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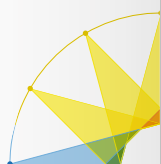
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12 Forms of Influence and Refresh Beliefs

Main group	Form	Influencing others
Relational	1. Attention	Paying Attention and Asking Questions Building personal rapport, favor factor, touch, follow-through questions.
	2. Words	Redefining Words Adjust sharp words in your summaries and questions and redefine sentences.
	3. Motivation	Utilizing Motivation Take time for the underlying motivation, <i>burning platform</i> and visualization of success.
Structural	4. Cause	Convincing with Logic Use logic and facts and base them on scientific research. Prove with graphs.
	5. Meaning	Leading to Other Meanings Rethinking to give a different meaning, to emphasize a different outcome or consequence.
	6. Framework	Expanding the Framework Create favorable context, personal atmosphere, different perspective and design charts.
Subliminal	7. Stories	The Art of Influence Through Storytelling Use individual stories, storytelling to touch emotion, extended quotes.
	8. Metaphor	Utilizing Metaphors Connect with metaphors to the perceptual world of the other person. Use global terms.
	9. Body	Working through the Body Repetition, <i>nudging</i> , unconscious influence with techniques from neuromarketing.
Power	10. Dominant	Asserting Your Opinion Deploy your sources of power and apply Kiesler's pattern interruption to influence dominant individuals.
	11. Space	Making Space through Following Set a frame and ask an open-ended question and do not fill in. Let silence fall.
	12. Tactics	Influencing through the Force Field Conduct force field analysis and plan interventions to influence in a complex field.





Refresh one's own beliefs

Share and Zoom

Make space in your brain by sharing what is bothering you. Allow colleagues and friends to ask questions.

Choose Your Words with Care

Ban the sharp words from your vocabulary and internal dialogue.

Embrace Your Intentions

Acknowledge to yourself where your intention is and use this as a basis for a new perspective.

Find a Better Cause

Look creatively for other causal links and choose a stimulating cause that makes sense.

Toward Constructive Meaning

Stretch yourself to be open to broader meanings and let go of snap judgements.

Expand the Framework

Add things to the picture such as a wide time axis, larger area and other dimensions.

Use Inspirational Advice

Ask for help from others, live or virtual. Ask for help from parts of yourself or the bigger picture.

Helpful Metaphors

Find the dynamics and use metaphors that give space. Your brain generalizes this into truth.

Experience It in Your Body

Everything you can experience in your body and let it flow. It changes when you hold it loose.

Take Matters into Your Own Hands

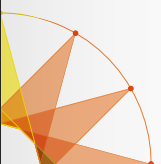
Decide what you want and decide to do. Repeat this, speak intentions.

Go with the Flow

Experience everything in your mind and body and conclude nothing. Let everything flow through you, don't act.

Live from Your Mission

Be the yardstick and lead the world. Live from your deepest mission and, with it, direct your world.





INTRODUCTION

“There is nothing either good or bad, but thinking makes it so.”

Shakespeare’s words, from Hamlet, found a place on my white desk when I was just fifteen, as I sought to decipher the complexities of life and human nature. Early on, I came to realize that our perception of events profoundly shapes our reality.

Our perspectives, particularly those formed in childhood, lay the foundation for our beliefs. These beliefs, often held sacred, underpin our behavioral patterns, survival mechanisms, and even our identity. We all harbor beliefs, and it’s their clash with the beliefs of others that can lead to strained work relationships, familial disputes, and even conflicts on a larger scale. Therefore, introspecting and challenging our own limiting beliefs is not just insightful but imperative. The clearer we understand our own beliefs, the better we can comprehend and empathize with others’.

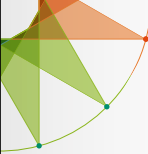
This understanding, however, comes with its own set of challenges. Distance and reframing, the ability to shift perspectives, is a vital tool in this journey. It empowers us to exert influence over our own thoughts, navigate various situations, and effectively interact with others.

My enduring quest is to unravel how this process of belief and perspective operates in individuals. What are the beliefs that ensnare us, and how can I assist in widening these perspectives? Whether it’s navigating difficult collaborations, complex power dynamics, or personal challenges, we are all, knowingly or unknowingly, influenced and influenced by others. Recognizing and understanding these subtle dynamics of influence can be transformative, both professionally and personally.

Through years of practice, I’ve honed my skills in reframing and influencing. My training sessions with professionals are dedicated to uncovering effective strategies. This book is designed to help you recognize and harness your strengths and possibilities, transforming the complex art of influence into a practical skill. To aid in this journey, I offer you the Perspective Principle and the Influence Compass, tools to guide you in mastering the twelve forms of influence.

How I Found My Grounding in Positivity

Reflecting on the source of my positive mindset, I often think back to my youth. As a fifteen-year-old, I was an observer, not yet fixed in my opinions about world



events, such as the nuclear weapons demonstrations of the 1980s. I realized that multiple perspectives existed for every situation.

This open-mindedness was a trait nurtured in my family. Our home was a haven of calm discussion, devoid of heated debates. Both of my parents had endured remarkable wartime experiences—my father in Amsterdam and my mother in a Japanese internment camp. Their response to these hardships was a conscious choice to focus on positivity. My mother, a lawyer by profession, was adept at considering others' viewpoints, questioning, and understanding motivations. My father, a man of charm and leadership, stood firmly against injustice but was not prone to anger. He believed in resolving conflicts with open dialogue and humor. In our family, negative emotions like sadness, anger, and fear were quickly transformed into positive experiences, shaping my approach to life and influence.

Emulating the example set by my family, I found my grounding: I knew how to stand out in a family of four children, adapt to school life, and turn any situation to my advantage. I felt in control of my seemingly perfect life. But was it too perfect? Indeed, it took a life crisis to teach me the importance of embracing the less pleasant emotions and accepting that not everything in life can be controlled. This lesson was driven home by the crisis in my marriage, which ultimately led to divorce.

For a time, things seemed to be going my way. Fresh out of high school with a keen interest in psychology, I faced the reality of a tough job market, which led me to a technical university instead. There, studying Measurement and Control Engineering in Delft, I learned how to make systems do exactly what I wanted. Understanding the underlying principles, grasping the essence, and creating models to predict outcomes became my forte.

During my tenure as president of a student union, I often faced the challenge of addressing hundreds of roaring students. Commanding their attention was crucial. My predecessors relied on raising their voices, with mixed results—a method that didn't suit me and diverged from my family's approach. That year, with the support and feedback from friends, I explored ways to refine my demeanor and speech. I would climb onto a bar stool and wait silently until the rowdy, drunken crowd hushed. Initially, it took thirty minutes of standing silently, enduring their raucous behavior, all the while pondering the right posture and words for when they would finally quiet down. Later, it took only twenty minutes. But eventually, they listened, attentively and with increasing respect.

Grasping how things work and then steering them to my advantage was my strength as a product manager in the automotive industry, later evolving as an executive in a leading technical firm. However, the call of my true passion, psychology, was irresistible. Eventually, I transitioned into a trainer role at a business NLP agency, and after seven years, I took the leap to establish my own venture, De Crux, a training and consulting firm.



A Deep Personal Crisis

Despite my expertise, there are limits to what one can control, a reality brought home by a profound personal crisis. This crisis, looking back, was the catalyst for this book. When my wife confessed her love for someone else, I – as you might now expect – employed every technique I knew to sway her decision in my favor.

I explored every angle, tried various approaches, and shifted perspectives, but to no avail. Ultimately, she chose to leave. This plunged me into a world of grief, wrestling with emotions like anger and sadness, while my self-image and perception of our marriage fluctuated wildly. After enduring this stormy and dark period, I rose again, determined to confront and reassess my own beliefs. I forced myself to see things from my spouse's perspective and critically assess the flaws in our relationship. This tough introspection allowed me to accept the breakup, find inner peace, and move forward. It also opened the door to a new chapter in my life, where I found happiness with another wonderful woman.

Life, work, and relationships are in a constant state of flux. To evolve and grow, it's essential to release old, deep-rooted beliefs and adapt to life's ever-changing rhythm. This book offers you a comprehensive toolkit for understanding influence in its various forms, helping you uncover the core of yourself, others, situations, or problems.

Whom is This Book Intended For?

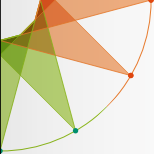
This book is crafted for those eager to learn and willing to self-reflect. Are you one of these people? You don't need to experience a profound personal crisis like I did to benefit from this book. It's here to guide you in examining the aspects you find challenging, whether in your career, relationships, or personal life. Each chapter is sprinkled with anecdotes from my life, illustrating the daily impact of beliefs and showing how common our human experiences are. To truly capitalize on this book, dedicate time to completing the Influence Profile scan, practicing influence techniques, and exploring your own limiting patterns. That's how you'll unlock its full potential.

How is This Book Structured?

In the first part, I delve into the Perspective Principle and how our actions are largely shaped by our beliefs. You will learn to spot these beliefs in conversations and understand that they can be reshaped by viewing them from different angles. This knowledge is encapsulated in a novel framework that brings together all forms of influence: the Influence Compass.

In the second part, you'll explore the extensive range of the twelve forms of influence in the external world. I've used these methods extensively in both my professional and personal life. However, as you've learned, they don't provide control over everything. Some situations unfolded in ways I didn't anticipate and were beyond my ability to alter.

Thus, the third part shifts focus inward. Here, I learned to confront and clear the mental barriers within, creating space in my inner world. This section delves into



how you can apply the twelve forms of influence to your own beliefs, leading to a life that is freer and more enjoyable.

Throughout this book, you'll encounter numerous examples featuring individuals' names. These stories are based on real events, but the names have been changed for privacy. Most are drawn from my professional experiences, with a few from my personal life. While the primary focus is on working professionals, their colleagues, clients, and work processes, you'll find that the techniques and insights are equally applicable and beneficial in your personal life. I hope this book brings you both enjoyment and valuable insights.

Bart Verhaagen, 2024

BEFORE YOU PROCEED. DO THIS:

This book is a treasure trove of insights, techniques, and personal experiences – too rich to digest in one sitting. I encourage you to take regular breaks, allowing you to immediately experiment with and practice the concepts discussed. To support this hands-on learning, I've developed e-learning modules available on www.perspectiveprinciple.com.

Use the unique code inside the book's cover to access these resources.

Alongside the knowledge in this book, you'll gain access to a variety of videos, exercises, checklists, and related articles, enriching your learning experience.

Log in for the e-learning modules

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PART



**THE
PERSPECTIVE
PRINCIPLE**





THE PERSPECTIVE PRINCIPLE

What drives people's actions? How can you uncover the root of behaviors and effect change? Why do we often find ourselves mired in challenging situations at work and beyond, feeling at a loss for solutions? The answer lies in our limited perception and the beliefs that heavily influence our actions. Your beliefs are the foundation of your actions. Their perceived truth is so ingrained in you that questioning them seems unnecessary, reinforced by experiences that appear to validate them.

In this introductory section, I'll illustrate how beliefs often hold true only within a specific context. By shifting your perspective, your beliefs can transform as well. This brings us to the core idea of this book: the Perspective Principle. By viewing limiting beliefs through different lenses, you can redirect them. This principle can resolve workplace conflicts, relationship issues, and personal barriers. To aid in this process, I introduce a unique tool at the end of this section: the Influence Compass.

Transform your limiting beliefs by viewing them from new perspectives.

1. How Well can You Perceive?

Let's start by delving into behavior. It's perplexing how sometimes people engage in actions that, in hindsight, are clearly stupid. We all have moments where, despite better judgment, we make foolish decisions. It's important to recognize that this is part of our brain's functioning. I'll share an instance that highlights my own brain's limitations and how it affected my perception.

It was a typical Tuesday in 2018, and I was working from home when I received a text:

Hi dad this is my new number

Whose? I have so many kids.. 🤔

The oldest and brightest 😂😂

Ahhhh! Is the other down the drain??

Water fell on my phone

Got another sim in there right now

Shit..

My eldest daughter, unlike her, got her cell phone wet and had to borrow a SIM card to keep messaging. This was crucial, as she needed to manage payments for a garden house she had recently bought - a charming Hansel and Gretel-like cottage in an allotment area. It's spacious and habitable for most of the year. I was delighted she found such a lovely spot, with grand plans to refurbish the cottage and beautify the garden.

However, her online banking was down, as mentioned in the texts. Eager to help, I transferred over four thousand dollars, feeling like a caring father, basking in the warmth and love of our connection. The next day, when I called



to discuss repayment, her bewildered response took me by surprise. “I didn’t send that text at all...” she said.

It took me a moment to grasp what had happened. SHIT! For a full minute, I stood there screaming, and then, with a flushed face, I explained to my daughter that I had been duped. I had unwittingly transferred four thousand dollars to a scammer. Her reaction was one of shock. “How could you do that, Dad? You know I would never just ask for money like that, right?” I frantically called the bank and the police, but the money was gone for good.

How could I have been so gullible? The moment I saw a message starting with “Hi Dad, ...” from my daughter, I felt a surge of warmth and acted out of love. The reality - that she would never approach me in such a manner, that she would never ask for a large sum without proper explanation, or that she would borrow a SIM card so casually - never crossed my mind. Why didn’t I see it?

What Do We Perceive in the Outside World?

Neuroscientists believe that only about 10 percent of what we perceive is actually present in the external world. The rest, a staggering 90 percent, is constructed by our own minds. When I read “Hi Dad,” I instinctively knew it was from one of my children. My brain filled in the rest of the story. It’s startling to realize I perceive only 10 percent of my surroundings, which means I’m barely grasping what I see, hear, and experience. So, how is it that I still feel like I’m fully aware of the reality around me?

In his book “Deviate,” Beau Lotto¹ offers insightful answers to this mystery.


He asserts that we perceive only a fraction of what’s around us because the true spectrum of light, sound, and sensation is just an incomprehensible mix to our brain.

Consider this image. This represents reality as our eyes capture it.





Figure 1 Reality as Perceived by Our Eyes



What do you see? An animal, a mountain, a person? What do you make of it? How do you feel looking at it? Most people find it unsettling. Our brains don't appreciate ambiguity; we crave something identifiable. The brain scours its vast repository of images and experiences, trying to figure out what to make of it.

Curious about what's actually in the image? Flip to [page 134](#). Once you've glimpsed the picture – even briefly – your brain quickly categorizes it: “Ah, that's a...” The details fade away; further scrutiny seems unnecessary. You recognize certain concepts already stored in your mind – bicycle, triangle, coffee, elephant, sadness, conflict. When you encounter something resembling a bicycle, your brain matches it against this internal template. If it's close enough, the brain concludes, “It's a bicycle,” and ceases further analysis. If the resemblance is insufficient, the brain continues its search because it dislikes uncertainty. Hence, only a brief observation is needed for your brain to categorize reality and identify an object as a bicycle. You don't scrutinize closely, because, in your mind, it's already a bicycle.

We perceive everything partially and fill in the gaps, crafting our own version of reality.

This is an ongoing process in the brain, happening throughout the day, each day. The brain's operations are primarily driven by the need for safety and efficiency. Familiar and safe situations require less energy, a strategy inherited from our cave-dwelling ancestors. Our survival instinct leads us to perceive things briefly, and our brain quickly assigns a label, like 'bicycle.' But sometimes, this quick labeling can be misleading. What we perceive as a bicycle might actually be something else, perhaps a spinning wheel. You might not realize this mistake immediately, unless several people point out it's actually a spinning wheel. If only one person challenges your perception, you're likely to stick with your initial interpretation.

Our Brain as a Black Box

Imagine your brain as a supercomputer without a camera or microphone. You can't see or hear anything; all you have is a powerful processor receiving various electrical signals through input wires. These signals alone don't make much sense. However, you do have the ability to send signals out through other wires.

Because you're adept at math and logical thinking, you start to notice connections. Sending signals through a specific wire often results in receiving signals back through an input wire. “Hey, these wires must be connected,” you think. Gradually, your supercomputer begins to identify more and more of these connections.

When you experience a strong electrical surge at input wire A and respond with an equally strong surge at output wire B, the surge at A subsides. Over time, you learn that this pattern translates to feeling hunger (A), crying (B), which then leads to being fed and the hunger easing (A).

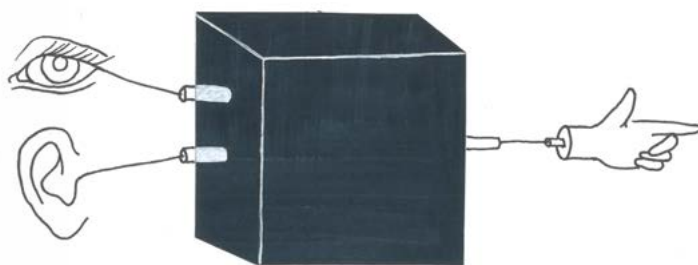



Figure 2 *Our Brain is like a Supercomputer with Limited Input and Output Wires*

Our brain is ingenious, making countless connections. Yet, it sees, hears, and feels nothing in the traditional sense. It simply processes electrical impulses received through our nerves and sends motor signals through other nerve pathways. Consider the immense challenge this presents to a baby, who is just starting to learn everything. Gradually, the brain gains more control, influenced by environmental examples and later by explanations from those around us.

The Absolute Reality

But, given these electrical currents and our interpretations of them, how can we ever truly know what's happening outside our 'supercomputer'? In my view, we can't. It's impossible to prove that a real, universally consistent world exists outside of our personal perceptions. We can only compare our interpretations of reality and live with the illusion that we perceive and understand everything accurately. I delved into this concept by placing myself in an extreme situation.

Last year, I embarked on a unique journey: a darkness retreat in Ghent, Belgium. For three days, I lived in total darkness, completely alone, nourished only by a bowl of rice and vegetables delivered twice daily through a special hatch, with emergency assistance available if needed. The prospect of this experience was both intriguing and daunting. I dreaded it. How would I manage to keep it up? Meditating for an hour was challenging enough for me.



The thought of three days in isolation raised worries and uncertainties. What fears and demon would I encounter there, in the darkness?

Yet, I was compelled to explore what darkness could reveal about myself. What could I find there?

After a warm introduction and familiarizing myself with the layout (bed, futon, toilet, shower), the darkroom was sealed at 10 p.m., plunging me into absolute darkness. It was an intense absence of light, not even a sliver of illumination. It took a full day for the residual light phenomena in my eyes – flashes, spots, stars – to fade away completely, leaving total darkness both outside and within.

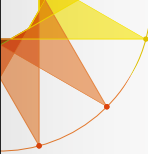
With visual stimuli gone, my other senses began to amplify. I could faintly hear distant sounds, but mostly, what I perceived originated from within: sensations, emotions, fears, thoughts. In the meditative darkness, my intuition started to awaken. I asked questions about my book, beliefs, affect, the void, my relationships, addictions, and the chaos of the current times. To each query, I received profound, clear responses. I gained insight into my life's purpose and the guiding forces supporting me. In this secluded retreat, I discovered a deep peace and an unexpected comfort in the enveloping softness of darkness.

Suddenly, the emergency phone rang, its sound jolting me out of my tranquility. I was so startled that I missed the call. When I called the counselor back, she was surprised, explaining that she hadn't called and nothing like this had happened in ten years. The intensity of the external world intruding into my space was staggering – perhaps a hundred times more forceful than my own internal thoughts and intuition.

During those three days, I completely lost track of time and my sense of location. It was a period of deep introspection, a chance to delve into the depths of silence and nothingness. I discovered that beneath our subjective perception of reality lies a profound field of truth, accessible only when we quiet our minds and embrace the void. This experience taught me that to truly connect with my inner self, I need to consciously disconnect from the external world; otherwise, its overwhelming presence drowns out my internal awareness.

Your Subconscious Brain Eases the Load on Your Conscious Mind

What we think we see is 90 percent a product of our brain. It's an internal construction, pieced together in an instant from something we faintly recognize. Our brain links incoming light pixels and sound frequencies to pre-existing concepts in our minds. A loud bang isn't a sign of war but revelers setting off fireworks – nothing to worry about. A moving dot of light in the night sky isn't a UFO, but a satellite – all is safe. A stomachache isn't an ulcer, but probably a reaction to the meat substitute I just ate – no cause for alarm.



Our brain functions like a supercomputer, processing over ten million bits per second². It manages everything from blood circulation and breathing to organ control, with a primary focus on ensuring our safety. This task, a relic from the more primitive parts of our brain, is its main priority.

All these processes occur in the background, unbeknownst to us. Our conscious mind is constantly supported by our unconscious mind. The conscious brain alone could never handle reality with such finesse due to its limited processing power, estimated at about 70 bits per second. This is just a fraction of what the unconscious brain can handle.

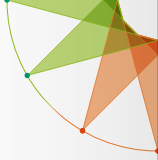
Is Your First Impression Always the Right One?

Do you think much of your behavior is directed subconsciously? I find the research by Gitte Lindgaard³ and colleagues particularly convincing. They studied how quickly people form opinions about the visual appeal of web pages. Initially, participants were shown web pages for only 50 milliseconds each and asked to rate their visual appeal. This duration is incredibly brief. Later, they rated the same web pages based on seven specific design aspects. The results showed that their initial impressions of visual appeal closely matched the scores given to the design aspects afterward. It suggests that our later, conscious rationalizations are often justifications of our initial, subconscious impressions. I had a similar experience when I decided to install a dimmer two years ago.

The lamps above my dining table had been there for twenty years, and I was ready for a change. I found two beautiful pearl lamps with new LED bulbs and was thrilled about them, anticipating my children's enthusiastic reactions. However, upon installation, I realized these new bulbs were much brighter than the old ones – excessively so. Thus, I decided to install a dimmer. Removing the old switch, I noticed only black and brown wires, which was problematic since I knew that a dimmer also required a blue wire.

I've pulled many electrical wires throughout my life, threading new ones through the old pipes. It's a challenging task. My youngest daughter assisted, but despite our efforts, we hit a dead end. After a frustrating hour and a half, I conceded defeat, plagued by the thought of having to tear open walls and ceilings just to install a dimmer. Following a restless night, I resolved to also add an extra socket and fix a crack in the wall. The entire ordeal consumed five dusty, labor-intensive days, leaving my ceiling far from pristine.

When I finally got to the dimmer, the instructions reveal a surprising detail: I only needed a black and a brown wire, not a blue one. Those wires were always there, meaning I could have completed the job in just fifteen minutes. Reflecting on this mistake, I realized my technical knowledge misled me. I was certain that a dimmer required a blue wire and never thought to verify this assumption. I was wrong.



Myside Bias

We often make quick assessments and then look for evidence to support our initial judgments. This process, as seen in Lindgaard's website research, involves forming a belief unconsciously and rapidly. We then filter reality, showing a marked preference for observations that reinforce our beliefs, known as confirmation bias or myside bias.

Our system is wired to swiftly convince us of our correctness, often without deep contemplation. Consequently, we start seeing proof of our rightness everywhere. The more convinced we are of our views, the more we gravitate towards people who share similar thoughts, creating a bubble of like-minded individuals. This effect is amplified in the digital realm. Platforms like YouTube, Facebook, and Instagram constantly feed us content and opinions that align with our past searches, creating an echo chamber where it appears everyone shares our perspective. We end up thinking the whole world agrees with us.