

SESSION NOTES FROM GARRISON WYNN

This overview of Garrison's presentation is designed for people who attended the session.

FOCUS ON SOLUTIONS

The research

- 5,000 top-performing people of influence in multiple industries

What drives people's choices?

- People don't choose what's best; they choose what they are the most comfortable with. It doesn't matter if it's the best.
- **The lesson:** Being the best is not good enough. **The illustration:** The best product or service does not always succeed.
- **The key:** Success is based on knowing what people value, why they value it, and how comfortable you can make them feel.

Proof of value

- **Creating willingness:** To create a culture of change, you must let people know their experience plays a key role in the future. People who feel valuable are more likely to be supportive even if they don't fully agree with the changes taking place.
- Making sure people feel valued is critical to success. Prove your value by doing what's best for others.

AN EXERCISE IN INFLUENCE

The Plumber Exercise: Doing a Good Job

5. Good job
4. Not that good
3. Less than not that good
2. Bad
1. Really bad

- If people don't like your behavior, they will look for reasons to mistrust or disagree with you.
- What the top 1% of leaders would only discuss anonymously: The opinion that others have of your behavior is more powerful than your skill.
- Your behavior always betrays your skill.
- Plumber No. 1 didn't look at the role he played in his own behavior: Are you willing to take a realistic look at how others see you? Make sure your behavior does not interfere with your ability to influence others. (Remember: People don't work for companies; they work for *people*.)
- Can you have horrible behavior and be supportive? If your employees don't like your behavior, they will always do the minimum.
- What comes out of your mouth (not necessarily your knowledge or skill) creates the culture around you.
- Employee loyalty and customer loyalty are not driven by satisfaction (i.e., solving their problem); loyalty is driven by the overall *experience* they had. You can give people exactly what they want and they might still choose someone else over you. Know what it feels like to deal with you, particularly during times of change.

WHAT THE MOST INFLUENTIAL HAVE IN COMMON

They know the impact of clarity.

- Don't let your brilliance prevent you from making sense! It doesn't matter how smart you are if no one knows what you're talking about.
- **A clear example:** If your job is to get everybody on the same page, you should at least make that page a lot easier to read. Does everyone agree on what a job well done looks like?
- Communication is not just about making the information available; it's about making sure people actually understand what you've told them. Does it have legs? Is it easy to understand and repeat?

- In our poll of 500 CEOs, 479 of them agreed that if a person cannot clearly communicate the value of his or her topic in the first three minutes, that person doesn't belong in the meeting.
- Beware of mixed messages such as "Be safe but hurry up!"

They know clarity is the foundation of value.

- People buy into what they can understand quickly. If you are easy to understand, you have more influence. **Simple is the new smart.**
- A good idea is not good enough. You'll have more influence if you position your good idea inside the clarity-of-value formula:
- **Issue** – a well-defined description of the problem, using simple terminology.
- **Action** – the solution, with big picture first, followed by details. Keep it simple and repeatable.
- **Impact** – why the solution has specific value to a particular person or group.
- Most people believe that if you can't simplify your information, you don't understand it well enough yourself.

They avoid jellyfish communication.

- No spineless leaders! Influential communicators do not blame those above them for changes the company requires.
- Non-jellyfish statement: "Our new process is different but definitely doable."

They stand on their value.

- Not every buying decision hinges upon price. Stand on your value by posing the right question: Will a lower price still be worth it if it does not completely meet your expectations?
- Realism and honesty are your weapons; low price equals high risk, and high price equals low risk.
- Everybody values something; you just have to ask the right questions.

They know the perfect team is not perfect.

- The definition of a team is people playing different positions to achieve a common goal.
- The foundation of true agreement is disagreement. People must feel it's permissible to voice differing opinions. You cannot reach a real solution unless you know what the problems are.
- People are loyal if they can be honest about how they feel. They get people to THINK.
- Teaching or transferring your knowledge onto others is not enough; you need to get people to think by asking questions that provoke thought. **Good question**: "Is there a question I didn't ask today that you think I should have?" This proves you care and gets them to think more deeply about what you've told them, which might spur them to ask the questions they were afraid to ask.
- Avoiding bad questions is easy; asking good questions takes effort.

- The agreement formula (ask, listen, agree, recommend) works because people rarely disagree with their own ideas. The best idea they've heard is their own idea.
- In fact, the three most common traits of top performers were
- a superiority complex—they believe they deserved to win;
- an insecurity complex—they felt their efforts were not good enough, which fueled constant improvement; and
- impulse control—they resisted temptation enough to sacrifice the present for the future.
- For the average person, the takeaways are these:
Know you can win.
- Don't stop getting better because you have had some success.
- Be patient and look for the opportunities that will really get you where you want to go.

They spend time with people who can position them to succeed.

- The top 1% network with the right people and associate themselves with those who can help them succeed. If you spend all your time with people who can't help you succeed, you don't have time for those who can or will.
- Spend most of your time with your best people; don't spend much time with customers who don't buy enough.

They have fair partnerships that create good relationships.

- It's difficult to build strong relationships if you are perceived as making others work hard while you goof off.
- Show your people that you have the willingness to do the very things you ask of them.

They are present in the moment.

- They use body language and make eye contact that shows they are in the moment. Be sure you express the care and concern that makes people feel heard and valued.
- People are loyal to (and write checks to) people who are present in the moment!
- Pay attention to what's important. Good relationships with coworkers and employees can save your life. People who like each other tend to look out for each other.
- The danger of complacency: Satisfaction might be the goal of the average person, but it is the enemy of greatness.

They make good first impressions.

- First impressions count! Our research shows the experiences that people have on their first encounter with you creates the filter through which they view all other interactions with you.
- To stay competitive, you need the advantage of making a good first impression in all areas.
- People are more likely to choose what looks good instantly. Are you realistic about how others view you? Are you viewed as a solution or an obstacle?

They deal well with generational differences.

- Younger workers often lack a sense of urgency; they struggle to understand that “now” means drop what you’re doing and tend to this NOW!
- The worst strategy you can have is wishing people were more like you.
- To get younger people to show up consistently for work, make it clear that you are willing to replace them with someone less skilled who does show up consistently.
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- **What works:** Trust each other and believe that every problem comes with its own set of solutions.

KEYS TO CUSTOMER SERVICE

Managing expectations and emotions

- Don’t look down on people. You might have to lower your expectations of people a little bit to be effective.
- If you receive consistent complaints, you are losing business! Customers complain about only 4% of the problems they experience.
- Most service providers exceed expectations NOT because they are the best but because they set those expectations to begin with. You reduce complaints if you let people know what will happen and how they might feel when it happens.

Blame containment

- Deflecting blame allows you to avoid the burden of responsibility...but it builds stress. The leading cause of stress: Knowing what you should be doing and consistently doing something else.
- We cannot blame others – or the customer – for the problem. We simply need to apologize and fix it. That creates a positive, memorable experience.
- The fact is you can do everything right and fix the problem, and you still might lose the customer because the *experience* was negative. Blame shifting can do that.

THINKING LIKE A TOP PERFORMER

Innovative thinking

- You can't lead by example if you are a bad example.
- **Leadership defined:** People following you because they want to, not because they have to.
- Don't let the media tell you what your life looks like. Good news does not sell newspapers!

Change

- We have to be innovative to make change work. The big question – Can you do things differently?
- **Action and adaptability** – Change is not the problem; resistance to change is the problem. If you continue to do what you've always done, you'll get the results you've always gotten.
- To be influential, you have to set things up so others can be successful even when things go wrong.
- **Your value** – If you make others feel valuable, you'll be seen as more valuable. If you understand and believe in your own value, it's much easier to show and deliver more value to others.

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Research on employee engagement: Find it at evolvepg.com/about/impact

How to Get People to Do What You Want Them to Do

by Garrison Wynn, CSP

If this article title pulled you in, maybe you've recently realized that having a better tactic or using your *charisma* is not producing the influence you would have hoped. You've read the leadership and negotiation books and you've witnessed some disturbing YouTube videos that appear to prove you no longer need talent or a point to be in front of a camera. However, depending on your age and situation, one or more of the following all-consuming problems still remain: Your employees just can't get the job done, your boss is a low-IQ narcissist, your parents think you actually want *their* life, your girlfriend is addicted to vampire books, your boyfriend is still a "skater-dude" at age 30, or your 22-year-old son has just told you "I don't, like, see myself as, like, working every day at a job and stuff."

Could it be that what works for others in the area of influence will not work for you? Over the years, Wynn Solutions (along with former Gallup researchers) has conducted anonymous surveys with thousands of extremely influential people who have a proven track record of motivating people to do what needs to be done. From them, we found the root of influence to be some foundational ideas that we often deem irrelevant. Here are those ideas:

Are you proving to people that you see them as valuable? Have you told them that you appreciate their talent and could not have done so well without them? That's very different from just saying "Good job!" And it's not as ridiculous as saying "You'll have a job here as long as you want one," which seems to indicate that they will definitely quit – it's just a question of *when*.

Are you being sincere but emphatic with your adult child who still lives at home? These days, over 50 percent of all adults 18-26 years old live with their parents. So if you are in your 20s and living at home, it's pretty close to normal these days. However, if you have an adult child still living at home, not making a contribution, wearing your bathrobe, and wanting to know when more food will be arriving, you need to be forthright. You might say something loving but pointed, like this: "The only way someone else will appreciate you as much as we do is if they see you as self-sufficient. You and your generation have more opportunities and greater knowledge than any other generation has ever had. So getting out on your own (which will involve leaving this house, by the way) will cause the good things in life to come your way." Letting them stay too long sends the message "We love you so much that we're willing to sacrifice your ability to be a functional adult." Being 37 and still living at Mom and Dad's house is more than just pathetic; it's creepy.

Do you have extreme clarity? Intelligence is not enough. It doesn't matter how smart you are if no one knows what you're talking about. The average IQ for an executive is 104, which is lower than the average for middle management. But if you think your boss is stupid, remember that he's just smart enough to be your boss! If you've ever been to a Mensa meeting, you might have noticed a disturbing number of 35- to 50-year-olds wearing backpacks and a lot of crummy cars in the parking lot. Intelligence is just a small part of influence.

As for tried-and-true solutions, it all comes down to value.

1. *If you want to be influential, you must be able to **clearly state your value (or the value of whatever you're proposing)**.* Clarity is the foundation of value. People buy into what they grasp quickly. The

leading addiction on the planet is not drugs or alcohol or video games. It's convenience. We will abandon a complex process that works for a mediocre one that's easy but barely works. Simply stated, good ideas just aren't good enough. Case in point: It took 40 years to get seatbelts in cars, but they green-lighted the Pet Rock at the first meeting. Spray cheese caught on pretty quickly too.

We are influenced by things that sound good instantly, and nothing sounds better than what we seem to already believe. Making things very *clear* makes them familiar. When we hear something clearly stated, we will often say, "Oh, yes. That's common sense." But the truth is we did not think of it until it was very clearly stated. Clarity makes the stated value *make sense*. So if you think this paragraph has told you something that you already knew, then you are right and enlightened at the same time.

2. *To influence people under 30 years old, what you propose **must make sense at a very basic level**.* This younger generation grew up with so much information thrown at them that you've got to be able to show them why you're doing something. If it doesn't make relevant sense to them *today*, they will question it and have difficulty taking action on it. If you want young people to come to work early, you need a real business reason – not just that you like to get to work at 7:30 a.m. and don't particularly care for loneliness.
3. *The key to getting people to do what you want them to do is **understanding what they value**.* In its clearest, simplest form, what they value is love, money, and prestige. If they can get *that* from you, they're willing to listen and take action. Unfortunately, most people believe they need to outsmart others to get them to take action. So if you're upset because you think the world is run by idiots – well, you might have a point. Most research shows that it's easier to simplify things so you can compete. The truth is that when it comes to getting people to take action, in many cases, explaining your value is more valuable than actually *having* it.
4. *It all comes down to engagement.* You may have heard the term "**employee engagement**" or "**client/customer engagement**" and just viewed it as corporate buzzword, but it's the ultimate foundation of success. Engagement is what this article is really all about. You need real personal influence to make it happen. It's hard to be successful at your job if you think no one at work cares about you (especially your boss). It's difficult to write a check to someone who does not value you as a person. So the key word that ties it all together is *value*. The way to make sure people see your value and are willing to make a decision that will benefit you is to show them that *they* are valued. Then you have a level of engagement; you also end up with a minimal amount of haters. There is always that one person who hates success, Christmas, pizza, vacation days and money (your money, of course, not theirs).

According to Evolve Performance Group, an organization run by former Gallup executives and researchers, engaged employees are 40 times more likely to say they would recommend their company as a great place to work, and 4.5 times more likely to recommend their company's products and services. So not only is being influential the best way to get people to do what you want them to do; it's something you have to do just to compete.

The idea is to position yourself up front with all the influence tactics you can and then throw all your effort

behind that. This strategy is central to a story I often tell about a speaking engagement I had at a convention years ago. My wife was in the audience for my event. She'd just heard me speak and she was clapping – yes, even *after* a few years together, she still applauded (maybe because I was through talking). In fact, she clapped so hard that she lost the diamond in her ring, but she didn't know it at the time. So the next day she goes back and starts searching all along the 10,000-square-foot parquet floor. The custodians have already swept and mopped. Twice. Nothing has turned up. Everyone's thinking, "Lady, you're never going to find it." But my wife insists, "I'm looking anyway." So she's on the ground, face to the floor, searching, searching... She's sucking up dust bunnies for a full hour and a half before she spies a little glimmer from across the room. And there it is! In the end, we walked away with two big lessons. First, if something is important enough to you – if you believe in it enough – then the effort, skill, talent, and ability generated from your body and channeled into achievement is amazing. But also, if you buy a *r-e-a-l-l-y* **BIG** diamond, it's a LOT easier to find.

<http://www.garrisonwynn.com>