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## BOOK REVIEW

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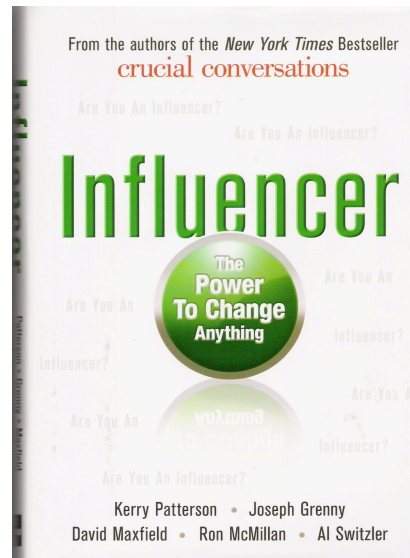
### "Influencer: The Power to Change Anything"

**By Kerry Patterson,  
Joseph Grenny, David Maxfield,  
Ron McMillan & Al Switzler**

**McGraw-Hill: New York 2008**  
**ISBN 13:978-0-7-148499-2**  
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It's readily apparent in the Leadership course that I take in the MBA program at the University of South Australia that students want to know how to really influence as a leader. The same applies to the numerous managers and leaders that I coach; how do they influence their staff as well as those both up and down the line. Scores of parents have often asked me the same kind of question in regards to their children. How do I get my kids to behave? How do I get them to do the right thing? Then there are those who just want to make a difference in their own surrounds whether that be at home, at work, on the sports field or socially.

The authors state that their book came out of 20 years of their work in organisations and once they noticed successful patterns occurring as a result of influence, they set about researching the world for what it was that brought about change – real change. From Boston to Bangkok they sought examples of people who had produced remarkable change. What were the ingredients for change? How did they do it? The secret to influencing others is not as we commonly think ie., verbal persuasion and brow-beating others with the "gift of the gab." Far from it. It has to do with a set of skills; and these skills can be learned by all of us.

The book first introduces us to Dr Mimi Silbert who over 30 years has developed the Delancey Street Foundation in San Francisco. She has a dozen businesses. So what's so unusual about that? Simply that all her employees are convicts; "They're nasty, racist, violent, and greedy. They're thieves, prostitutes, robbers, and murderers." But over 90% of them never go back to crime or drugs and instead, they earn degrees and become professionals and turn their lives right around. This is done without any therapists, no professional staff, no grants or donations, and no guards. Remarkable, but true, and it's all due to the influence principles that Dr Silbert uses.

Then there's the case of the TV producer Miguel Sabido in Mexico City who perfected strategies for changing how people think and behave by producing life-changing soap operas. There's also Dr Donald Hopkins and his colleagues at the Carter Centre in Atlanta, Georgia who assisted millions across both Africa and Asia to change their dangerous water-drinking habits where the Guinea worm causes incurable pain and disease.

While most of us are not concerned with the Guinea worm or how to rehabilitate after major crime, we all have our own private "worms" or own private "offenses" from which we need to change or alter.

This book is remarkable in its ability to outline procedurally the six sources of influence that bring about change. These include dealing with Personal Motivation, training in specific skills to enhance Personal Ability, ensuring that you get the right people on-side and harnessing peer pressure is Social Motivation, enlisting the help of others and gaining the strength through numbers is Social Ability, re-arranging the system and defining how people are rewarded and how they're accountable is Structural Motivation and finally, there is the need to alter the environment itself which is Structural Ability.

In nutshell, no matter whether you are a leader endeavouring to inspire and lead your followers or whether you are an individual trying to impact certain sectors of your life, this book shows how to:

- Identify a handful of high-leverage behaviours that lead to rapid and profound change,
- Apply strategies for changing both thoughts and actions,
- Marshall the 6 sources of influence to make change inevitable.

This book is a stimulating read. It is easy to read with numbers of powerful stories and tales to tell. It is well researched and has the anecdotes to match. It focus on that one topic called influence that has been the bane of many of us and which up until now has been an elusive concept. This book makes it real. And influence is available to all of us.

[Dr Darryl Cross is a clinical and organisational psychologist as well as a credentialed executive and personal coach. He is also an author, international speaker and university lecturer. Dr Darryl assists people to find their strengths and reach their goals. Further information on Dr Darryl can be seen at [www.DrDarryl.com](http://www.DrDarryl.com)]