

# Principles of Influence

The following ten principles are general strategies that leaders can use to persuade and influence others (Hoy & Smith, 2012; Cialdini, 2001):

1. **Principle of Attraction**—*Individuals are attracted to whom they are similar*: Create and nurture relationships based on common interests.
2. **Principle of Reciprocity**—*Individuals feel obligated to return a good deed*: Help others and they will feel obligated to help you.
3. **Principle of Collegueship**—*Individuals listen to and follow the lead of respected colleagues*: Seek out respected colleagues, solicit their advice, and win their backing.
4. **Principle of Commitment**—*Individuals are motivated to act on the basis of their public commitments*: Seek public and written commitments.
5. **Principle of Expertise**—*Individuals defer to those with demonstrated expertise*: Demonstrate your effective use of knowledge both formally and informally.
6. **Principle of Scarcity**—*Individuals desire what is scarce, not what is plentiful*: Use limited resources and information strategically and honestly.
7. **Principle of Trust**—*Individuals follow whom they trust*: Cultivate trust because influence of leaders expands as trust deepens.
8. **Principle of Fairness**—*Individuals desire fair treatment*: Be a model of fairness with your colleagues.
9. **Principle of Self-Efficacy**—*Individuals who are confident in their own ability usually succeed*: Believe in yourself and so will others.
10. **Principle of Optimism**—*Optimism enhances success*: Problems are filled with possibilities, just find them.

These are not isolated principles. They work in concert to enhance influence; in fact, their interactions with each other add to their potency. For example, if leaders demonstrate their knowledge in unobtrusive ways to garner influence, the potency of the influence grows dramatically if leader action is trustworthy, fair, transparent, and underscores the optimism of the outcomes. Likewise, the principle of reciprocity suggests that leaders should obligate followers by strategically doing favors. The key is doing favors that are for the good of the group and not for purposes of manipulation. Again, the potency of reciprocity grows when coupled with trust, fairness, optimism, efficacy and collegueship. Planful interactions of the principles dramatically increases their power.