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Abstract

While managers may use their power over subordinates to achieve desired outcomes, influence tactics to “manage your manager” have been given increased attention. This study focuses on influence in lateral relations, where data is scarce.

An experiment was conducted using an online survey to test different tactics aimed at garnering support for a proposal. Participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups: Critique, Advice, and Control. The survey presented a scenario in which a peer (a co-worker at the same level in the organization) presented a proposal. In the Control group, no influence attempt was made to gain support for the proposal. Two different variations of consultation as an influence tactic were used in the Critique and Advice groups. In the Critique group, participants were asked to provide three to five critical comments on the proposal. Participants in the Advice group were asked to provide three to five suggestions for improving the proposal. The final question to all participants was to rate the level of support they would give the proposal.

A total of 230 participants completed the survey. When the Critique and the Advice group were combined into a single entity referred to as the Combined consultation group, no statistically significant difference in the level of support for the proposal was observed when compared to the Control group. However, when examining the three groups independently, the Advice group exhibited a significantly higher level of support for the proposal than the Control group, whereas the Critique group demonstrated a significantly lower level of support in comparison to the Control group.

In conclusion, using consultation as an influence tactic to get support for a proposal is effective when consultation is sought by asking for advice. When consultation is sought by asking for critique, the targets tend to give lower levels of support for the proposal compared to not making an influence attempt at all.

Introduction

Background

Seeking influence and power is often associated with an inner drive or desire to climb the corporate ladder and achieve certain personal career objectives.

However, a significant amount of exertion of influence in organizations does not follow downward reporting lines, and there are effective power bases beyond legitimate power. Katz and Kahn (1978) define an organization to be composed of interpersonal relationships and interdependencies, and navigating and influencing these organizations requires an understanding of the psychosociological dynamics and how agents can move targets to action.

Most corporations are organized as hierarchical structures with a general manager or chief executive officer (CEO) at the top of the hierarchy and different levels of organizational complexity and hierarchical depth depending on the size of the corporation and the nature of the business. Large organizations typically implement a divisional structure where divisions represent geographical areas, product lines or customer types (McShane, Steven L. & Von Glinow, Mary Ann, 2021) as shown in the example organization chart in figure 1.

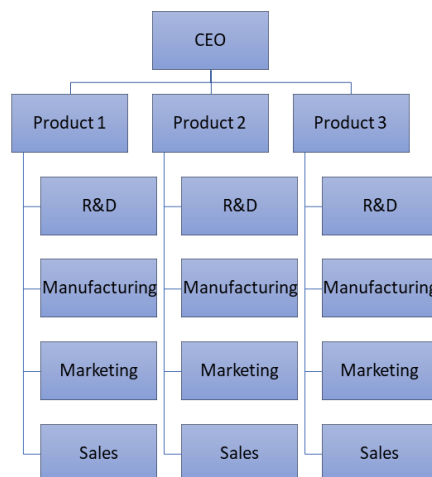


Figure 1 Simplified example of divisional organization structure based on product lines

Although hierarchical organizational structures have proven effective to organize the workplace, there will always be a need for influence and exertion of power that do not follow the solid lines of the organizational chart. This need can arise when the chosen organizational structure does not fit a given objective, such as organizing a multi-product marketing campaign (Figure 2) focusing on a specific customer type in a multidivisional structure with product line (not customer type) focused divisions. Modern organizations are often characterized by flat structures where agile self-directed groups are set up, sometimes temporarily, to do work (Church & Waclawski, 1999). In such environments, lateral relationships and the ability to influence peers are important. Other examples of contexts where mastering lateral influence skills is essential can be within formal or informal interest or project groups or within matrix organizations.

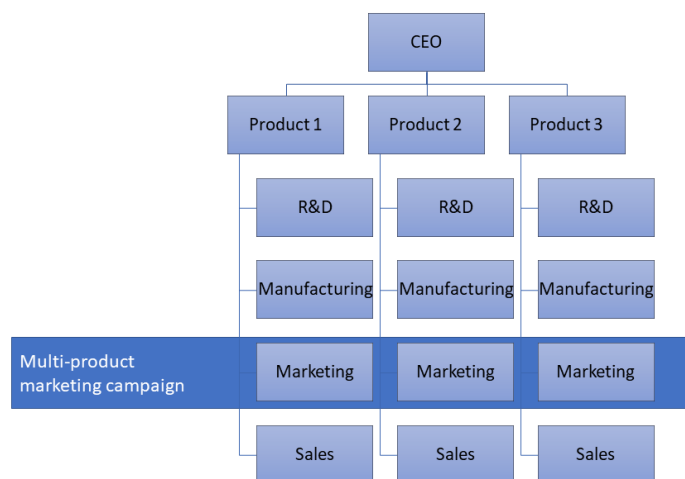


Figure 2 Simplified example of divisional organization structure based on product lines

Power balance in the workplace

Managers, by virtue of their formal positions, possess distinctive access to legitimate, reward and coercive power bases (French Jr. & Raven, 1959; Peiró & Meliá, 2003). Legitimate power is granted by the organization and gives specific roles the ability to request certain behaviors from others. Managers overseeing

personnel can set priorities and delegate tasks to their subordinates. Legal and quality managers can mandate the implementation of compliance with quality standards and relevant legislation. Personnel managers can reward employees through promotions, pay raises, bonuses, and awards. They can also exert their coercive power by showing disapproval, demoting, or firing employees.

Although the power balance between managers and subordinates is in favor of the manager, there are power bases accessible to individuals regardless of position. Expert power is the capacity to influence others by possessing knowledge or skills valued by others (French Jr. & Raven, 1959). Individuals with expert knowledge are often perceived as credible sources of information, and their opinions bear substantial weight in decision-making processes. Referent power is the capacity to influence others when others identify, like, trust, or respect the person. Referent power has to be built and is thus closely related to the term Social Capital (Adler & Kwon, 2002), which refers to the value of the goodwill (sympathy, trust, and forgiveness) others have towards us.

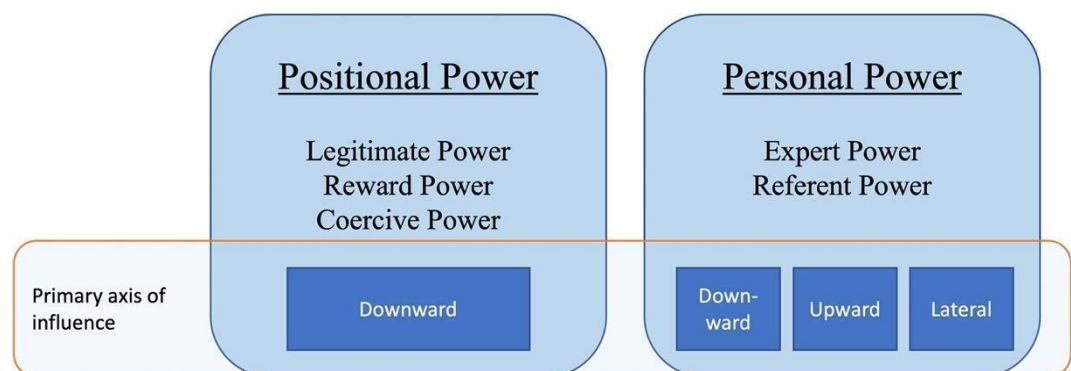


Figure 3 Actors have access to different power bases, depending on their position in an organization. Personal Power will have utility in all axes of influence, while positional power has primarily utility downwards in the organization.

Managers can use their legitimate, reward, and coercive power to influence subordinates (downward influence), but may also have access to expert power and referent power, depending on how they are perceived by others. The capacity of an agent to exert upward and lateral (i.e. between co-workers at the same level or with different managers) influence in an organization is based on the agent's access to expert and referent power bases as shown in Figure 3. In addition, an

agent can make use of influence tactics that to some degree manipulate the power balance between the agent and the target.

Persuasion and influence tactics

The effectiveness of persuasion or influence attempts is determined by a combination of factors related to the agent, interpersonal factors, factors related to the target and message factors (O'Keefe, 2016). Important factors related to the agent include charisma, communication skills (verbal and non-verbal), empathy, patience, and persistence. These factors contribute to the agent's referent power. Interpersonal factors include the relative power balance, the strength of the relationship, bilateral trust, and collaboration culture. Factors related to the target include individual motivation, personal goals, and perceived power balance. Most influence techniques focus on the structure, format, and content of a message to maximize persuasiveness – often by leveraging the above-mentioned factors.

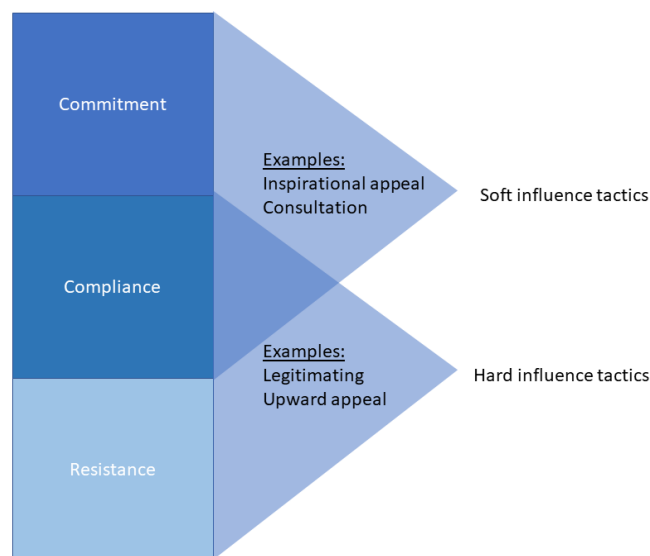


Figure 4 Consequences of hard and soft influence tactics (Adapted from Church & Waclawski, 1999)

To be effective in persuasion, studies indicate different influence tactics seem to be needed depending on the power bases available to the actor and the direction of the influence attempts (downwards, upwards or lateral) (Church & Waclawski, 1999, Yukl et.al., 1995, Yukl, 2006). The power base will also likely moderate the effectiveness of the influence attempt (Yukl, 2006). For instance, Exchange tactics will likely be moderated by the agent's reward power.

Persuasion attempts are often met with resistance. Ideally, a successful influence attempt is followed by compliance and commitment by the target (Falbe & Yukl, 1992). Hard influence tactics (e.g. legitimating, upward appeal) are more likely to lead to resistance, while soft influence tactics (e.g. inspiration appeal, consultation) are more likely to lead to commitment as illustrated in figure 4.

In a meta-analytic review, Lee et al. (2017) studied the effects of various influence tactics with a focus on the following eleven tactics:

- rational persuasion
- exchange
- inspirational appeal
- legitimating
- apprising
- pressure
- collaboration
- ingratiation
- consultation
- personal appeals
- coalition

Among these influence variables, consultation and collaboration showed the highest operational validity values for task-oriented and relation-oriented outcomes. Although Lee et al. also aimed to compare multiple directions of influence (upward-, downward- and lateral influence), their analysis was only able to find data related to all directions of influence for the “ingratiation” influence variable. Few studies have looked at consultation as an influence variable in lateral relations in the workplace. Yukl et. Al. (1990) called for further research with regards to the relative effectiveness of different influence tactics for different objectives, targets and situations. Later, Yukl and Tracey (1992) suggested that of the nine different influence tactics studied, rational persuasion, inspirational appeal and consultation resulted in the highest task commitment and effectiveness rating in all three influence directions. We will look further into consultation as an influence tactic.

Consultation

In their seminal work on a taxonomy for influence processes Kipnis et al. (1980) did not identify consultation as an influence tactic. Expanding on this work, Yukl and Falbe (1990) added inspirational appeal and consultation as influence tactics, based on leadership studies showing the importance of these factors (Bass, 1985, Yukl, 2006). They defined Consultation Tactics as “The person seeks your participation in making a decision or planning how to implement a proposed policy, strategy, or change” (Yukl & Falbe, 1990, tab. 1). Yukl elaborated on the concept of consultation in his book “Leadership in Organizations” (Yukl, 2006, p. 167–168), highlighting its multifaceted nature. According to Yukl, consultation can take various forms, with negotiation and joint problem-solving being common approaches aimed at facilitating agreement among involved parties.

Fu et al. (2001) conducted cross-cultural studies and found that consultation has demonstrated effectiveness across different cultural contexts. Their research suggests that the practice of consultation transcends cultural boundaries and remains a valuable influence tactic across diverse cultural settings.

In the field of influence research, two questionnaires have emerged as prominent and extensively validated methods: Profiles of Organizational Influence Strategies (POIS) and Influence Behavior Questionnaire (IBQ). During the last two decades they have undergone multiple validations and studies with subsequent iterations and refinements. A fundamental distinction between these two instruments lies in their respective aims and target populations. The POIS primarily focuses on soliciting self-reporting data from agents. In contrast, the IBQ was specifically designed as a questionnaire administered to targets of influence attempts. The Target Influence Behavior Questionnaire - General (IBQ-G) version, as presented in the article by Yukl et al (2008), includes four questions relating to consultation which can be labeled helping (question 33), suggesting (question 34), critical thinking (question 35), and improvement (question 36). These are quite different ways of consulting and may lead to different outcomes.

The Unity Principle

Successful influence attempts in lateral relationships are likely to be based on the perceived expert and/or referent power the influencer possesses. Cialdini (2014) lays out a framework of six principles of influence that to some degree relates to these two power bases. Cialdini's principles of influence are: reciprocity, commitment or consistency, consensus or social proof, authority, liking, and scarcity. Cialdini focuses on the influence target rather than the agent and certain vulnerabilities in human nature that an influence agent can exploit. One way to understand the link between Cialdini's approach and the concept of power bases is that both expert and referent power are related to the *perceived* expertise or likability of the influencer (figure 5). It is this perception that several of Cialdini's influence tactics target, by seeking to modify or exploit it. In his book "Pre-suasion" (2017), Cialdini introduced a seventh principle in influence tactics that he called "unity". Unity is the shared identity that the influence target experiences with the agent. As an example of this principle, in a situation where garnering support for a new proposal is attempted, Cialdini differentiates between asking a target "what do you think of this proposal?" and "how would you suggest making this proposal better?". According to Cialdini, the first question creates distance (influence targets tend to critique and disassociate themselves from the proposal) and the latter creates unity (targets become co-creators of the proposal and associate themselves with it). Additionally, in the latter variation, Cialdini's "consistency" principle may also come into play as targets who feel they have co-created the proposal will tend to be consistent with the (potential) support expressed during the constructive interaction.

Although Cialdini has not referred to the research of Yukl and his co-workers, they all describe consistent characteristics and behaviors associated with consultation as an influence tactic. Cialdini's focus on the influence target rather than the agent also coincides with the principle behind IBQ. However, while Yukl and co-workers studied how the targets perceive the effectiveness of influence attempts, Cialdini recognized and explored the varied reactions and responses that individuals may have to different tactics employed to influence their behavior. This nuanced understanding of diverse reactions gives practical utility to

Cialdini's principles, making them valuable tools when attempting to convert influence and persuasion theory to practice.

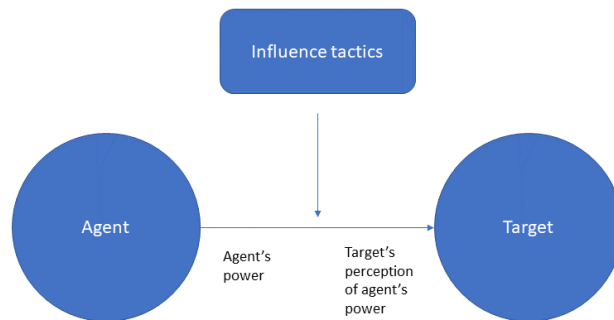


Figure 5 Some influence tactics attempt to modify or exploit the target's perception of the agent's power

Research question

Based on this background, we have formulated the following research question:
How does influence in lateral relations using consultation most effectively happen in the workplace?

Hypotheses

Individuals who attempt to impose change or action in an organization, will likely be more effective if they can successfully convince stakeholders of their proposal. Influence objectives may vary and have been defined as the following five groups (Yukl et al., 1995): Assign Work, Change Behavior, Get Assistance, Get Support, and Get Personal Benefit. We will focus on the influence objective Get Support. More specifically, to get support for a proposal. Although external motivational factors may move an individual to action when being assigned work or requested for assistance, intrinsic motivation has been shown to be uniformly associated with positive employee outcomes (Kuvaas et al., 2017). The main intrinsic motivation factors are autonomy, mastery, and purpose (Pink, 2010). Not

consulting individuals or groups of employees that will be affected by a decision is contrary to supporting their sense of autonomy. Listening to the insights and knowledge of co-workers will enhance followers' sense of autonomy (Zhou et al., 2022). Consultation is reported to be among the most frequently used influence tactics by both agents and targets (Yukl & Falbe, 1990) regardless of direction (upward, downward, or lateral). However, most studies on the effects of consultation look at downward influence attempts (Shef et al., 2019; Zhou et al., 2022).

Hypothesis 1: The degree of support for a proposal will increase if consultative influence techniques are used in lateral relations.

The manner in which people are consulted is not arbitrary. To ask a target for comments, expectations, or critique may create more involvement than no involvement, but asking for advice creates a different type of engagement. By being asked for advice, targets feel like they are helping to create the final proposal, not just commenting on it (Cialdini, Robert B, 2017). Cialdini's Unity principle is about creating a cohesive identity. It can be related to group identity (family, location, religion, etc) or to a sense of co-creation or shared purpose.

Hypothesis 2: The type of consultation (advice or critique) will determine the effect of the influence attempt for support of the proposal so that request for advice will elicit stronger support than request for critique in lateral relations.

Methods

Experiment

The hypotheses were tested using an experiment where a web-based questionnaire generated in nettskjema.no (University of Oslo, Norway) was posted on the authors' Facebook and LinkedIn profiles. In order to maximize participation, a paid Facebook campaign was also run, targeting an audience belonging to the age group 23-64 and located in Norway. The invitation to complete the questionnaire used the challenges in getting employees to return to work after the COVID-19

pandemic as the motivation and background for the survey. Participants were asked to supply demographic control variables including gender, age (measured in 10-year intervals), employment sector and employment tenure. A number of questions regarding use of home office during and after the period of COVID-19 related restrictions were included to conceal the real objective of the experiment (Appendix 1). An imagined situation was described to all the participants, where a co-worker, on the same level as the participant, but with a different manager, was tasked to suggest a new and inviting office layout. To avoid overwhelming support for the proposal among participants, the proposal was purposely designed to contain a combination of potentially positive and negative outcomes for the target. The complete scenario can be found in Appendix 2.

Participants were randomized into three groups:

Group 1: “Critique” - was asked to criticize the suggestion

Group 2: “Advice” - was asked for advice to make the suggestion better

Group 3: “Control” - was the reference group and were not asked for neither critique nor advice.

The survey was identical for all three Groups except that Group 1 and 2 were presented with an imagined situation where the co-worker consulted with them about the proposed new office layout. Group 1 was asked to provide a minimum of two and a maximum of five critical comments about the proposal and group 2 was asked to provide a minimum of two and a maximum of five suggestions or advice for improvement of the proposal. Both critical comments and advice had to be given as free text in five separate text boxes. The final question to all participants was to rate the level of support they would give the proposal on a scale from 0-7 (0 = will absolutely not support, 7 = will absolutely support).

To increase the survey's reliability, a pilot version was distributed to a small group of people to validate the readability and quality of the survey. The pilot group gave feedback which led to some minor changes before the invitation to the survey was distributed on social media.

Once the number of participants for the Control group had reached our target, further randomization was restricted to Group 2 and Group 3.

Statistical analysis

To test hypothesis 1, we merged the answers from Group 1 and Group 2 into a single group (designated Combined group) where different types of consultative influence tactics were used (both request for critique and request for advice). The Combined group was compared to the control group using a t-test of two-samples assuming unequal variances. To find both positive and negative deviation, we used a two-tailed analysis with an alpha of .05 and 0 as zero-hypothesized mean difference. Both the means and standard deviation for each group were calculated.

To test hypothesis 2 we kept group 1 and group 2 separate and performed a one-way between-groups ANOVA analysis. We also performed a two-way ANOVA to test the effect of moderators based on demographics.

Results

Demographics

The paid social media campaign had 26368 impressions and resulted in 414 clicks giving a click-through-rate of 1.5%. The age and gender distribution among individuals who clicked on the link (not necessarily completing the survey) in the advertisement inviting to the survey is shown in Figure 6.

Clicks by age and gender

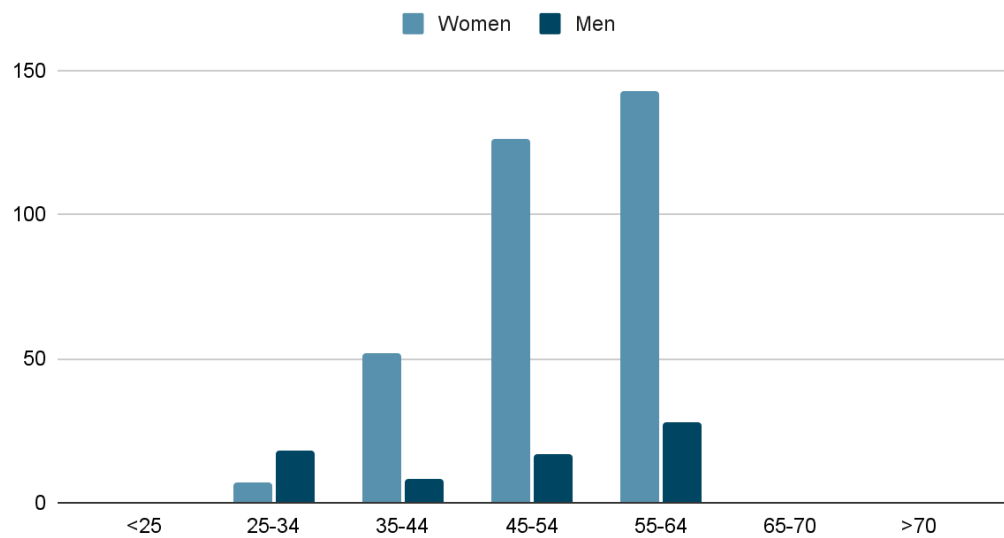


Figure 6 Age and gender distribution of clicks to participate in the experiment from one of the channels used to recruit study participants; a paid Facebook advertising

360 individuals started the survey, while only 230 participants completed it: 112 in the Control group, 66 in the Critique group and 51 in the Advice group. The age and gender distribution of the population that completed is shown in Figure 7.

Respondents by age and gender

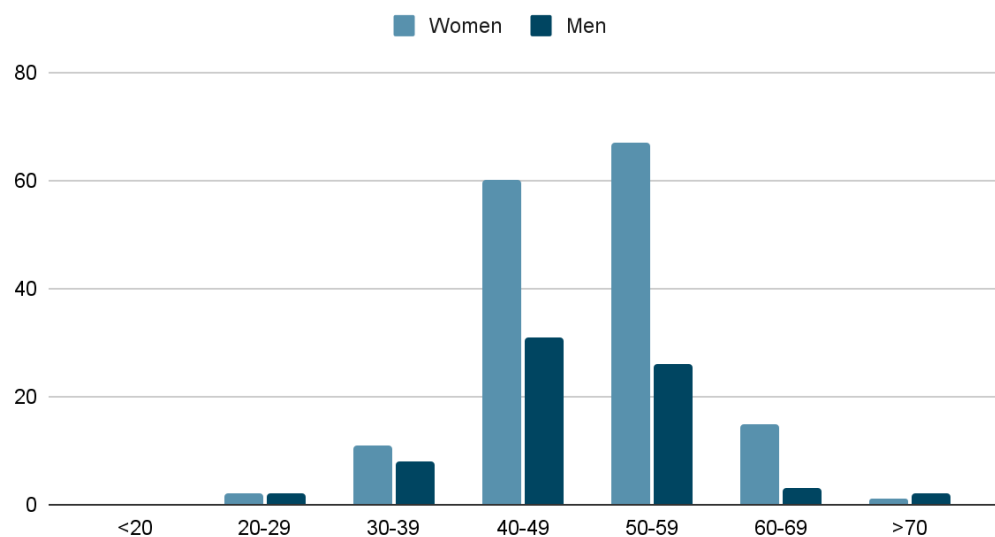


Figure 7 Age and gender distribution of all participants who completed the experiment. There were 2.1x more women participants than men.

Table 1 shows the demographics in the population across all three arms of the study as it relates to educational level, which sector they work in, time in current position, if they are in a manager role, and their access to home office use.

Category	Alternatives	Percent
Highest completed education	7th grade	1,3 %
	High school	12,7 %
	Bachelor/Cand.Mag.	41 %
	Mastergrad or PhD	45 %
Sector	Private sector	46,3 %
	Public sector	48,5 %
	Other sectors	4,4 %
	Unemployed	0,9 %
Time in current position	<1 year	9,2 %
	1-5 years	38,4 %
	6-10 years	18,8 %
	>10 years	32,3 %
	Not relevant	1,3 %
In manager role	No	67,2 %
	Yes	32,8 %
Possibility for home office	Yes	90,8 %
	No	9,2 %

Table 1 Descriptors of the 230 participants who completed the experiment. Note the even distribution between private and public sector and the high proportion of participants with the possibility of using home office

Hypothesis testing

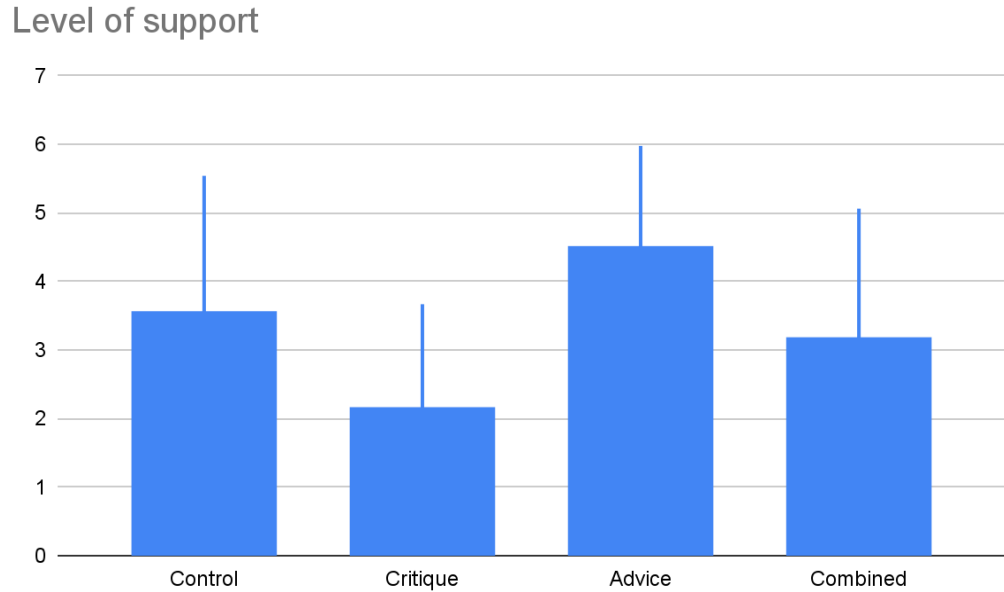


Figure 8 Mean level of support (and standard deviation) for the proposal on a scale of 0 (“Absolutely not”) to 7 (“Absolutely”) for the control group, the group asked for critique, the group asked for advice and the combination of the “critique” and “advice” group

The mean level of support was 3.54 (SD = 2.00) in the Control group, 2.14 (SD = 1.49) in the Critique group and 4.49 (SD = 1.53) in the Advice group. In the Combined consultation group (Critique and Advice combined) the mean level of support was 3.16 (SD = 1.90). See Figure 8.

Hypothesis 1

The t-test comparing the Combined group (both types of consultative influence) with the Control group showed no significant difference ($t(225) = -1.44$, $p = 0.15$). Therefore, there was no support for hypothesis 1 in our data.

Hypothesis 2

The one-way between-groups ANOVA test looking at the three groups separately showed that the difference in level of support was significant between all three groups with a F-value of 26.78. Eta-squared was 0.192 which indicates that this is a considerable effect. Therefore, there was strong support for hypothesis 2.

Table 2 shows the mean difference between the groups.

	Control	Critique	Advice	Combined
Control	-	1.399*	0.954*	0.373
Critique	-1.399*	-	-2.354*	-
Advice	-0.954*	2.354*	-	-
Combined	-0.373	-	-	-

*Table 2 Mean difference of the level of support between groups. * indicates statistically significant difference at $p < 0.05$. Differences between the combined group and the critique or advice were not calculated as these are not independent groups*

The two-way ANOVA analysis to look for moderating effects of demographic variables (gender, age, education, tenure, etc) showed no significant effects.

Discussion

Both traditional hierarchical and matrix organizational structures will in practice include a complex web of lateral influence, whereby agents navigate a network of colleagues and managers to achieve their goals. For example, project managers in a project-based organization may need to persuade department managers to allocate the best resources for successful completion of their project.

Given the significant role of lateral influence in most organizations, it is critical for agents to master effective techniques for exerting influence in this context.

This study set out to test the effectiveness of two variations of consultation in lateral influence attempts by performing an experiment, thus addressing some of the shortcomings in the study by Yukl et. al. (1990). Consultation has been found

to be the most frequently used influence tactic in lateral influence attempts as reported by agents (Yukl & Falbe, 1990). Yukl et. al. (ref 1992 study) measured the effects of consultation in lateral relations (as well as other tactics and directions) as perceived by targets using a survey without separating between different ways to use consultation tactics towards the target. Our data is a novel contribution to the existing literature by giving insights into the effects of different types of consultation attempts on the level of support for a proposal using an experiment as methodology.

Hypothesis 1 was based on the findings by Yukl et al (1990) who demonstrated that consultation is among the most frequently used influence tactic, and findings by Lee et al (2017) which indicates consultation is the most effective influence method in lateral orientation. When consultation is considered as a combination of the two consultation sub-tactics (criticism and advice for improvement), our study did not replicate these findings as we did not find any significant differences. Having different findings while testing the same type of experiments is not uncommon (Higgins et al., 2003, Yukl et al. 1995) as cultural context, the nature of the influence attempt, and other factors that cannot be controlled for may differ. Our study design was non-personal (using an online survey), imagined (targets were not approached by a real co-worker), and with a specific message. The effect will probably not be constant across different messages (Jackson & Jacobs, 1983) and in more realistic settings.

A study by Clarke & Ward (2006) revealed significant correlation between consultation as an influence tactic and positive outcomes. However, the definition of consultation was relatively compounded (the supervisor asks if you know a good way to do it, and the supervisor asks for your opinion) and no measures were taken to control how the consultation was done. To unpack this, we formulated hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 to analyze different types of consultation attempts, combined and separately. By examining Group 1 and 2 as a combined group, we could not find a significant effect on the level of support.

When examining Group 1 and Group 2 separately, our results are consistent with Cialdini's seventh principle of persuasion; the unity principle (2017). When a

target is asked for advice to improve a proposal, the target will become a part of the solution and feel united with the co-worker who is making the proposal. The two consultation techniques had opposite effects on the level of support compared to the control group. The group that was asked to give advice on how to improve the solution generated a mean score of .954 ($p=.005$) higher than the control group, whereas the group that was asked for criticism generated a mean score of -1.399 ($p=.000$) relative to the control group. Therefore, not only did asking for advice provide stronger support than not making an influence attempt, but asking for criticism yielded less support than not using any influence techniques at all. In a study on the likelihood for purchase after asking for advice or expectations (Liu & Gal, 2011) compared to a control group, results were remarkably consistent with the results in our study (rescaled mean level-of-support/purchase-likelihood comparison: Advice: 3.84 vs 4.49, Expectations/Critique: 2.07 vs 2.14, Control 3.03 vs 3.54). Consequently, it makes a significant difference what type of consultation is used, and agents should focus on creating a sense of unity, or closeness, through co-creation. Asking for critique, comments, or expectations may alienate the target and result in less support for the proposal.

There was a considerable drop-out rate from both Group 1 and Group 2. In these groups, many participants who started the questionnaire failed to complete it. Contrary to Group 3, the participants in Group 1 and Group 2 were required to actively engage in the situation by answering questions with free text, as opposed to answering multiple choice questions. This extra effort necessitated the use of System 2. Kahneman (2012) defines System 1 as intuitive, fast, and automatic cognition, while System 2 is conscientious, calculating, logical, and slow. System 2 is associated with a higher cognitive burden. Consequently, the dropouts may be explained by simple laziness as completing the survey may not be deemed worth the effort. Re-formulating the request for critique or advice into a multiple-choice would not have required participants to think as deeply about the situation and potentially reduce the reliability of the study. While the engagement of System 2 was indeed the desired effect of the questions, the unfortunate side effect was the high drop-out rate.

Cialdini's consistency principle predicts that a person who has made a choice will stand by that choice even though it may cost more at a later stage (Cialdini & Trost, 1998). By engaging System 2 thinking and inviting participants in the Advice group to make positive contributions to the proposal, this may have activated the underlying mechanisms of the consistency principle. The increased level of support in the Advice group may thus be a combined effect of both the Unity principle and the Consistency principle.

This study focused on influence tactics in lateral relationships in the workplace. Previous studies have found significant effects of consultation in down-wards (Clarke & Ward, 2006; Furst & Cable, 2008) influence attempts. It is therefore likely that our results could be extrapolated beyond lateral influence attempts using consultation.

The study was performed in Norway, where the cultural context tends to equalize the power balance between employees and employers. A study on power balance in Scandinavia (Olsen, 2016) found that employees in Norway and Sweden perceive more power vis-a-vis employers than in Denmark, and highly skilled occupations perceive higher power than less skilled occupations. One of the participants in our pilot group expressed that her level of support for the proposal in the scenario would not have changed if the question came from a colleague compared to from her manager. Within similar cultural contexts, our findings may be applicable to influence attempts using consultation beyond lateral relations. However, generalization of the findings in this study beyond lateral influence attempts, or even within lateral influence attempts, but with different messages, should be done with caution.

The scenario the study participants were exposed to did not contain a description of any pre-existing relationship between the participant and the imagined co-worker who had developed the proposal. No information was given which would indicate the level of referent power (e.g. liking, charisma, competence) or the amount of social capital (e.g. sympathy, trust, norms of reciprocity (Adler & Kwon, 2002)) in the social context. Most likely our results were not confounded with such factors, but we cannot draw any conclusions on how different levels of

social capital held by the agent could have moderated the level of support with different influence tactics.

To further explore the effectiveness of influence tactics beyond lateral relations, it would be valuable to conduct a study that compares the influence tactics used when the same question is posed by a manager to a subordinate, and between two peers in a lateral relationship. This approach would allow for testing if the direction of influence has a moderating effect on achieving the influence objective, as well as provide insight into which tactics are most effective in each scenario. In addition, assessing and quantifying the social capital of the influencer could give insight into the potential moderating effects of social capital and the related referent power. Such a study remains for future work.

Conclusion

Our study indicates using consultation as an influence tactic to get support for a proposal is effective when consultation is sought by asking for advice. When consultation is sought by asking for critique, the targets tend to give lower levels of support for the proposal compared to not making an influence attempt at all.

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Appendix 1 - Questionnaire

Ditt kjønn

Kvinne

Mann

Annet / Ønsker ikke svare

Hva er din alder?

Under 20 år

20-29 år

30-39 år

40-49 år

50-59 år

60-69 år

70 år eller eldre

Din høyeste fullførte utdanning (grad)

Grunnskole

Videregående skole

Bachelor/Cand.Mag.-grad

Mastergrad/hovedfag eller høyere

Bransjen du jobber i

Privat næringsliv

Offentlig tjenesteyting

Ideell/Politisk organisasjon

Ikke i arbeid

Hvor lenge har du hatt nåværende stilling?

Under 1 år

1-5 år

6-10 år

Mer enn 10 år

Ikke relevant

Har du personalansvar?

Nei

Ja, jeg har en formell lederstilling med personalansvar

Nå noen spørsmål rundt arbeidssted

Har du mulighet for å ha hjemmekontor?

Ja

Nei

Hvor mange dager i uken hadde du hjemmekontor i en typisk uke under koronapandemien?

Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja» er valgt i spørsmålet «Har du mulighet for å ha hjemmekontor?»

Hvor mange dager i uken har du hjemmekontor nå, i en typisk uke?

Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja» er valgt i spørsmålet «Har du mulighet for å ha hjemmekontor?»

Hvor mange dager i uken skulle du ideelt ønske du hadde hjemmekontor?

Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja» er valgt i spørsmålet «Har du mulighet for å ha hjemmekontor?»

Hvor lang reisevei har du til jobben?

0-10 min

11-30 min

31-60 min

Over 60 min

Ta stilling til disse påstandene:

Jeg er mer produktiv på hjemmekontoret enn på jobbkontoret

Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja» er valgt i spørsmålet «Har du mulighet for å ha hjemmekontor?»

Helt uenig

Uenig

Delvis uenig

Verken enig eller uenig

Delvis enig

Enig

Helt enig

Jeg er mer kreativ på hjemmekontoret enn på jobbkontoret

Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja» er valgt i spørsmålet «Har du mulighet for å ha hjemmekontor?»

Helt uenig

Uenig

Delvis uenig

Verken enig eller uenig

Delvis enig

Enig

Helt enig

Jeg trives bedre på hjemmekontoret enn på jobbkontoret

Dette elementet vises kun dersom alternativet «Ja» er valgt i spørsmålet «Har du mulighet for å ha hjemmekontor?»

Helt uenig

Uenig

Delvis uenig

Verken enig eller uenig

Delvis enig

Enig

Helt enig

Appendix 2 - Proposal scenario

The imagined scenario that was used in the survey to sample the level of support for a proposal (the text below has been translated from Norwegian, which was the original language of the survey):

A working group at your workplace has been charged with drawing up a proposal to get more people back to the workplace. The leader of the group works in another department, i.e. with a different manager, but is at the same level as you.



The working group has concluded that a lounge area should be established with table tennis, foosball, free snacks, a soda machine and sofas where people can hang out and have informal conversations and social interaction. The only place where the new lounge area can be established is where your group has just arranged a new collaborative space for hybrid meetings.

Group 1:

Before the proposal is being delivered to the management group, your colleague in charge of the working group stops by your office and asks if you can have a critical look at the suggested proposal.

Group 2:

Before the proposal is being delivered to the leader group, your colleague in charge of the working group stops by your office and asks if you have any advice to further improve the suggested proposal from your point of view in order to get the proposal as good as possible. What advice would you give to improve the proposal?

All groups:

A couple weeks later, your manager stops by and tells you about the proposal being presented to the management team. He asks if you support the proposal. Will you give it your support?