

## *Introduction*



A lot of people have trouble with getting people to yes. And that's really the most important part of influence. At one point you have to get a yes from somebody: "Yes I'm interested in taking the next step," "Yes I'm interested in doing business with you," "Yes to this higher level of engagement"—some kind of a yes. And there's a four-word phrase that is an extraordinarily simple way to get a yes from people—four one-syllable words that can change your business outcomes dramatically.

But it has to be preceded by honesty and by your authority and by relationship and by the focus on the other person. And if you're on board with all of that, and you're at the point in the relationship where you need to get some yeses from them in order for them to get the benefits of what you provide, then it's time to create some momentum in their willingness to accept your expert recommendations. And that's where this very simple strategy comes in.

## "The Four Most Powerful Words in Influence"

Anytime you're in a situation where you're attempting to ethically influence someone to take action that's in their own best interests, it is essential that you:

1. **Own your power.** You are the expert professional and they likely see you as an authority. If you don't fully own your rightful place as the authority, then you risk losing their respect and loyalty. If this is a problem for you, use positive affirmations to establish subconscious permission to act in accordance with your expertise and experience. You can also "act as if," or what we call "Act it 'til you've cracked it" (that's our variation of "fake it 'til you make it" because there's nothing phony about releasing your inner strength.

Acting as if you have the authority to guide others may seem awkward at first, but it will become second nature as you continue to step into your power over time. As soon as you believe it in your heart, it will be so.

2. **Put them on the Yes Express.** If you can ask broad or even rhetorical questions that naturally elicit a Yes response, you are making it easier for them to say Yes to the important questions later on. It's a proven strategy of ethical influence borne out by behavioral science. But be careful to only use this power for good!
3. **Ask "How does THAT sound?"** The easiest way to get a Yes is to ask "How does THAT sound?" (emphasis on the word "that"). Why that phrase? Because we are conditioned to always answer "That sounds good" or "Sounds great," which are powerful Yes responses. Every Yes the brain processes makes it easier for more Yeses to follow.

## Examples:

- "Let's start with the most cost-effective program and we can decide later if it makes sense to upgrade. How does *that* sound?"
- "Let me give you a printout with some feedback from our clients for you to look at. How does *that* sound?"
- "Your next appointment will be for me to go over the report I'll put together based on the work we did today. I'll get my calendar out and we'll schedule a day and time. How does *that* sound?"
- *And if they're ready to move into your primary recommendation:* "I'm really going to enjoy working with you. Let's go over the details together right now and we can get you started. How does *that* sound?"

If done correctly, "How does that sound" is so effective that you want to make sure to use your power for good and not for evil—so we're presuming that you're coming from the right mindset and perspective on this!

Again, what you want to do is to explain your position with a confident smile and an air of certainty—not cockiness or arrogance, but self-assurance and expert authority. And you after you explain your position and make your recommendation (whatever it is) then you say, "How does that sound?" with a little emphasis on the word that. Asking "How does that sound?" gets them on board with you and moving in the same direction. And that's a huge part of influence.

Of course, that doesn't necessarily mean that they've signed on the dotted line or handed over their credit card or whatever it is that ultimately is going to start your relationship with them in a more formal way, but it helps people be more comfortable moving with you to the next level of engagement. It's another connection point that's going to lead to their decision to do what's in their own best interests, which is doing business with you.

There's a certain structure to this approach that makes it particularly effective. You don't necessarily have to follow this chronology exactly, but it's certainly going to help:

The five components of the "How does that sound" approach are:

- Be trustworthy (there is no "acting trustworthy.")
  - Educate about your benefits.
  - Own the power of your convictions.
  - State your optimal recommendation.
  - Ask "How does that sound" with the appropriate authority and confident expectation.
1. **Be trustworthy.** You have to be authentic and trustworthy. In other words, you've got to embrace the kind of contribution-focused relationship perspective we espouse at Mindfluence—that's the baseline. Using this approach as a manipulation tool is going to backfire on you big time because people are going to see right through you—and more importantly because it violates a deeper ethical principle.
  2. **Educate about your benefits.** You have to provide enough information about the benefits of your product or service so that they can feel like there is a rational basis for saying yes. This is why education is a key element of our Mindfluence Youniverse model. And just to differentiate, we're talking about benefits, not features. A feature is a factual component of your offering, whereas a benefit answers the question "What's in it for me to do business with you." And by the way, this has to be continually answered at every point along your service-relationship journey, whether or not they ever ask you this question verbally. They may not even consciously know to ask, but subconsciously they ask every time they interact with you. "What's in it for me NOW?"



3. **Own the power of your convictions.** You have to believe with every fiber of your being that what you're offering is absolutely necessary in order for people to get the best results. This certainty is a foundational mindset because people will never believe in you if you don't believe in you.
4. **State your optimal recommendation.** You have to state your recommendation or the optimal outcome in a positive, compelling, and unequivocal way. This is key; if you sound unsure of yourself or if you back off in an attempt to be less assertive, then you give up a lot of the power of this process. People want you to lead them with confidence to the outcomes they need!
5. **Ask "How does that sound" with the appropriate authority and confident expectation.** Immediately after stating your desired outcome, then ask "How does THAT sound" with the emphasis on the THAT. This should be presented casually, but with absolute expectation of their positive response.

If you believe that they're going to give your desired response, then that expectation will be reflected in the tone and timbre of your voice and it will create a subconscious connection with their psyche that will trigger the response they want to give (and in fact that they *need* to give) in order to take advantage of the amazing benefits you offer.

People will respond with "That sounds great." Then it's so natural for you to say, "Good, then let's get you started" or "Here's the next step."

I know that sounds like a lot to remember, but it will become more natural as you proceed, because truthful influence in order to help others is naturally within you. Just start sprinkling "How does that sound" into your conversations and you'll begin to see some success with that alone. But if you follow this specific approach, you'll begin to see some amazing results.

## Conclusion:

This whole process should be positive and affirming. If you have focused on them and their education and they still had questions remaining at that point, then this technique would absolutely be a way for that to come out. For instance, if you ask "How does that sound?" and they say "I'm not sure" or "I need time to think about it: or "I don't have the time or money," then at least you'll know what's standing in the way.

Or they might say "That sounds good but I have a question." Now you can address whatever they don't fully understand. Also remember that most time or money objections are really covert language for "I'm still uncomfortable making a decision" because you haven't sufficiently answered their question 'What's in it for me to do this?' and even "What does my future look like if I don't do this?" or "What do I stand to lose if I fail to accept your offer of help?"

Using "How does *that* sound?" helps people feel like you're with them, too. It's asking for and confirming agreement while allowing for a concern to be expressed. But no matter how they reply, this is a way to advance the relationship and move the process forward and it gets you closer to where you need to be, which is helping people get the outcomes they're looking for.