



*In critical moments, your ability or inability to bring all of yourself will determine the success of the influence attempt.*

**STRATEGY**

◆ TSUN-YAN HSIEH AND HUIJIN KONG, CO-AUTHORS,  
*POSITIVE INFLUENCE*

# Mastering influence

**I**nfluence is ubiquitous and you are using it, well or poorly, in your life whether you are aware of it or not. You have likely been to a powerful workshop or training program where you felt you learned a lot. A few weeks after, though, you cannot remember much and start thinking the workshop wasn't that impactful. What drives the gap between your immediate feeling at the workshop's end and a few weeks later? It is creating the attitudes and habits you need to adopt and internalize what you learned and to consistently practice and apply those learnings.

Developing proficiency in influencing, like becoming good in any skill, has four stages:

1. Unconsciously unskilled.
2. Consciously unskilled.
3. Consciously skilled.
4. Unconsciously skilled.

To go from 'unconsciously unskilled' to 'consciously unskilled' is a logical progression once you are exposed to a new idea. To go from 'consciously unskilled' to 'consciously skilled' is all about commitment and practice. Improvement comes with consciously devoting

time and energy to adopting the skill. Practice will lead to habituation. You explore what habit you will adopt to use the principles day in and day out. You determine who will practice with you. And you envision what or who will enable you to call on these principles during times when you need them most.

To go from 'consciously skilled' to 'unconsciously skilled' (mastery) is essentially about your commitment to personal growth—not just about what you can access today, but about going outside your comfort zone, activating underutilised parts of your being, and integrating what you have experienced and learned into your being. Becoming more conscious and calling on the inner qualities needed for positive outcomes requires a great deal of effort initially, but over time it will become more automatic.

So, in terms of your influence, how do you consciously work to align your inner being with your influence attempts? Are you constantly working to uncover more of your personal qualities, to use a variety of strengths, and to minimise your negative instincts? Are you able to break through some inner barriers that hold you back from



**ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

**Tsun-Yan Hsieh** is Chairman and Lead Counselor, LinHart Group. Tsun-Yan is co-author, *Positive Influence: The First and Last Mile of Leadership*.

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seizing the moment and bringing your most heightened being to bear?

In critical moments, your ability or inability to bring all of yourself—mind, heart, and soul—will be keenly felt by others and will determine the success of the influence attempt.

The following five habits and attitudes will enable you to become more proficient in involving your inner being to have a positive influence:

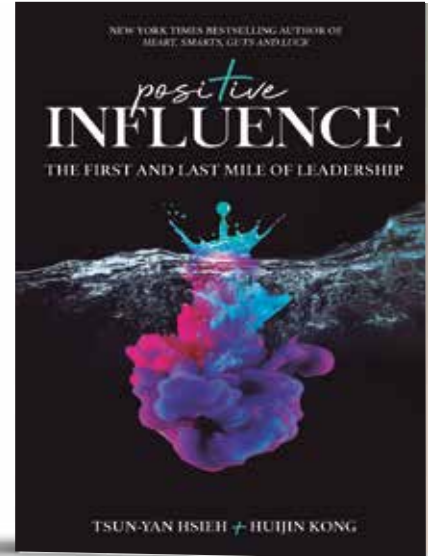
**1. Care about others:** Always commit to raising others' productivity, growth, and satisfaction—not just your own. When you intensively care about others, you have a greater chance of punching through inertia and concerns, inspiring people to act.

**2. Stretch yourself:** Pause your instinctive reactions and try approaches new to you. If you are a task person, try a relational approach, or vice versa. Too often, people default to a rational business approach; there are many roads to Rome. Going outside your current comfort zone is rewarding: you uncover more of your whole self, and better



### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

**Huijin Kong** is Principal, LinHart Group. Huijin is co-author, *Positive Influence: The First and Last Mile of Leadership*.



apply the influence needed to result in a positive outcome.

- 3. Be present:** Notice what is going on in yourself and in others during influence attempts, be it an angry scowl, or a twitch around the eyes. Discern what are the key pressures and needs to be addressed.
- 4. Invite feedback:** At every opportunity, ask others for their feedback regarding how well you performed in accomplishing specific influence goals you had, and how you made people feel.
- 5. Take time to reflect:** Following the completion of any project, activity, or influence attempt, reflect on what you did well or you need to improve, along with what assumptions and beliefs you need to revise.

The more you consciously practice these habits, the more you will become an habitualised master at better influencing others. **IM**