

## How to influence discussions and decisions

**What** do I want to achieve? How much will I compromise what I want?

**Why** do I need buy-in from another person or group of people?

**When** in the day am I most likely to have the greatest impact?

**Where** should we talk? Where are the fewest distractions? Where will I get undivided attention?

**How** should I approach the conversation? Am I prepared to:

### Listen and probe?

- Ask questions and probe for detailed answers
- Listen for objections and work out how to get past them
- Reinforce the benefits and invite questions to clarify issues, uncertainty or concerns

### Tune in?

- Build rapport
- Establish motivation
- Find common ground

### Note body language?

- Be conscious of your non-verbal communication
- Pay attention to non-verbal communication in others

### Understand then be understood?

- Explore beliefs and values
- Speak fluently
- Avoid long silences, fillers and non-words - they can affect the clarity of the message you are trying to get across

### Remain assertive?

- Be assertive not aggressive
- Keep your goal in mind
- Focus on a positive outcome

