of openness. And that's all part of credibility

Change of environment

People behave differently in different environments. Think about army recruits. They're deliberately put into barracks, given a strict routine, and dressed the same. This is an extreme version of influencing by environment, but it's a very real and obvious one.

Hogan claims that when you move someone from one environment to another, especially one the person is unfamiliar with, the brain changes. The brain enters a state of flux and typically becomes more suggestible.

He further argues that a changed environment is uniquely powerful in changing behaviour.

The Franklin Effect

The Franklin Effect is named after the US President, Benjamin Franklin. He asked a political opponent to do him a favour. His opponent did just that. As a result, the opponent felt good about helping Franklin. And because he felt good, and had helped someone, he was happy to help Franklin again.

This is counterintuitive, but interesting.

Reciprocity

We're wired for this. Be willing to help others. They'll reciprocate in return.

Choice architecture

This is a feature of behavioural economics. Make the choice you want people to make easy. Kiwisaver is an opt out scheme. In some countries, organ donation is the same. Put healthy food at eye level so people don't have to think too much about choosing it.

Herd behaviour

We like to conform, and to go with what others around us think. It's even more useful if you can show a trend towards the point of view you're promoting, i.e. *more and more people are....*

Social influence is one of the most effective ways to nudge behaviour. If you know more and more people are not driving drunk, you'll be more likely to go along with the growing majority.

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Thanks for coming!

From The Training Practice team - Kristen, Hilary, Jesse, James, Oli and Paucha

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Follow us on [LinkedIn](#)

Get in touch: 027 222 1498 | office@trainingpractice.co.nz

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