INFLUENCE

Five Things I Know About Successful Influence: *Plan Before You Push*

B. Kim Barnes
THE INFLUENCE GURU

Successful influence starts well before the conversation. Five things to think through first.

1 **Know what you want to achieve.**

What action do you want the other to take? What would success look like?

2 **Think about your relationship with the "influence target."**

Have you influenced one another successfully in the past? Do you have an investment in your future influence relationship? Is there something you need to do to repair or build your influence relationship?

3 **Consider what you know about that individual.**

What characteristics or current situations should you be aware of? What vested interests or issues might your influence goal raise for him or her?

4 **Understand relevant individual, organizational or cultural values, norms, processes, and goals.**

How can you frame your goal, idea or desired action to create a better "fit" between your influence goal and the individual, organization, or culture?

5 **Develop an approach that takes all of this information into account.**

Which Expressive or Receptive influence tactics and behaviors would be your best choices to respond to the influence target's interests and issues.

Know what you want to achieve. What would success look like?

Originally published on LinkedIn, May 12, 2014.

B. Kim Barnes

Founder of **The Influence Guru**, Kim Barnes is a coach, facilitator, and author with more than forty years of experience in leadership, influence, and organization development. She was a founder and, for many years, CEO of Barnes & Conti Associates, and developed or co-developed programs including *Exercising Influence*, *Inspirational Leadership*, *Intelligent Risk-Taking*, *Consulting on the Inside*, and *Managing Innovation*. She is the author of six books, including *Exercising Influence* (Wiley) and *Building Better Ideas* (Berrett-Koehler). She works with enterprise companies, government agencies, small businesses, and individuals from the San Francisco Bay Area.

bkimbarnesconsulting.com · hello@bkimbarnesconsulting.com · linkedin.com/in/bkimbarnes

© 2026 B. Kim Barnes. All rights reserved. This article may not be reproduced without permission.