

3 simple ways to become more influential at work, says Stanford expert: 'There's nothing more powerful'

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You don't have to be a CEO, or even a manager, [to be influential](#) at the office.

Getting your coworkers to listen to and support your ideas boils down to just three [emotional intelligence](#) techniques, says Stanford University lecturer and communication expert [Matt Abrahams](#). They can help you show your peers and bosses that you have strong ideas, form meaningful connections across your workplace, improve your job-related skills and maybe even land you a promotion, he says.

The advice is timely, Abrahams adds: Hybrid and remote work mean most entry- and mid-level Gen Z and millennial employees get less face time with their bosses.

"Careers are very different now ... things are more remote and virtual, so you're not around people as much," Abrahams tells CNBC Make It. "You really are forging your own way and need to get others to at least support, if not follow, the things you're trying to do."

His three recommendations are simple, and can be applied to in-office or remote roles:

Figure out how to be helpful

First: Observe your office's dynamics. You can usually look online or check with HR to figure out what different teams work on and who reports to which manager.

Then, find a “leverage point” — a way to get noticed within that structure, Abrahams says. “If there are certain tasks people don’t like to do, stepping up to that can give you some access.”

You can volunteer to take notes during meetings, for example, which encourages the other people in the room to direct their attention to you. “They’ll want to make sure you capture things right, and you’ll have an opportunity to ask questions of others,” says Abrahams.

You could get involved with planning office events, or start a Google document that helps keep your team organized. If a single person is running the company’s social media, and you have relevant experience, volunteer to help with posts or produce videos.

“All of a sudden the role you have — a mundane role that many people don’t like — gives you access and influence,” Abrahams says.

Find allies

Whenever you find yourself in a room of people who don’t usually work with, you have an opportunity to form new relationships.

If you’re taking minutes in a meeting, for example, you can listen to how that group brainstorms, selects and executes on new ideas. You can identify people who think similarly to you, or can help you navigate your workplace’s dynamics and inner workings. You might even be able to connect with a higher-up who would be willing to grab a coffee can give you feedback.

Don’t treat your relationships as transactional, Abrahams advises. Seek out people you naturally connect with, and who your other coworkers respect.

“Check in with people and really listen when people say things to you,” says Abrahams. “I’m not saying be manipulative. Buy [and respond] to the things you care about. Those are the things that, I think, can make a difference.”

Support each other’s ideas

Once you’ve formed strong professional relationships, figure out how you can work together toward common goals. Abrahams calls it “aligning” with others.

The next step, he says, is to “amplify.” That can mean vocally supporting each other’s ideas: When someone has a good idea in a meeting, for example, say why you think it’s interesting or beneficial to the company’s mission.

You can also make your own ideas more influential by noting how your colleagues have helped shape it, says Abrahams: “Sally, Joe and I have been working on something we think could solve a problem” is often more impactful than saying the idea came from you alone. It shows that you’ve tested and garnered support for it, and you understand how to get things done within your company’s structure, he notes.

Consistently crediting your teammates helps get people to listen to you, and can make other coworkers more likely to ask for your input or include you on projects.

“There’s nothing more powerful,” Abrahams says.