

## Influencing styles - Push and Pull Questionnaire

### Overview

The purpose of this 'diagnostic tool' is to help you assess your influencing skills and create awareness of two particular styles of influencing, Push and Pull.

Please reflect on each item and allocate points, on a scale of 0-4, that best represent how you generally behave when you are aiming to influence others.

Use the following convention to allocate points:

0 means 'I never do it'

1 means 'I rarely do this'

2 means 'I sometimes do this'

3 means 'I often do this'

4 means 'I always do this'

	Influencing Situation/Style Item	Score
1	I exert pressure in order to achieve my objectives.	
2	I get others to support my projects by offering to help them in some way.	
3	I bring others to see the exciting possibilities in a situation.	
4	I listen carefully when people express views which are different from mine.	
5	I present strong arguments for the proposals I favour.	
6	I am quick to make my wishes and desires known to others.	
7	I verbalise standards that I think others ought to meet.	
8	I am open with information as opposed to secretive.	
9	I make sure my optimism and enthusiasms are contagious.	
10	I smooth over disagreements i.e. pour oil on troubled waters.	
11	I help others see the goals and values they have in common.	
12	I tell people directly when they don't meet my expectations or requirements.	
13	I use the power of my position to get others to go along.	
14	I hold to my position until others show willingness to compromise or make concessions.	
15	I use praise selectively to get others to change or improve their performance.	
16	My belief in others helps them to feel stronger and more confident.	
17	I use humour or anecdotes effectively to help make a point.	
18	I put forward proposals and suggestions that I feel have merit even if they are unpopular.	
19	I am open about my motives and intentions.	
20	I work with others to help get the best solution to the problems.	
21	I am prepared to make a fuss to get things done.	
22	I use rational argument to make my points.	
23	I help other people to solve their own problems.	
24	I have a clear code of principles that I communicate to others.	
25	I am able to communicate what needs to be done to create a better future.	
26	I check my understanding of what others have said.	
27	I defuse conflict situations by the use of humour or an appropriate change of subject.	
28	I challenge ideas or suggestions I disagree with or have questions about.	
29	I exchange favours in order to get things accomplished.	
30	I present my ideas with vigour.	
31	I exert pressure on people in order to achieve my objectives.	
32	I take steps to acquire formal authority to enable me to implement my plans.	

33	I take great care to educate others so that they can understand what I am thinking.	
34	I bargain to get what I want.	
35	I strive to inspire people by the way I present ideas.	
36	If individuals are not participating I go out of my way to involve them.	
37	I am quick to state my wishes to others.	
38	I use my personality and charm to advantage.	
39	I try to find common ground with others.	
40	I work steadily to build trust into relationships to enable effective joint working.	

**Now go to the next page to score and interpret your responses**

## Answer Grid

Instructions:

1. Enter your item scores from the questionnaire against the relevant number on the left hand side of the grid.
2. Add your scores on each row across the page to give you a total score for each style.
3. Add your scores in the style totals column to give you a total score for PUSH and PULL styles.
4. Reflect on your scores using the interpretation guidelines on the next page.

ITEM SCORES							STYLE TOTALS	
1		13		21		31		Force
7		12		24		32		Rules & Standards
2		14		29		34		Exchange
5		18		22		33		Persuasion
6		19		28		37		Assertion
<b>PUSH TOTAL:</b>								
9		17		30		38		Personal Magnetism
3		11		25		35		Visioning
4		16		26		39		Bridging/consensus
10		15		27		36		Environmental
8		20		23		40		Joint Problem Solving
<b>PULL TOTAL:</b>								

## Interpretation Guidelines

Please refer to the '*Push Me Pull You Approaches to Influencing and Persuading*', on the following pages, for definitions of each style and then consider the following:

- Are your total Push and Pull scores equally balanced or is one much higher than the other? The higher the score the more likely you are to use this style.
- Do you have a spread of scores across the different styles in the Push and Pull sections or are some significantly higher than others? Again, the higher the score the more you favour this influencing style.
- How relevant is your influencing style to the role that you have and the people you manage?
- If you have some styles that you appear to favour more than others is there a particular reason for this? Or should you think about trying to vary your approach?
- Does your role require you to gain commitment from people over the longer term or change attitudes? If so are your styles of influencing appropriate? Remember push styles alone may get quick results but may not gain commitment.
- Does your role require you to ensure compliance with rules, for example, for legislative or health and safety reasons, if so, is your range of influencing styles relevant to ensure compliance?
- Are your highest scores in line with your 'power sources'?
- Consider any actions you should take to adjust or develop your influencing styles?

## Actions...

## 'Push Me Pull You' Approaches to Influencing and Persuading

There are many different styles of influencing and it is important to recognise which styles will work for different situations.

Two different styles are:

### 1. Push

### 2. Pull

#### Push Styles

Push is more about moving or forcing someone to a change rather than motivating them to want to make the change. Push styles tend to involve logical reasoning, threatening punishment, or offering rewards or incentives. They seek to increase the 'forces' and rationale **for** change. They can often be referred to as the 'stick and carrot' approach. Push styles can be effective in achieving compliance but may not achieve commitment. They may bring about quick results.

#### Pull Styles

Pull is generally about motivating the individual to want to change. They tend to involve personal disclosure, involvement and showing the possibilities that will result from change. They tend to work on decreasing the forces or rationale **against** change. Insincere pull styles can however be seen as manipulative and dishonest. Pull styles can be effective in gaining commitment and high quality but they may be slower in achieving results.

There are pros and cons for both Push and Pull styles and it is important to understand the uses of each.

The following tables outline the different types of Push and Pull styles and how they may be useful.

#### Push Styles

	Descriptions	Uses	Comments
<b>Force</b>	'Do X or the consequences will be...' Threat of punishment, costs, damage. Power Source: Position, moral, expert, coercive.	Turnaround situations. Where there is no option. Where individuals are in danger or at risk.	Effective but short-lived. May produce resentment, lack of commitment. People can become dependent and unimaginative or they may fight back (sometimes covertly).
<b>Rules and Standards</b>	'It is a rule that you must do X'. Establishing and enforcing a regulatory framework e.g. rules, procedures, standards, principles, contracts, agreements. Power Source: Position, personal, expert.	Where there is a risk to staff, clients or the organisations business if things are not done in a certain way.	Efficient. Relies on a perceived right to institute and enforce rules. Can result in mindless rule following without real thought for consequences, alternatives or challenging change.

<b>Exchange</b>	<p>'Do X and I'll give you Y'.</p> <p>Bargaining, negotiating, bribing. Use of sweets, money, promotion, friendship, favour, inclusion.</p> <p>Power Source: All sources.</p>	<p>Where there is opportunity to negotiate or 'trade'.</p>	<p>Effective short term, but rewards get progressively less desired and the price of agreement tends to increase.</p>
<b>Persuasion</b>	<p>'It is logical for you to do X'.</p> <p>Argument based on information, logic and reason.</p> <p>Power Source: Expert, Personal.</p>	<p>When in an advisory or specialist position.</p>	<p>Requires credibility. Fails if there is a conflict of interest. Requires low emotion. Potential for blame/creating a 'scapegoat' if it does not work out. One person's logic is often another person's prejudice.</p>
<b>Assertion</b>	<p>'I would like you to do X'.</p> <p>Statement of personal wishes in a non-aggressive manner acknowledging the other person's rights, wishes or viewpoint.</p> <p>Power Source: Personal, Position</p>	<p>When there is a clear course of action easily identifiable by both parties.</p> <p>When there is a good relationship or when there is obvious rank / hierarchy.</p>	<p>Effective in achieving compliance but not commitment. If influencer compromises then it can become negotiation or joint problem solving.</p>

## Pull Styles

	<b>Descriptions</b>	<b>Uses</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>Personal Magnetism</b>	<p>Using charm, personality, personal attractiveness, enthusiasm, trust, love, respect.</p> <p>Power Source: Personal, moral, social.</p>	<p>Where there is scope for individuals to choose to follow you.</p> <p>In fluid or open situations.</p>	<p>Liable to produce dependency. Committed while personal needs are met. Can feel let down when influencer is not there.</p>
<b>Visioning</b>	<p>Using language and imagery to 'paint a picture others can see'. Identifying common purpose, areas of agreement, shared goals.</p> <p>Power Source: Personal, moral, position, expert.</p>	<p>Where there is a clear idea for the future e.g. Martin Luther King: 'I have a dream'.</p>	<p>Effective – adds meaning and purpose for others, draws people together, motivates and inspires. Picture must reflect shared values to be effective.</p>
<b>Bridging</b>	<p>Listening to, involving and supporting others. Finding connections with others where you can join your energy with theirs.</p> <p>Power Source: Personal.</p>	<p>Where there is scope for exploration, time to achieve change.</p> <p>In consulting or counselling situations.</p>	<p>Usually used to support other styles e.g. Persuasion. Some people, who will not be pushed, will talk themselves into changing their position when Bridging is used.</p>

<b>Environmental</b>	Adjusting the environment (physical and psychological) to encourage the desired behaviour e.g. target setting, praising, involving, consulting, facilitating, harmonising. Also seating patterns, temperature, use of noise and so on. Power Source: Any.	Where there is a clear desired outcome and time and resources are available.	Effective in supporting the other influencing styles. Unlikely to succeed on its own.
<b>Joint problem solving</b>	Working together to define the problem, the goals and the best solution. Power Source: Personal, Expert.	Where time and energy and motivation to change exists.	Highly effective. Requires high trust and skill. Can lead to best decision and high commitment. Can be more time consuming and uses more emotional and physical energy.

## Summary

- We all may need to develop influencing skills whatever our role or position.
- Everyone has a source or sources of 'power or authority' and these will have an impact on our approach and ability to influence.
- There are a variety of influencing styles, however, Push and Pull are often viewed as the two main styles.
- Push styles are generally about 'moving' a person to another viewpoint or position.
- Pull styles are generally more about motivating a person to see the possibilities of changing to another viewpoint or position.
- Push and Pull styles have many different uses, and leaders will draw on aspects of both styles dependent on the situation and circumstances. There is no right or wrong but it is fair to say that Pull, when combined with the minimum amount of Push needed to achieve compliance, are most effective in developing commitment and attitude change.