



Career Influence Diagnostic Quiz

Discover exactly where your professional influence stands — and what to do next. This resource is built for working professionals (0–15 years experience) who want to lead, persuade, and advance with clarity and confidence.




Why Influence Is the Career Skill No One Taught You

You can be brilliant at your job and still find yourself passed over for promotions, ignored in meetings, or unable to move stakeholders to action. The missing variable is almost always **influence** — the capacity to shape decisions, shift perceptions, and build credibility without relying solely on title or tenure.

Influence is not manipulation. It is not reserved for extroverts or senior leaders. It is a learnable, measurable set of behaviours and habits that compound over time. The professionals who advance fastest — regardless of industry or function — are consistently those who have diagnosed their influence gaps early and acted on them deliberately.

This quiz solves a specific problem: most professionals feel their influence is "fine" until they hit a wall — a promotion denied, a project ignored, a stakeholder unmoved. By then, the deficit is deep and costly. This diagnostic is your early warning system. It maps five core dimensions of professional influence so you can see exactly where you are strong, where you are leaking credibility, and what to do about it right now.

 **How to Use This Resource:** Read through the introduction, then move to the quiz. Score each question honestly — no one is watching. Tally your section scores, find your influence profile, and follow the action plan for your result. Return to the worksheets quarterly as a progress check.



Diagnose First

Understand your current influence baseline across five evidence-based dimensions before taking any action.



Then Navigate

Use your personalised profile to prioritise the one or two areas that will move the needle fastest in your career right now.



Act Immediately

Every profile includes a 30-day action plan with concrete, calendar-ready steps you can implement this week.



Dimension 1 – Credibility & Expertise Signal

Credibility is the foundation of all influence. Before people will follow your lead or adopt your ideas, they need to believe you know what you are talking about. But credibility is not just what you know – it is **what others perceive you to know**. This section measures how effectively you signal your expertise in the environments that matter most to your career.

Many high-performing professionals under-signal their expertise. They do excellent work in private but rarely make their thinking visible. They wait to be discovered rather than actively shaping how colleagues, clients, and leaders perceive their competence. This dimension tests whether you are building a credibility reputation or quietly hoping someone notices.

Rate yourself honestly: 1 = Never / 2 = Rarely / 3 = Sometimes / 4 = Often / 5 = Always

1	2
<p>Question 1</p> <p>I proactively share my professional opinions, analyses, or recommendations in meetings, on email threads, or in writing – even when not directly asked.</p> <p>Your Score (1-5): _____</p>	<p>Question 2</p> <p>When I complete a significant project, I ensure the right stakeholders understand my specific contribution and what it achieved.</p> <p>Your Score (1-5): _____</p>
3	4
<p>Question 3</p> <p>I regularly update my knowledge in my domain (articles, courses, communities) and can speak fluently about current trends and challenges.</p> <p>Your Score (1-5): _____</p>	<p>Question 4</p> <p>Colleagues or clients seek me out as a go-to person for advice in my area of expertise.</p> <p>Your Score (1-5): _____</p>

  **Section Score:** _____ / 20 — Add your four scores. Record this number on the Summary Score Sheet in Section 8.

Dimension 2 — Relationship Capital & Network Depth

Influence does not live in a vacuum — it lives in relationships. Your ability to move others to action is directly proportional to the quality and breadth of your professional network. Relationship capital is the accumulated trust, goodwill, and reciprocity you have built across colleagues, stakeholders, clients, and industry peers over time.

This is not about having hundreds of LinkedIn connections. It is about having **real relationships** — people who will speak up for you in rooms you are not in, who will flag an opportunity before it is posted, or who will champion your ideas when you need a coalition. Weak relationship capital is one of the most common hidden blockers in career advancement, and most professionals only notice the deficit when they urgently need a favour and have none to call in.



Rate yourself: 1 = Never to 5 = Always

- **Q5.** I maintain regular, genuine contact with professional relationships outside of transactional needs. Score: _____
- **Q6.** I have at least 3–5 advocates — people who would proactively recommend me or speak positively about my work. Score: _____
- **Q7.** When starting a new initiative, I know exactly who to call to gain buy-in, introductions, or resources. Score: _____
- **Q8.** I invest time in others' goals and success, not just my own networking agenda. Score: _____

Relationship Capital Insight

Research consistently shows that **weak ties** (acquaintances, former colleagues, cross-industry contacts) are responsible for over 70% of career opportunities. Are you investing in your network width, or only in your immediate team?

The goal: be memorable, be useful, be present — even when you need nothing.

  **Section Score: _____ / 20** — Record on your Summary Score Sheet.

Dimension 3 – Communication & Persuasion

Power

You may have the best idea in the room, but if you cannot communicate it persuasively, it will die in the meeting. Communication influence is not just about speaking clearly – it is about structuring your message to land with **the specific audience** in front of you, managing your presence under pressure, and knowing when to listen versus when to assert.

This dimension is where most professionals find their biggest leverage point. Small upgrades in how you frame a recommendation, open a presentation, or handle pushback can produce dramatic changes in how your ideas are received. The quiz below tests both your verbal communication confidence and your written and executive communication skills.

Q9 – Audience Framing

Before presenting an idea, I consciously adapt my language, structure, and tone to what matters most to my specific audience (not what I find interesting).

Score (1-5): _____

Q10 – Handling Resistance

When my ideas are challenged or dismissed, I stay calm, acknowledge the concern, and redirect the conversation productively rather than defending or withdrawing.

Score (1-5): _____

Q11 – Executive Communication



I can summarise a complex recommendation in 2–3 sentences for a senior leader, leading with the outcome rather than the background or process.

Score (1-5): _____

Q12 – Written Persuasion

My written communications (emails, proposals, messages) consistently get responses, approvals, or action – not silence or pushback.

Score (1-5): _____

  **Section Score: _____ / 20** — Record on your Summary Score Sheet.

Dimension 4 — Visibility & Strategic Presence

Visibility is about being known for the right things, by the right people, at the right time. Strategic presence means you are not just doing excellent work — you are ensuring that work registers in the minds of those who make decisions about your growth and opportunities. Many capable professionals are invisible to their own leadership teams, and this invisibility is career-limiting regardless of performance quality.

This dimension assesses whether you are playing the long game on your professional reputation. It includes your online presence, how you show up in cross-functional settings, whether you take on high-visibility projects, and how you position yourself as a thought leader within your organisation or industry. Visibility without substance is hollow — but substance without visibility is a missed opportunity.

Q13 — Internal Visibility

Senior leaders outside my direct team know my name, my work, or my reputation — not just my manager.

Score (1-5): _____

Q14 — External Presence

I maintain an active, professional online presence (LinkedIn, speaking, writing, communities) that reflects my expertise and ambitions.

Score (1-5): _____

Q15 — High-Visibility Projects



I actively seek out or raise my hand for projects that are cross-functional, strategic, or visible to leadership — not just safe, familiar work.

Score (1-5): _____

Q16 — Personal Brand Clarity

I can articulate in one clear sentence what I am known for professionally and what I want to be known for in the next 2 years.

Score (1-5): _____

  **Section Score:** _____ / 20 — Record on your Summary Score Sheet.

Dimension 5 — Political Intelligence & Stakeholder Navigation

Political intelligence is not about playing games — it is about understanding the **unwritten rules** of how decisions really get made in your organisation. Every workplace has a formal org chart and an informal influence map. The professionals who advance understand both. They know who the real decision-makers are, who the gatekeepers are, and how to build coalitions before bringing a proposal to the table.

This is consistently the most underrated dimension in our research. High-performing professionals often dismiss "office politics" as beneath them — and then find themselves blindsided when a well-prepared proposal gets killed by a stakeholder they never invested in. Political intelligence is emotional intelligence applied to systems and power structures. It is a professional survival skill.

Q17 — Stakeholder Mapping

Before launching a new idea or project, I identify all key stakeholders, understand their interests, and engage them proactively — not reactively.

Score (1-5): _____

Q18 — Reading the Room

I can accurately read the informal dynamics in a meeting or group — who has real influence, who is resistant, what is left unsaid — and adjust my approach accordingly.

Score (1-5): _____

Q19 — Managing Up



I manage my relationship with my manager and senior stakeholders proactively — keeping them informed, managing their expectations, and aligning my priorities to what matters most to them.

Score (1-5): _____

Q20 — Coalition Building

When I need organisational change or buy-in for a significant idea, I build a coalition of supporters before presenting formally, rather than relying on the strength of the idea alone.

Score (1-5): _____





  **Section Score: _____ / 20** — Record on your Summary Score Sheet.

Your Summary Score Sheet

Transfer your five section scores below. Add them for your Total Influence Score, then find your profile on the next page. Be honest — this is your baseline, not a judgement. The goal is clarity, not perfection.

Dimension	Your Score (out of 20)	Quick Self-Note
1. Credibility & Expertise Signal	_____ / 20	Strength / Gap / Neutral
2. Relationship Capital & Network Depth	_____ / 20	Strength / Gap / Neutral
3. Communication & Persuasion Power	_____ / 20	Strength / Gap / Neutral
4. Visibility & Strategic Presence	_____ / 20	Strength / Gap / Neutral
5. Political Intelligence & Stakeholder Navigation	_____ / 20	Strength / Gap / Neutral
TOTAL INFLUENCE SCORE	_____ / 100	

Scoring Key

<p> 20–44</p> <p>Emerging Influencer</p> <p>Significant gaps across multiple dimensions. Your influence is largely reactive. This is a high-opportunity zone — targeted action will produce fast results.</p>	<p> 45–69</p> <p>Developing Influencer</p> <p>You have real strengths but notable blind spots. Focus on your lowest two dimension scores for maximum career impact in the next 90 days.</p>
<p> 70–84</p> <p>Practised Influencer</p> <p>Strong foundations with room to sharpen. Identify which dimension is holding back your overall score and make it your focused development priority.</p>	<p> 85–100</p> <p>Strategic Influencer</p> <p>You are operating at a high level. Your focus should be on maintaining breadth, mentoring others, and expanding your influence beyond your current sphere.</p>

Your Influence Profile: What Your Score Reveals

Your total score places you in one of four influence archetypes. But do not stop there — the real intelligence is in your dimension breakdown. A total score of 65 means very different things depending on whether your gaps are in Credibility, Visibility, or Political Intelligence. Read your profile below, then cross-reference your lowest-scoring dimension for your personalised action focus.

● The Emerging Influencer (20–44)

You are in the early stages of building professional influence. Your current impact may be limited to your immediate team or function. You are likely doing solid work but not yet shaping decisions, advocating for ideas, or building the relationships that create career momentum.

Your Priority: Start with Credibility (Dimension 1) and Communication (Dimension 3). These are the fastest levers. Begin making your thinking visible — in meetings, in writing, in any forum available to you. One well-prepared contribution per week compounds fast.

● The Practised Influencer (70–84)

You are a confident, capable professional with strong influence habits. People respect your opinions, seek your input, and generally respond well to your communication. Your challenge now is about **scale and reach** — expanding your influence beyond your comfort zone into new stakeholder groups, senior forums, or external arenas.

Your Priority: Visibility (Dimension 4) is often the ceiling-breaker at this level. Are you known beyond your manager and immediate team? If not, this is your growth edge. Seek one high-visibility assignment in the next quarter.

● The Developing Influencer (45–69)

You have established influence in some areas but are inconsistent across the five dimensions. You likely have strong relationships within your immediate circle but may be invisible to senior leaders or external stakeholders. Or you may communicate well one-on-one but lose impact in group settings.

Your Priority: Audit your two lowest-scoring dimensions. Build a 30-day focused sprint on one specific behaviour in each. Consistency matters more than intensity — small daily actions beat occasional heroics.

★ The Strategic Influencer (85–100)

You are operating with intentional, multi-dimensional influence. You understand the formal and informal dynamics of your environment, communicate with precision, and have built genuine relationship capital. At this level, your job is to **wield your influence responsibly**, mentor others, and expand your impact to industry or ecosystem level.

Your Priority: Look for opportunities to teach, speak, publish, or lead cross-organisational initiatives. Your influence at this stage is a multiplier for others — use it.

Reflection Worksheet: Turning Your Score Into a Plan

This worksheet is designed to be completed immediately after scoring. Block 20 minutes, find a quiet space, and answer each prompt honestly. These questions are not theoretical — they are engineered to surface the specific behaviours you need to change right now. Return to this worksheet every 90 days to track your progress.

1 My Highest-Scoring Dimension Is:

What specific behaviours or habits are driving this strength? How can I leverage this strength more intentionally in the next 30 days?

Your Answer: _____

2 My Lowest-Scoring Dimension Is:

What is the single most honest reason this dimension is low — skill gap, fear, habit, time, or priority? Be specific.

Your Answer: _____

3 The One Relationship I Most Need to Invest In Is:

Name a specific person — a senior stakeholder, a peer in another function, or an external contact — who would meaningfully increase your influence if the relationship were stronger. What is the first step?

Your Answer: _____

4 The Visibility Gap I Am Most Avoiding Is:

What is one high-visibility action you have been putting off — a presentation, an article, a cross-functional project, a conversation with senior leadership? What would it take to do it this month?

Your Answer: _____

5 My 30-Day Influence Commitment Is:

I will _____

(specific, observable, weekly behaviour) every week for the next 30 days. I will measure success by

_____.

The 30-Day Influence Activation Checklist

Use this checklist as your weekly tracker for the month following your diagnostic. Each item is a small, consistent action that builds influence over time. Tick each item as you complete it. Aim to complete at least 80% of items in your profile tier. This is not about perfection — it is about building a new default mode.

Week 1 — Awareness & Foundation

- Share my quiz results with one trusted colleague or mentor and discuss one insight
- Review my last 5 email threads — did I frame my recommendations for the reader or for myself?
- List 3 people whose opinion of my work matters most — how recently have I been visible to them?
- Update my LinkedIn headline to reflect who I am becoming, not just my current title
- Identify the one upcoming meeting where I will make a deliberate, prepared contribution

Week 2 — Credibility & Communication

- Write and share one opinion-led piece of content (LinkedIn post, internal memo, Slack message to leadership)
- Prepare a 2-sentence "executive summary" version of my current project or priority — practise it out loud
- In at least one meeting, practise the Frame-Evidence-Close structure from Dimension 3
- Ask a trusted colleague for honest feedback on how I come across when presenting ideas
- Read one relevant article, report, or book chapter in my domain and share a key insight with my network

Week 3 — Relationships & Network

- Reach out to one person I have not spoken to in 3+ months — offer something useful, ask nothing
- Identify one cross-functional colleague I barely know but who is important to my goals — start a conversation
- Nominate or publicly credit a colleague for their work in a visible forum (meeting, Slack, email)
- Schedule a coffee or call with one senior person outside my direct reporting line
- Join one professional community, group, or forum in my industry or function

Week 4 — Visibility & Strategy

- Volunteer for or pitch one high-visibility project or initiative that stretches my current scope
- Map the informal influence structure of my organisation — who really shapes decisions?
- Write a one-paragraph personal brand statement: what I am known for + what I want to be known for
- Identify one stakeholder I have been avoiding or neglecting — make contact this week
- Review progress on my 30-day commitment from the Reflection Worksheet and adjust if needed

Your 7 Influence Principles to Carry Forward

These are the core truths distilled from the Career Influence Diagnostic. Bookmark this page. Return to it when you feel stuck, invisible, or unsure about your next career move. Each principle is a compass point that will reliably guide you toward greater professional impact — regardless of your title, industry, or experience level.

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|--|---|---|
| <p>01</p> <hr/> <p>Influence is a skill, not a trait</p> <p>It is built through deliberate, repeated behaviours — not personality. Anyone can develop it. The only question is whether you are intentional about it.</p> | <p>02</p> <hr/> <p>Credibility must be visible to count</p> <p>Excellent private work is necessary but not sufficient. Make your thinking, contributions, and expertise visible to the people who matter to your growth.</p> | <p>03</p> <hr/> <p>Relationships are a career asset — invest in them like one</p> <p>Your network is your career's immune system. Build it before you need it, contribute more than you extract, and invest in weak ties as much as close allies.</p> |
| <p>04</p> <hr/> <p>Persuasion is audience service, not self-promotion</p> <p>The most influential communicators make it easy for their audience to say yes. Frame every message around what the listener needs, not what you want to say.</p> | <p>05</p> <hr/> <p>Visibility is a responsibility, not vanity</p> <p>If your ideas have value, the world — or at least your organisation — deserves to hear them. Staying invisible does not make you humble; it makes you inaccessible.</p> | <p>06</p> <hr/> <p>Political intelligence is professionalism, not politics</p> <p>Understanding how decisions are really made in your organisation is not cynical — it is competent. Navigate it with integrity, and you become someone others trust to get things done.</p> |
| <p>07</p> <hr/> <p>Consistency beats intensity every time</p> <p>One brave presentation does not build influence. One thoughtful contribution per week, every week, for a year — that builds a reputation. Show up consistently and your influence compounds.</p> | | |

Your Next Steps & Quick Reference Guide

You now have a complete map of your influence landscape. You know your score, your profile, your strongest dimension, and your most critical gap. The only remaining question is: what will you do this week? Use this quick reference page to keep your commitments visible and your momentum alive.

Your 3-Step Post-Quiz Action Plan

1

This Week

Complete the Reflection Worksheet (Section 10).
Identify your single highest-leverage action.
Schedule it in your calendar before you close this document.

2

This Month

Work through the 30-Day Checklist (Section 11).
Focus on your two lowest-scoring dimensions.
Track weekly — even a brief end-of-week reflection note is enough.

3

In 90 Days

Retake this quiz. Compare your scores.
Celebrate the gains, identify remaining gaps, and set your next 30-day commitment. Influence is a living practice.

Quick Reference: The 5 Dimensions

- **D1 — Credibility:** Signal your expertise visibly and consistently
- **D2 — Relationships:** Build capital before you need it
- **D3 — Communication:** Frame for your audience, close with clarity
- **D4 — Visibility:** Be known for the right things by the right people
- **D5 — Political IQ:** Understand the real map, navigate with integrity

Retake cadence: Every 90 days for active development. Every 6 months for maintenance tracking.



🌟 A Final Word from PlanetSpark: Influence is not about becoming someone you are not. It is about ensuring that who you already are — your ideas, your expertise, your intentions — actually lands with the people who need to hear it. You have done the hardest part: you have looked honestly at where you are. Now go build the career you are capable of.