

# Influencing Stakeholders

## Program Outline

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# The Need for Influencing Stakeholders

In the 1980's Professor R. Edward Freeman, acclaimed for constructing the stakeholder theory, further expanded on the word 'stakeholder' that was first used at the Stanford Research Institute. He emphasized, "A stakeholder in an organization is (by definition) any group or individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives."

Stakeholders can either support or hinder the achievement of goals, depending on their level of involvement and influence. We regularly engage with both internal and external stakeholders such as investors, peers, managers, cross-functional teams, clients, and customers to ensure the smooth execution of programs, projects, or business operations.

Stakeholders may need to be consulted for their expertise, involved in decision-making, kept informed of key developments, or actively engaged in driving outcomes. Whether it's finding time in a colleague's busy schedule, securing approvals from leadership, or convincing a client of the importance of the project, these situations all require effective influence. Aligning stakeholders with responsibilities, targets, and timelines is essential to keep the organization progressing toward its goals.

However, influencing stakeholders and keeping them on board is not an easy task. What are the go-to strategies when suddenly faced with a red flag? Or what is the best approach to take when you want a stakeholder to buy into a quick decision? How do you convince a stakeholder over whom you have no authority? Here's where the ability to influence stakeholders comes into play.

The foundation of effective stakeholder influence lies in understanding the individual; their interests, expectations, and behavioral patterns. This insight helps you tailor your approach, communicate in a way that resonates with them, and anticipate potential obstacles. Ultimately, it enables you to build strong working relationships and gain their support with minimal resistance.



At **FocusU**, Influencing Stakeholders is described as the ability to get the buy-in of the stakeholders by adapting strategies that are aligned with their expectations and the project goal.



## Polishing the Skill of Influencing Stakeholders

This program helps identify what drives and motivates a stakeholder towards agreement, choose strategies that will appeal to the stakeholder and identify ways to expand on personal traits that will better relationships with different types of stakeholders.

Central to this program is the AIM framework: Align Intentions, Investigate Their World, and Move to Action. It's a simple yet powerful approach that helps individuals clarify their goals, step into the stakeholder's reality with empathy, and take action in ways that build buy-in with the minimal resistance. Through practical activities, guided reflections, and scenario-based discussions, the program supports individuals in shifting from transactional conversations to meaningful, influence-led partnerships that drive outcomes.

### AIM before you influence a stakeholder:



Influence, when grounded in intention and empathy, becomes a powerful tool to tailor communications, achieve shared goals and build relationships beyond transactional conversations.

**“ The greatest ability in business is to get along with others and to influence their actions. ”**

- John Hancock  
American politician



# Program Objectives & Flow

## The program is designed to help learners:

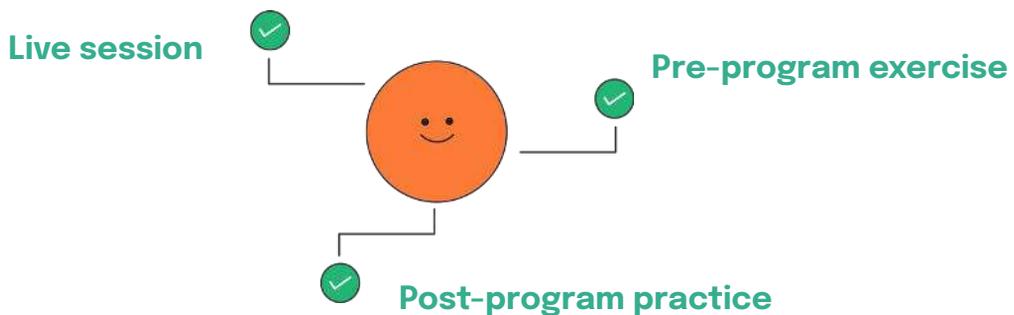
- Uncover the nuances of influencing a stakeholder
- Learn ways to understand what drives a stakeholder towards agreement
- Apply tools and techniques to influence different stakeholders

## Program Flow

This program comprises a full-day session flow. The duration for the live session is only an estimate and is adjustable to a half-day or extendable up to 2 days based on training needs or scheduling requirements.

The program on **Influencing Stakeholders** is organized as follows:

<b>Pre-program exercise</b>	To be completed individually by participants before the live session	20-30 mins approx
<b>Live session</b>	To be attended by all participants (refer to details in program agenda)	1-day program
<b>Post-program practice</b>	To be completed individually by participants after the live session	20-30 mins approx





# Modules

**Introduction:** Context Setting and Session Overview

## **Building on Existing Knowledge**

- Decision Duel

## **Nuances of Influencing Stakeholders**

- Defining Influencing Stakeholders
- Why does being able to 'Influence' matter?

## **Scenario Spotlight: The Deadline Shift**

- Understanding the real-world challenges to influence stakeholders at workplace

## **Framework: AIM Before You Influence a Stakeholder**

- **A**lign Intentions
- **I**nvestigate Their World
- **M**ove to Action

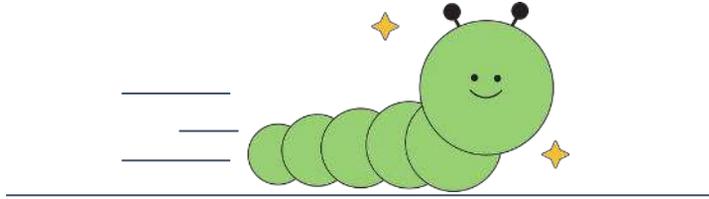
**Useful tools** while understanding and interacting with stakeholders

**Watchouts** while Influencing Stakeholders

## **Application and Retrieval Practice**

- The Signature Campaign

**Wrap Up:** Reflection and Summary



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