INFLUENCE FOR IT PROFESSIONALS

BY OWEN MCCALL

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Introduction

A NOTE FROM OWEN MCCALL

Dear Readers, welcome to my e-book!

Today's IT team is charged with delivering value to their organisation through the effective use of information and technology. This is a simple enough mandate to understand however delivering on this is easier said than done. CIO's and their teams face a number of barriers that make delivering value difficult. One of the biggest issues is that IT teams do not control the value they create. Delivering value through IT requires a joint effort between IT and all other departments within the organisation.

No other department is so dependent on effective cooperation as IT. This interdependence means that to be successful IT teams need to operate predominantly through influence rather than direct management and leadership. As a result, ensuring IT professionals can work effectively across the organisation is critical to an IT team's ability to deliver value.

Unfortunately influencing skills do not appear to come naturally to many technology professionals. We shouldn't be surprised by this, after all IT has always had more than it's fair share of introverts. Many people are attracted to technology because we find solace in the logical challenge of working out solutions to problems, preferably on our own or with a small group of like minded colleagues. This problem solving skill, sometimes wrapped in superb creativity, is one of the superpowers that many IT people are blessed with. But it comes at a cost. While the best technical people are awesome problem solvers they sometimes struggle to effectively communicate with their non IT business peers.

This eBook is a collection of blogs that I have written over the years on the importance of influence and what you can do to build your ability to be influential. My hope is that by reading these blogs you will begin to engage with and explore the tools of influence.

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Chapter 1

THE CHIEF INFLUENCING OFFICER

"I have always thought that success as a CIO ultimately comes down to your ability to be influential. It's true that influence is important in many roles and essential for executive roles, but in no other roll is it as important as for the CIO."

The CIOs is often the only executive role where you are not directly responsible or involved in the delivery of organisational value and there is no legal or compliance need for the role. This is changing slowly as technology is increasingly embedded into products and services and as we create business models, which are completely dependent on online delivery, but it is still the norm.

Think about it. Value creation is usually led by a COO with support from sales marketing and some form of product or service delivery function. Other executive mainstays include the CFO, human resource and often risk and legal. While these are clearly important business roles they have significant legal and compliance issues at their heart.

Then there is the CIO. In most traditional businesses it is cast as a support function yet there is no legislation that says you must use technology.

The only rationale for investing in technology is that you believe it will make your business better at what it does. Under these circumstances there should be no confusion on why the role exists, add value or perish, and perhaps the only real question worth asking is how? How do you add value when there is no mandate and the role is not directly involved in value creation? The only answer I have come up with is by being influential with colleagues across the business. Which begs another question, how do you become influential?

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There are a lot of books and seminars out there that will teach you all sorts of techniques to help you influence others, however I have always been a believer that at the end of the day results count. If you want to be influential in the long term then consistently produce the results that your organisation wants, needs and expects.   For the CIO that can mean only one thing, deliver value.   Technology delivers value to the enterprise in a number of different ways and each one contributes to your ability to be influential:

1. Employees use technology to make their daily jobs easier to do, however if your systems are not available when they should be then work stops. The first value stream for the CIO to deliver then is reliable systems so work doesn't stop. In reality this isn't so much about delivering value as it is the removal of an irritant and destroyer of value and influence.

2. Cost effective. Like it or not organisations run to the heartbeat of money. It doesn't matter whether you are a for profit, a not for profit or a government department, it is money that makes organisations run. If you want to be influential you need to be able to demonstrate that you are an effective manager of money. If you are seen as being a person who is careless with money your influence will be diminished and people will wonder if you even understand the basics of business and management.

3. Optimise the current business. This is where value creation and influence really starts. This value stream is about making the business as a whole more efficient and effective at what they do. IT contributes to this in two fundamental ways. Firstly through process automation, which improves organisational efficiency and secondly through the improved use of information, which supports improved decision making. CIOs who can successfully deliver change programmes that optimise their organisation are very powerful and influential indeed.

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4. Create new value. We hear a lot these days about new and disruptive business models and more often than not the new business models are made possible by innovative uses of existing or new technology. Whether it is the creation of new products and services, the ability to access new markets or customers or simply a much cheaper way to serve an existing need this is perhaps best described as the CIO as alchemist, creating value when none previously existed.

So more than any other C Suite role, to be effective as a CIO you need to be influential. To become influential you need to consistently deliver value to the organisation and by meeting the organisation's needs and expectations starting with the most basic until all needs are met. If you do this as a CIO, while you might not be the CEO, you are likely to be the architect of the organisation's future and highly influential in your company, across your industry and within the IT community.

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Chapter 2

THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IT PROFESSIONALS - PART 1

I have been a fan of Stephen Covey's 7 habits[1] for a long time now. It has been very influential in how I look at the world and how I live my life, despite my constant failures to live up to the habits. It has also been influential in my understanding of what you need to do to be successful in realising the value of technology for organisations that I work with. You can see the influence of Covey's work in my ideas. For example, the concept of competence before influence is built out of Covey's private victory.

Despite this influence, I have never sat down and mapped Covey's 7 habits and how they can help IT professionals with the task of creating value from IT. The other day it struck me that this is something that I should do and so here is part one of the Seven Habits of Highly Effective IT Professionals.

> **"Proactive IT professionals realise that while they may not control circumstances, how they respond to circumstances has a major influence on outcomes."**

Habit 1: Be proactive. This is all about taking personal responsibility and Covey takes "response-able" literally when he says that effective people understand that they have a choice in all situations about how they feel and how they act. Effective people do not let fate, circumstance, or other external stimuli dictate their decisions and actions. As you would expect with the first habit be proactive sets the foundation on which ask the other habits are built.

[1] 7 Habits of Highly Effective People; Dr. Stephen R. Covey 1989

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For the IT Professionals habit 1 tells us that we need to accept and understand that when it comes to delivering value from technology we are "response-able". Yes, there are plenty of circumstances and stimuli in the external world that may make this seem like a difficult task, however we need to be proactive in managing the circumstances and make sure that these circumstances do not control us or our actions.

"Proactive IT professionals realise that while they may not control circumstances how they respond to circumstances has a major influence on outcomes."

Indeed, much of what an IT professional does comes down to proactive influencing. That may be influencing the IT team around improving service levels, it may be influencing your peers across the business that IT can in fact add value to them and their team and that IT has the capability to deliver that value for and with them.

THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IT PROFESSIONALS - PART 1

Habit 2: Begin with the end in mind. This is all about goal setting. Having decided to be proactive you then need to define what it is that you want to achieve. Habit 2 is based upon the notion that all things are created twice. There is a mental (first) creation, and a physical (second) creation. The physical creation follows the mental, just as a building follows a blueprint.

If you follow my writing you will know that I believe that the goal of the CIO and their IT team is to use technology and information to add value for the organisation. If you accept this as the overall goal, then habit 2 guides IT professionals to specifically define what value means for your organisation. You need to answer questions like:

- What is an appropriate level of service to provide to our users?
- How much money should we spend on IT and how should it be spent?
- What processes and activities can we enable?
- What decisions can we assist with through timely information and what decisions can we automate?

Then you need to socialise and agree the answers to these questions with your peers across the business and within your team so they understand where you are heading and what is expected of them.

Habit 3: Put first things first. This is all about prioritising what you do and ensuring that you do the most important things first. The most important things are those things that add the most value and contribute the most to our ability to achieve the goals you have established in habit 2. Exactly what those things are will vary across organisations and over time however the IT Hierarchy of Needs provides us with guidance on what this should be depending on how mature you are and on what needs you have been successfully met and what needs are still outstanding.

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- If the services you are providing to your users are not reliable and you struggle to effectively deliver your projects, then you need to focus on improving your internal delivery capability, so you can and do deliver reliable services.
- If the services you deliver are reliable, but you are seen as being slow, bureaucratic or expensive then you need to focus on streamlining and simplifying your processes, your customer responses, and your systems.
- If the services you deliver are perceived to meet the user's needs and as being efficient and effective, then your focus needs to be on beginning to leverage what you have for the greater benefit of the organisation. A key step in this is to determine what is the long-term digital platform that you will create and leverage for the organisation.
- If you have created the code of your digital platform, your focus then needs to shift to how do we leverage this to add even more value.

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THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IT PROFESSIONALS - PART 1

The private victory. Living habits 1 to 3 form what Covey calls the private victory. When you have achieved the private victory you have the ability to own your actions and outcomes without the need to blame or justify. If you are anything like me catching yourself moving to blame or justification is an ongoing process. The private victory isn't so much about being perfect (and therefore practically non-human) as it is about catching yourself moving into blame and justification and then moving past it to a proactive response.

"For a CIO and IT team you achieve your private victory when you have demonstrated that you are a professionally competent IT team for your organisation."

 I believe there are four key outcomes that show you have achieved professional competence and IT's private victory:

- IT services and stable and operate when and where users expect them.
- You deliver the vast majority of your projects on time, to budget and the solution is capable of delivering the desired benefits.
- People from across the business (and customers of your services outside your business if appropriate) find you easy to engage with.
- You are fiscally responsible and manage your budgets and funds well.

"When you have demonstrated that you are technically competent, your peers across the business will treat you with professional respect. They will also begin to wonder what else you might be able to do for them and this will begin to open up discussions around creating the public victory."

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Chapter 3

THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IT PROFESSIONALS - PART 2

"The role of IT professionals is complex and difficult, and if you hope to be successful in the long-term you need to look after yourself."

"Both empathy and curiosity about your colleagues will lead you to understand what their win is and set you up to think about how to deliver it."

Habit 4: Think win-win. This instructs us to have an "everyone can win" attitude. Win-win sees life as a cooperative arena, not a competitive one.   Win-win is a frame of mind and heart that constantly seeks mutual benefit in all human interactions. Win-win means agreements or solutions are mutually beneficial and satisfying.

Covey goes so far as to say that if you can't get win-win, then no deal is an OK option and much better than the alternative of win- lose.

For an IT professional, this leads us to think about all of our work from the perspective that everyone can win for any initiatives undertaken as well as ensuring that on an ongoing day to day basis that both the users of IT and the IT team win.

In fact, in its ideal form think win-win would become win, win, win. The organisation wins, the customers/users win and the IT team wins. In order to think win-win you need to be able to think from multiple perspectives rather than our human default of thinking primarily (or perhaps only from our own perspective).

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In my experience there are two states of mind that can lead us to thinking from multiple perspectives. The first is empathy, which is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another. Empathy is probably the preferred approach. However for those of us that struggle with empathy, curiosity works as well. Get curious about the other person, their point of view and understanding why they believe what they believe. Both empathy and curiosity about your colleagues will lead you to understand what their win is and set you up to think about how to deliver it.

Habit 5: Seek first to understand, then to be understood. This asks us to listen to people sincerely and understand their needs before we worry about being understood. This is not particularly natural for most people. Our default reaction is to seek first to be understood; you want to get your point across. And in doing so, you tend to ignore the other person completely, pretend that you're listening, selectively hear only certain parts of the conversation or attentively focus on only the words being said, but miss the meaning entirely.

"For an IT professional, 'seek first to understand' asks us to listen to our customers before you try and explain the IT view. Understand their needs and frustrations before you begin trying to justify IT's performance, or lack of performance."

Habit 5 asks us to REALLY LISTEN and understand. Do this through your empathy or curiosity skills mentioned above. When you really understand your customers' needs and can explain it back to them so they agree with you, you understand, then begin to explain your view. Having invested the time to truly understand your customer's wants and issues opens up the communication channels. Better yet, in my experience you will find out that what your colleagues and customers want is actually quite reasonable. Usually what your colleagues want are systems that work, projects that deliver as promised and customer service that is friendly and keeps them informed of what is happening.

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Habit 6: Synergise. This asks that you work cooperatively to achieve more than would be possible if you worked separately. Quite literally synergy means "two heads are better than one."

Synergy doesn't just happen on its own. It's a process, and through that process, people bring all their personal experience and expertise to the table. Together, they can produce far better results than they could individually. Synergy lets us discover jointly things we are much less likely to discover by ourselves. It is the idea that the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. One plus one equals three, or six, or sixty - you name it.

For an IT professional, habit six asks that you work cooperatively across the organisation and within IT to come up with solutions that support the users as they want to be supported, delivers value to the organisation and allows IT to successfully deliver and support the agreed solutions.

There are many articles and books out there that will make recommendations on how to do this. They range from simple brainstorming processes, various root cause analysis techniques, innovation processes, hackathons, cross functional, self managing self selecting teams and many others. They pretty much all work if done well.

> "Personal renewal is important for an IT professional."

Pick some that work for you and operate well within your corporate culture, commit to it and most of all, focus on thinking win-win through the process.

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THE 7 HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE IT PROFESSIONALS - PART 2

The public victory. These three habits culminating in synergy form what Covey calls the public victory. The public victory delivers value to the organisation above and beyond what can be delivered by the individual people or departments.

For the the IT professional the public victory ultimately creates a coherent IT or digital platform that is leveraged to deliver above market returns to the organisation.

In effect, the public victory underpins the organisation's ability to become a digital leader.

Habit 7: Sharpen the saw. This sets out the requirements to renew yourself regularly to ensure you preserve and enhance your greatest asset - you. Covey defines a balanced program for self-renewal in the four areas of your life: physical, social/emotional, mental, and spiritual.

Personal renewal is important for an IT professional. The role of the IT professional is complex and difficult, and if you hope to be successful in the long-term you need to look after yourself.

For an IT professional, however, 'sharpen the saw' goes further than personal renewal. It also implies renewal of your systems to make sure they are maintained properly and constantly improved and perhaps, most importantly, renewing your knowledge of what's possible for your organisation from the use of technology and information.

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Chapter 4
INFLUENCING THROUGH VALUE PROPOSITIONS

Value. As I have mentioned many times in my previous articles the role of IT teams is to use technology to deliver value to their organisation. One of the biggest challenges to the delivery of IT value is that delivering value through technology is a cooperative act between IT and other teams across the organisation. While every team is dependant on others to some extent, no team is so dependant on effective cooperation as IT. Why? Because IT value is not delivered within IT. IT value is delivered across the business when capabilities developed by IT are used. Value in use. This is largely unique within an organisation. To be sure all teams are dependant on others to some extent but most teams have much more control of the value they are producing within their team than an IT team does.

This interdependence, which IT has on other teams, means that to be successful IT teams need to operate predominantly through peer to peer influence rather than through direct management and leadership. As a result ensuring your team can work effectively across the organisation is a critical component of your ability to deliver value and get to the top of the IT Hierarchy of Needs. Unfortunately, it is a very rare IT team indeed that has widespread influencing skills within their team. Let's face it, influencing others is not a skill that comes naturally to a lot of IT people.

We shouldn't be surprised by this, after all IT has always been full of introverts and most people do not go into technology because of their love and desire to be with others. In fact, for many it is exactly the opposite. We are attracted to technology because we find solace in our own company and often enjoy the logical challenge of working out solutions to problems on our own. This problem solving skill, sometimes wrapped in superb creativity, is one of the superpowers that many IT people are blessed with. But it comes at a cost. While our very best technical people are awesome problem solvers they sometimes struggle to effectively communicate with their non IT business peers.

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Let's face it, IT has a language all of its own and when we talk to non IT people we tend to use this IT language. Most of our customers, the users of our IT services, don't understand this IT language and as a result we often come off as geeks that don't understand business. Needed geeks, after all IT has to keep the business running, but largely irrelevant.

To make matters worse, our business people are being constantly sold to by well funded professional IT sales teams. These sales teams, usually full of extroverts, have been taught the arcane arts of influence and persuasion. They have money to burn and can paint a very rosy picture of what the new world will look like if our customers buy their product.

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Shadow IT is born as our business begin to work around us and do their own thing. We struggle to compete because we're not sales guys and we don't have the budgets and resources or training that they do. In this environment the question you need to ask is "what can I do?"

There are many things that you can and should do to improve your team's influencing skills including investing in influence training for your teams, however as a starting point consider this. If you want to "sell" your ideas successfully it helps enormously if you use the other team's language.

A simple way to do this is to capture any proposal we wish to make in a value proposition. A value proposition comes in three simple parts, which are described below:

1. A definition of the business issue or opportunity that we wish to address. A business issue or opportunity can take many different forms from processes that cost too much to opening up new markets or additional customer groups. An example might be a company who has traditionally focused on wholesale markets looking to grow their business by selling direct to the retail marketplace. They believe if they do this they can grow their sales and their margins. If technology can support them to do this (through an online sales process for example) then IT enabled value will accrue to the company.

2. An outline of the proposed solution that will address the issue or opportunity (including options if appropriate).

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3.   A definition of the benefits (and costs) that will flow from addressing the issue with the prefered solution. Look to the six sources of value when seeking to identify benefits. While you should never start with the proposed technology solution when presenting a value proposition you can change the order to suit your audience. If your CEO is "all about the money" you may wish to provide only a very high level introduction to the issue, then outline the benefits that are possible by addressing the issue, as this is what they will be most interested in. If, on the other hand, you are presenting to the COO and they are primarily concerned that any change is the right change and done the right way, then you will likely go into a significant amount of detail to define the issue and then show how the proposed solution will deliver this for them and then follow up with the benefits. Either way, in developing your value proposition you may want to think of it as a thoughtfully purchased and beautifully presented gift, it needs to be tailored to the recipient.

You may recognise this as the basis of traditional business cases and it is. The key is to keep focused on the business problem / opportunity and the benefits that will accrue rather than being predominantly a detailed technical explanation of the solution. Too many business cases today provide detailed explanations of the technical solution and as little business context as possible.   Being business relevant demands that this balance needs to change. The focus is on identification of the business issues and benefits that will accrue from addressing the issue.

In the end if we become influential we deliver substantial value to our organisations. Recent research shows that digital leaders generate 30% more profitability than their industry peers. This is not possible without having a high performing IT team that is led by highly influential IT gurus. But better yet is the personal gain for highly influential IT guru's. They build better relationships with their business peers, are consistently recognised for their expertise and contributions, and they get to do cooler projects and play with great technology that delivers value.   A win for everyone.

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Chapter 5

DON'T SELL TECHNOLOGY, SATISFY NEEDS

I often get asked how I go about selling technology. Sometimes, the question comes from technology company sales teams, other times from leaders of organisational IT teams. It doesn't really matter who is asking, because the answer is always the same: it depends on the needs of the customer.

I have learned this lesson several times, most memorably on presenting a business case for the implementation of a virtual desktop solution. Taking a user and business focus, we deliberately set out to highlight the potential benefits to users and the business as a whole. Consequently, the business case highlighted two key benefits.

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The first was productivity improvements for team members resulting from increased flexibility around where and when they worked. A pilot provided insights into the impact this had on the team members' hours of work and output. The changes were impressive and supported the case that increased flexibility would increase productivity.

The second benefit was the potential to avoid a planned investment to increase the size of our offices, which were near to full capacity. We believed this investment could be deferred by embracing flexible working arrangements enabled by the virtual desktop, which would effectively increase building capacity by some 20 percent.

The case was well researched and had a very good return based on improved productivity and avoided costs. The plan was rejected.

The bottom line is that selling technology isn't the answer. Instead, satisfying people's needs is.

The project team and the users who worked with us were devastated. We went back and analysed what went wrong and two themes emerged:

- The executive did not see improved flexibility for employees as a need. They didn't appreciate the link between improved flexibility, productivity and better results (after all, no jobs would be lost and no costs reduced).
- Remodeling the offices wasn't an obstacle for the executive as any cost was seen as a good investment for the future.

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We had made a fundamental error: while the business case demonstrated substantial benefits to the company, they didn't match the needs of our colleagues. What we perceived to be advantages simply weren't on their list of requirements.

But that's not the end of the story. While this process was underway we were also conducting a business continuity/disaster preparedness exercise, sponsored by the CFO and performed at the request of the board. It didn't go all that well.

Among the many reasons for the difficulties experienced was the fact that being completely dependent on one office is a problem should that office suddenly not be available. We would have performed a lot better if our team had the flexibility to work from anywhere – something a virtual desktop infrastructure can provide.

We re-pitched the case: same costs, same timelines. Except this time, we emphasised the business continuity benefits it would provide, an issue fresh in the minds of our executives. No other benefits were discussed and the business case was approved inside 10 minutes.

Reflecting on what had transpired and what could be learned, the conclusion was pretty clear. By any rational measure, our first business case was the more robust proposition. Despite that, it wasn't approved because it didn't meet a burning need of the executive. That's precisely where the second, pretty basic, business case differed. We could solve the business continuity problem starting the executives in the face, so they said 'yes please'.

The bottom line is that selling technology isn't the answer. Instead, satisfying people's needs is.

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Chapter 6

TECHNOLOGY HAMMER

In 1964 Abraham Kaplan coined what he called the law of the instrument – "Give a small boy a hammer, and he will find that everything he encounters needs pounding." This law, and all of its variations, describe the IT industry. We play the role of the small boy and technology, particularly new technology, fulfills the role of our favorite hammer.

You can see it everywhere. Whether it is in the creation of organisational IT strategies or the many vendor and commentator articles and white papers that come from the perspective of – "here is a technology, it's really cool, now, let's identify a problem or series of problems that we might be able to "hit" with this technology". Oh, we do it in a very sophisticated way ("Four key strategies to leverage [insert technology here]"), but that's what we do; here is my hammer, it's awesome, would you like to hit things with it? While I get the temptation to do this, it is the wrong way to sell technology and is unlikely to deliver any real value. Rather, you need to start by defining the problem, need or opportunity. Having clearly understood the opportunity then you can begin to plan and strategise how to meet that opportunity. Then you can consider which tool or group of tools are relevant to that problem, meets that need or creates the opportunity.

Having identified the need and the relevance of your tool to the need, you can then begin to formulate a plan or strategy to meet that need and consider what tools would be useful to help you do this. Doing this effectively requires that we change our perspective away from technology first into a customer and business first. To be effective at this we need to understand our organisations, what they do and how to create value, as well as we know technology. Ultimately, this requires study, whether that is reading articles, talking to colleagues, spending time in the business, going to industry conferences or all of the above. You need to invest in understanding how your business works and how it makes money. Then think about what technology tools you need to support this.

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Chapter 6

SISTER ACT: A TALE OF TWO INFLUENCERS

Sister one, Katie arrived home after a long day's work. Katie greeted me as I came in with a bright and cheerful "Hi, Dad." I said, "Hi" back and continued on. I headed upstairs dropped my briefcase and got changed. I then headed back down to the family and greeted them all properly. As I did this, Katie asked me if I would like a glass of wine. Yes, please. A red would be lovely. Umm, something's up. Katie's always helpful, but this was unusual. She brought me a glass of wine, my favourite central Otago pinot. I took a sip and relaxed. Later that evening, after tea Kate came and sat beside me with her notebook in hand. "Dad the school has an exchange trip to Germany later this year. The purpose of the trip is to help the students with their German language skills and to give us the opportunity to see Germany and German culture first-hand. The trip is for two weeks and costs $5000. Normally you give us a deal that if we raise half the money you will pay for the rest. I have worked out in my notebook what I would need to do to raise my half in time for the trip including earning some spending money." She handed over her notebook to me and showed me her workings. I asked her a few clarifying questions, which she answered simply and matter of factly. Then, she said, "I really like German and I think this trip would help me get even better grades. Can I go?

Now I knew why I got the royal treatment when I got home, but the answer was easy. "Yes, of course you can go."

Sister two, Emily arrived home after a long day's work. Emily came running right at me and yelled "Dad, can I have $5000?" I was taken aback both by the request itself and the forcefulness with which it was presented. "What are you talking about? No wait, let me go upstairs and change. "But Dad! Oh, it isn't fair", and she huffed off to her room. Unsurprisingly, Katie has a reputation in our family for having me wrapped around her little finger and getting whatever she wants. In a more formal context, however, we would say that Katie is good at influencing others. So, what can we learn from Katie?

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As part of writing this column I asked her to explain what she does to get me to say yes. Here is her answer:

If you ask me to do something, I try and do it without having to be asked over and over. This makes it much more likely that you will do what I want when I ask you (influence experts call this the law of reciprocity). I know what you want and I make sure I give it to you (i.e. she provides value to me in return).

> "With my children, what I want is to know that they have thought about things thoroughly and are committed rather than they just want to spend my money."

In business this is likely to be some benefit like increased margins, reduced costs or some more personal organisational benefit). I try and make it easy for you to say 'yes'.

I don't just say what I want, I try to make the case for why it is a good idea and I give all the information I can. If the first answer is 'no', I don't whine and moan but give you time to think about it. I then come back and ask why or what can I do to get a yes (at this point I often give some advice on what they need to do to get a yes or make a counter offer for her to consider).

I readily concede that there is more to influence than what Katie has set out here, however, this is a great start and well ahead of the skills demonstrated by many IT pro's. Too many take Emily's approach to influence making it really hard for people to say yes and then they wonder why their boss, their peers or their customers are so stupid.

Lately, I have noticed that Emily has been getting coaching from Katie on how to get to yes. Emily is improving, showing that the ability to influence is a learnable skill with a little will and work.

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About The Author

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It seems that everyone these days believes in the power of technology to transform. Believing in the power of IT to transform is one thing, actually making it happen however, is an entirely different matter. The road to fulfilling IT's potential to transform our organisations is more often a road to failure than it is a road to success. Just look at the statistics. Most pundits agree that 70+% of IT enabled change programmes fail.

As a lover of technology and a believer in technology's potential to transform, Owen finds statistics like this very frustrating.   As a result he now dedicates his time to supporting organisations to implement better ways to deliver change and to fulfill on technology's transformative power.

Owen is a qualified accountant and was previously a partner in Deloitte Consulting where for several years he led Deloitte's Australasian outsourcing business before returning to New Zealand to take up the position of CIO of The Warehouse Group. In addition to running his practice Owen is a regular blogger and contributor to CIO and iStart publications and is sought after as both an event speaker and judge of industry awards including CIO 100 and the NZ Hi Tech Awards.

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Reference

PUBLISHING HISTORY

The Chief Influencing Officer
First published on LinkedIn May 2016

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective IT Professionals – Version 1 Part 1
First published by CIO IDG NZ June 2016

The 7 Habits of Highly Effective IT Professionals – Version 1 Part 2
First published by CIO IDG NZ June 2016

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First published on Linkedin August 2016

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First published by CIO IDG NZ February 2013