



Leading Through Influence: Best Practices for Campus Budget Team

Presented by:

April Barnes, AVP Budget & Analytics

Glen Nakata, Assistant Dean for Finance & Administration, College of Education

Influence vs. Authority

- Influence (noun) - the **power** to have an effect on people or things, or someone or something having such power.
- Authority (noun) - the **power** to control or demand obedience from others.

Which one do you think is more useful to drive change?

Which one do you think is more difficult in practice?

Increasing your Influence

1 Build connections

People are more likely to hear you out if they fundamentally trust you, build rapport with others across all levels of the organization.

Examples: Look for quick wins to lay a foundation for trust and rapport.

Acknowledge when you made a mistake and make it right. Be genuine, care about people and not the position. Understand where their communication style and yours may conflict, you adjust NOT them. Cultivate personal connect points.



Increasing your Influence

2 Listen before you try to persuade

Active listening is essential to making others feel heard, respected, and valued.

Examples: Cannot be defensive, you must possess the emotional maturity to hear unflattering feedback. Don't fill the voids, periods of silence are okay, we can listen faster than others can talk. Get out of your own head, don't be thinking about your response. Ask open-ended questions, steer away from yes/no questions.



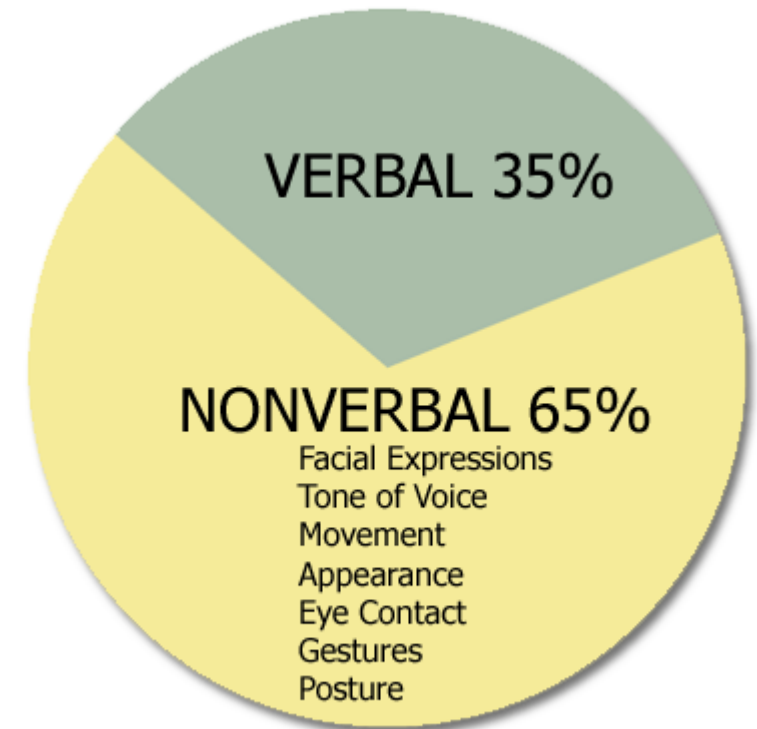
Increasing your Influence

3 Mind your body language and tone

Active listening is essential to making others feel heard, respected, and valued.

Examples: Nonverbal communication is more powerful than verbal messaging. When verbal, nonverbal and tone align the message is interpreted as authentic.

Examples: Relaxed posture, eye contact, be still (no fidgeting), firm handshake, SMILE, lower pitch in voice to combat nervousness, project warmth and confidence in your tone.



Increasing your Influence

4 Develop expertise

Establish yourself as the recognized expert within your organization. This is a long process but invaluable.

Examples: Promote your team, complete certificate programs, blog about your subject, write a department newsletter, establish informal/formal training programs, attend conferences, serve on regional/state/national organizations. Make yourself and/or team visible across the organization. Be the “SME”



Increasing your Influence

5 Map a strategy

Develop organizational intelligence, review the structured organization chart but also the informal structure of how things really get done.

Examples: Build a “power map” and look for those that you’ll need to influence. Can you influence them directly or need someone else to help? Leverage your network, no one creates change on their own.



Increasing your Influence

6 Give people what they want

You have to answer the question, “What’s in it for me?”. Any proposal that is fundamentally about you and your interest will ultimately fail, people can see through it and all of your hard work to build rapport will be lost.

Examples: Leverage the information you received through active listening and building connections. Focus on the “we” instead of “me” when creating proposals.



That's great, but how does
this work in REAL life?

*Here is a look into the last
18 months at UNT.....*

1 Build connections

- Meet on neutral territory, or better yet go to them!
- Informal coffees and lunches work wonders.
- AFO Meetings, College Meetings, First Friday
- Process change failure (ABA)
- Cross trained Budget Office staff and assigned Budget Buddy
- AVP Peer Group (quarterly)



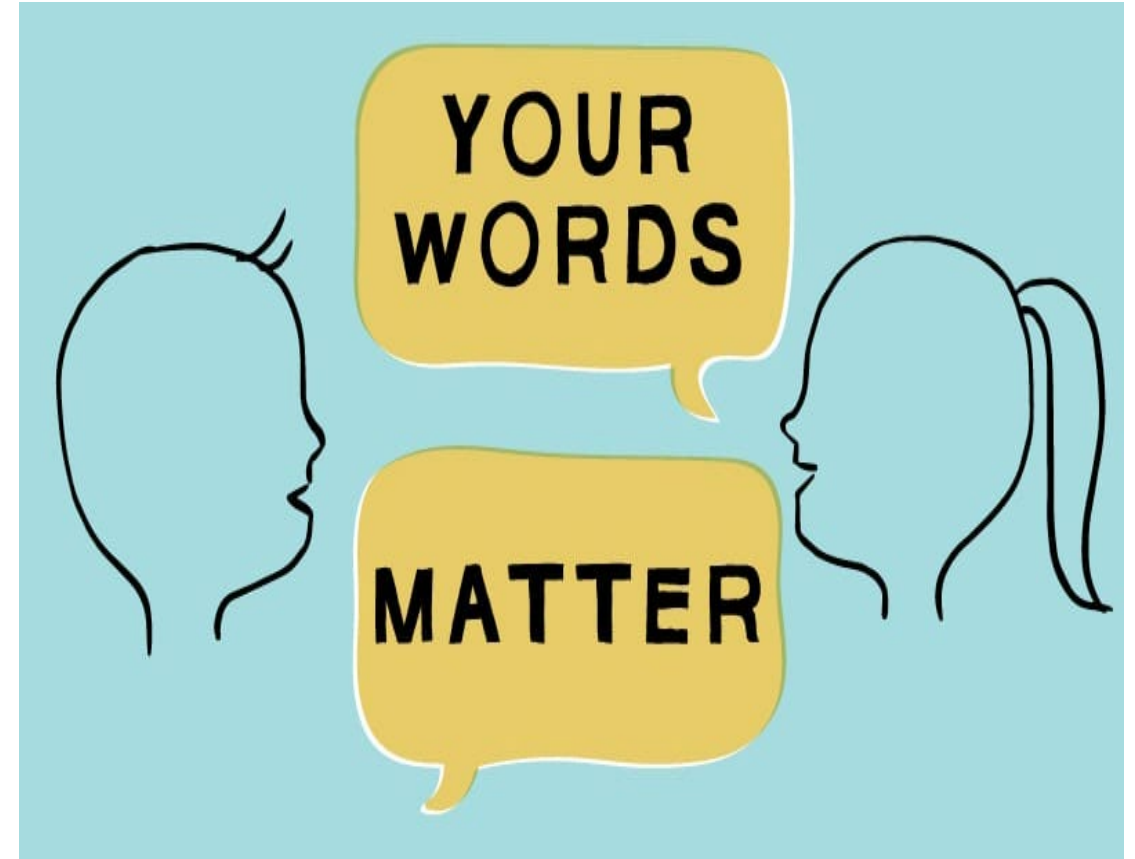
2 Listen

- Hosted focus groups with campus users specifically around three topics; two business process and training.
- Used a neutral party skilled in active listening to lead the focus groups and return results (anonymous).
- Individual conversations with campus users regarding budget instructions.
- Open forum at First Friday with University Budget Office (create safe space).



3 Body language and tone

- Culture change for the University Budget Office. Established values for the team and held each other accountable. Those who don't fit the culture should be moved out of role.
- Focus on providing an authentic interaction.
- Customer service focused interactions



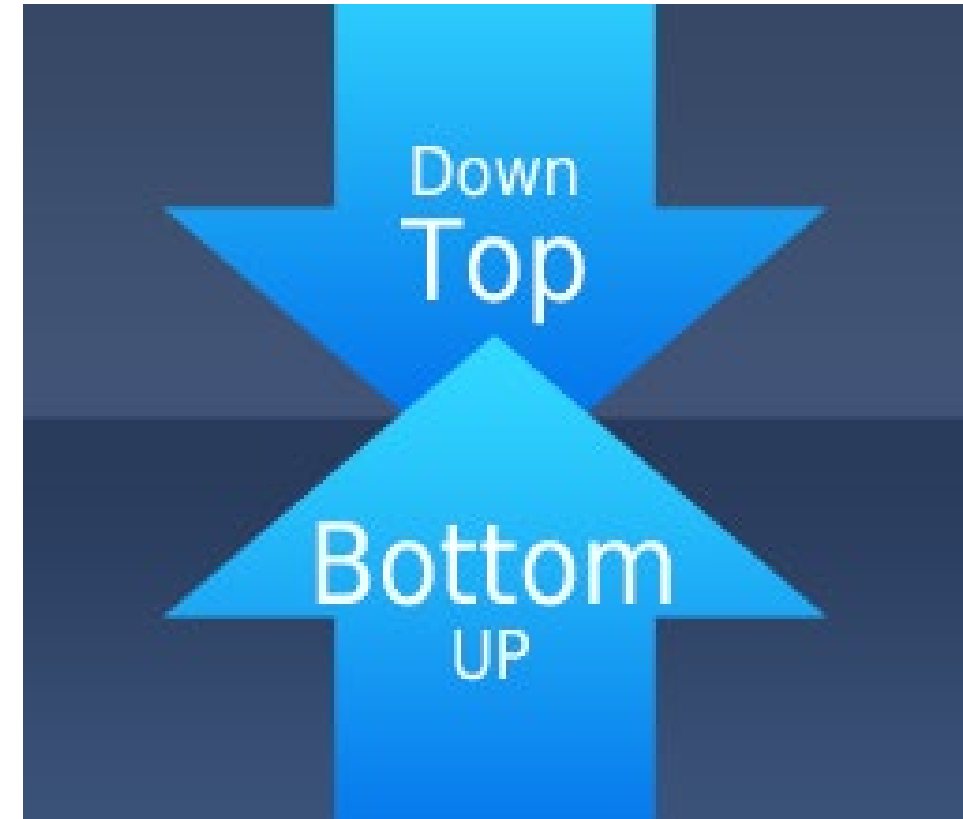
4 Expertise

- Created Finance Academy training with desk resources/manuals.
- Hosted Brown Bag with the Budget Office.
- Reenergized First Friday by bringing in other SME presenters outside of Budget Office.
- Open Lab



5 Strategy

- Leveraged customer wants and connections to secure resources for programming changes with budget transfers.
- Worked bottom-up instead of top-down. Change is much easier when the idea for change comes from the bottom.
- Encourage collaboration and breaking down silos – empower my staff and others on campus.



6

Give people what they want

- Enhanced budget instructions
- Removed non-value added steps in workflow
- Empower people to do their best
- Stabilized a 20 year-old incentive funding program
- Granted access based on job type, everyone gets the same
- Expanded training opportunities
- Deliver transparent and authentic communication



Building connections and giving people what they want.....an explanation.



Subject: COGNOS Reports Update

Good Afternoon Colleagues,

I'm writing to you today to apologize for the inconvenience and frustration you've endured this week regarding COGNOS reports.

Reports have been unavailable sporadically this semester but we understand that it's reached a new level of frustration this week after three days of unavailability. We are working hard on a solution and I want to be sure you fully understand it. First and foremost I want to assure you that it is not related to my discussion at February First Friday regarding Budget Overview.

We have plan to phase out older reports and replace them with an enhanced Budget Overview report. This will not happen until we've verified with end users (you) that the enhanced Budget Overview report is a quality value-add report.

From what we can tell so far, the problem of unavailability of COGNOS reports is happening at some point during our nightly refresh process. Each night, our process updates the data/information you see in COGNOS reports. It takes several hours and can only be completed in a prescribed timeframe. The last three nights, that process has been unsuccessful despite multiple individuals monitoring and troubleshooting overnight. We are collaborating with UNT System ITSS, UNT System Budget & Analytics, and UNT Decision Support to identify a solution.

There are a few theories that are being tested today/tonight. This recurrent issue is unacceptable and we aim to resolve it as quickly as possible. We understand how important it is for you to access reliable data to complete your tasks.

Transparency in this process is important so I will send you updates as I have them. As an advocate for you, I continue to work diligently with my colleagues to support your needs. Thank you for your patience as we find a resolution.

April

Customer Response.....



- “People appreciate (1) real communication and (2) understanding of our frustrations as the budget process begins and folks are already stressed and (3) an actual explanation of the problem that you provided yesterday. You are a breath of fresh air!”
- I just wanted to say that your transparent approach is refreshing and appreciated!! Thank you for all of your team’s hard work.
- “I, personally, appreciate the communication. Thanks for all you are doing to help.”
- “Thanks for such prompt response and for your personalized, professional help.”
- “I just want to say “Thank you!” I think this may be the most thorough, genuine, and transparent explanation of an issue I have ever received from any department in my six years at the university. We appreciate you!”

Final Thoughts.....