

Ground Rules of Influence



Before you can think about your strategies to achieve influence, you need to understand the basic rules of the game:

- 01 **Establish Your POV shot**
- 02 **Map Your Ecosystem**
- 03 **Play Your Role (Not Your Title)**
- 04 **Surf the Power Zone**



BOTTOM LINE

Influence starts with clarity. You can't have it without a clear Point of View and an understanding of who's affected by it. Remember—you already have power, no title required. Connect your ideas to others so the concepts feels true, not just new.



Establish Your POV Shot

A point-of-view (POV) shot is a filmmaking term. It's the camera shot early on that shows the audience exactly what a character sees, as if through their eyes. It creates intimacy and alignment with the character's perspective, often heightening emotion or tension. All influence begins by deciding what conversation you want to be having and drawing others into your POV. You can't assume that others understand why you care, what your desired change might mean, and why it matters. A clear point of view is your north star. Name the change you seek, why it matters, and for whom.

A concise POV turns vague desire into a brief others can respond to—clarifying outcomes, signaling stakes, and inviting alignment. Share it with early allies; their questions will refine your language and strengthen your case. A crisp POV is the seed from which strategy and momentum grow.

YOUR MISSION: Write Down Your POV (Page 40) ♦ **VIGNETTE:** Brittany's Story (Page 50)



ASK YOURSELF

What's one change at work that would make your job—and the work of others—better? Remember this as you move through the Playbook.

Why does this matter to you, your colleagues, or your organization?

How would you explain your POV to a high school student?

02

Map Your Ecosystem

No change happens in a vacuum.

List the people and groups who have a stake in your issue. Note what each values, fears, and needs. This “map” reveals leverage points, likely blockers, surprising allies, and sequencing—whom to engage first, whom to inform, whom to neutralize.

Seeing the whole system helps you aim influence where it will compound, not dissipate.

Strategy improves instantly when you design for interactions, not individuals.

YOUR MISSION: List Your Circles of Influence (Page 41) ♦ **VIGNETTE:** Shayla’s Story (Page 51)



ASK YOURSELF

Who stands to benefit, even if they don’t know it yet?

Who protects the systems you’ll need to navigate to make it happen?

Who might push back—and what can their perspective teach you?



03

Play Your Role (Not Your Title)

Influence flows from the role you occupy, not the title you hold. Define what is “yours to do” based on your credibility and strengths.

What are you known for, and what comes most naturally to you in any environment? Are you a convener? Storyteller? Organizer? Analyst? Fixer?

Claim that role and work from it. When you clarify your role, you quietly force others to clarify theirs, reducing turf fog and duplication. Roles connect; titles separate. Choose the role that advances the work, then act from it consistently.

YOUR MISSION: Identify Roles in Your Workplace (Page 42) ♦ **VIGNETTE:** Sara’s Story: Part I (Page 52)



ASK YOURSELF

How do the people you work with describe you when you’re not in the room?

What patterns show up again and again in how you’re known at work and among your friends?

Thinking about the change you want to make, what role naturally fits the person you already are?

04

Surf the Power Zone

Ask any surfer what this means and they'll tell you that the power zone is the sweet spot on a wave where its energy is strongest and speed comes effortlessly. Surfing it means positioning yourself just ahead of the breaking curl, letting the wave's momentum do the work while you steer and adapt.

What it means for you is this: Don't start from zero; start where energy already exists. Identify adjacent conversations, trends, deadlines, or mandates that favor your aim. Attach your idea to what's already moving—executive priorities, external news headlines, internal metrics, peer examples. Borrow their momentum to lower friction, shorten timelines, and normalize adoption. Surfing involves strategic timing and framing so your proposal feels inevitable, not novel. Momentum is a resource—ride it.

YOUR MISSION: Find the Wave in Your Workplace (Page 43) ♦ **VIGNETTE:** Sara's Story: Part 2 (Page 53)



ASK YOURSELF

What conversations or trends inside or outside your organization already connect to your idea?

How could you link your change to something that's already moving, so it feels timely rather than new?

Where's the momentum right now, and how might you ride it?

“Rules are not constraints; they are the foundation that makes performance possible.”

— Peter Drucker