



YOUR UNTAPPED POWER: INTERNAL INFLUENCERS

THE CONNECTIVE TISSUE OF YOUR
ORGANISATION

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THE CONNECTIVE TISSUE OF YOUR ORGANISATION

What if I told you that there is a group of people in your organisation who are responsible for:

- Making or breaking your next change effort
- Dictating your work culture
- Connecting everyone together, and
- Who form the basis of your next leadership pool?

Would you know how to find them?

Let's explore...

INTRODUCING INTERNAL INFLUENCERS

'Social Influencers' – a career that didn't exist just a few years ago is now a rapidly growing arm of many businesses marketing efforts. With increases in dedicated influencer spend each year, current projections put marketing spend on influencers at between \$5 and \$10 Billion by 2020.

It's clear that this group hold real power.

Social Influencers can take a multitude of forms – from beauty and fitness Instagram celebrities to video game streamers on Twitch or Vloggers on YouTube.

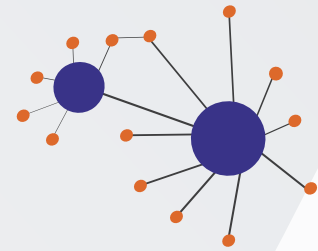
But, not everyone wants to be an Instagram star. There are many who want to excel in finance, marketing, project management, leadership, or some other form of valuable service.

Are we helping these people do that?

When was the last time you considered those in your organisation who get paid to **do what they love?**

BUILDING GREATER CONNECTION WITHIN OUR ORGANISATIONS

Influencers form crucial chains in our networks. Albert-László Barabási, a leading Professor of Network Science, found that no matter the network – from the grand expanse of the Internet to our own social groups – linkages form in the same patterns: Hubs and Nodes. What results is something like the image to the right.



What this means is that we have people in our organisations that are 'connection hubs' – people with a disproportional number of social connections to the rest of the organisation. These people form the connective glue between staff.

These are people we want to help us implement our vision. Influencers can play a number of key roles as we seek organisational growth and improvement.

AS LEADERS OF THE FUTURE

General consensus of the key traits and characteristics of a leader typically include confidence, inspiration, passion, communication and empathy.

These traits create social attraction – drawing people in. By their very nature, these are often the same traits held by internal influencers, forming a solid basis for formal leadership potential.

AS CHANGE CHAMPIONS

The ever-important 'Change Champion' typically plays the roles of the coach, trainer and information kiosk for their peers during change initiatives.

However, finding the right change champion is easier said than done.

By identifying the top set of internal influencers ensures you target only those with maximum connectivity and impact as change champions for your next big thing.

AS CULTURAL AVATARS

Our organisational cultures are not determined by our mission or vision statements, or even our corporate values. Our work cultures are determined by those with influence – both formal (hierarchical) and informal (social).

Our internal influencers wield power here. As they are 'in the trenches', our internal influencers often both represent and dictate the organisational culture across their immediate connections (which are usually many).

Want to change your organisational culture? Start with your internal influencers.

FINDING YOUR INTERNAL INFLUENCERS

It is at the intersection of two key groups that we find our internal influencers:

- 1) The Value Adders – those that are repeatedly selected as desirable work colleagues, and
- 2) The Information Brokers – those that are the go-to points for all relevant news, updates and (non-detrimental, honest) gossip.

Identifying these groups within our teams is simple when you ask the right questions.

Group	Key Question
Value Adders	If you could work with any three people from across the organisation, on any project, who would they be?
Information Brokers	If you needed an update on organisational news, key updates or gossip, who would you go to first?

A simple tally of the names is enough to get started, with higher aggregate totals indicating higher levels of influence. Further queries can then be asked of the data; for example:

- Which organisational areas have the most influencers?
- Who are the highest influencers across the organisation or within certain groups or parameters?
- Which influencers have the most cross-area connections?
- Are the influencers slanted towards formal leadership roles or are typically peer level?

MAKING THE BEST USE OF YOUR INTERNAL INFLUENCERS

The best way to work with your internal influencers depends on your goal.

If looking to build leadership capability across the organisation – a leadership opportunity or mentoring program could be rolled out with these identified influencers to reinforce their natural skill sets and test for other critical leadership skills like big picture strategic thinking.

Simultaneously an investigation into the unique factors that existed within those areas with higher numbers of influencers – with a view to implement those factors into the other areas to improve the calibre of their recruitment.

If looking to boost morale or improve culture, you could build a plan to create better organisational momentum and alignment with this staff; knowing that these individuals will bring their network connections along on the ride up with them.

The Baker Consulting & Ventures TMA Momentum Path™ (simplified below) forms a solid basis for this line of thinking. Consider where the influencer is, where you want them to be and the actions to get them there.

The TMA Momentum Path



Or, if looking to improve the success rates and speed of uptake of your next organisational change initiative, use your influencer shortlists to target your change champion efforts. Involve them early and watch your project successful uptake rates skyrocket.

No matter your goal, your success will be dramatically higher by consciously working with these special individuals.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Brendon is a master of change. As a leading expert in the field, Brendon has had oversight of over \$2 Billion in organisational uplift, growth and change programs across a range of industries. He is proud of his 100% success rate. As President of Baker Consulting & Ventures, Brendon is the trusted source for coaching and consulting with business owners, executives, and individuals who have a new idea, or can tell that something isn't right, and want to do something about it. To discuss how he can help you achieve your goals

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