Apply Language of Influence
1. Self-talk
2. Relationships with colleagues
3. Relationships with clients/customers
4. Personal life planning
5. Personal relationships

Brain Science: The amygdala, part of our limbic systems, is primarily focused on survival. It gives us energy to protect ourselves by pumping adrenaline and cortisol into our bodies for energy and decreased pain sensitivity. It can trigger "F Responses" in response to perceived threats. It cannot tell the difference between a life and death threat and an emotional one.

F Responses: **F**ight, **F**light and **F**reeze can be triggered in milliseconds, before our conscious mind can make meaning of the situation.
These can cause a decrease in working memory[27] that can last 18 minutes. Our ability to see multiple options drops from 16 to 9 to 3 to 1; and that one response will be fight, flight or freeze.

Venting: Venting is a natural reaction to an F Response. If done well it can help diffuse an F Response. If done poorly it aggravates the F Response; for oneself, the listener, and the subject of the venting. Our guideline: Any way of expressing emotion is helpful– as long as *no one* gets hurt.
1. Suggestion: Ask your close friends, "Can I vent? Don't take what I'm about to say as my actual opinion. I just need to blow off steam."
2. Talk about your emotions and <u>perceptions</u> rather than name calling and blaming.

R Responses: Our parasympathetic nervous system sends out biochemicals that **R**elax, **R**echarge and help us **R**efocus. They help us think more calmly and clearly. When we balance the energy of the amygdala and the calm of the R Responses we can achieve a solution-focus. Plus, a solution-focus helps us to find this balance. It works both ways. This is one of the many wonders of how our bodies work.
Some ways of creating an R Response are: slow, deep breathing; positive imagery; taking a break from a situation; stretching, emotionally enriching experiences; thinking about the positive traits/accomplishments of the person you're upset with; soothing music… and a solution-focus.

The Power of Focus: The human brain can only take in so much data at once. What we unconsciously or purposely focus on ends up limiting our ability to see other things. So what happens when we choose to look mostly at negatives or limitations? What happens when we focus mostly on success? Choosing to focus on solutions enables us to see opportunities that we may have otherwise missed. Words create mental images and feeling states. Negative words such as "stop", "avoid" and "don't" try to negate them. The brain immediately sends out emotion biochemicals in response to imagery – creating feeling states within milliseconds. Plus, the brain does not know how to negate a mental image.
E.g., when we say to a child, "No, do not go into the swimming pool," the child's mental image is going into the swimming pool.
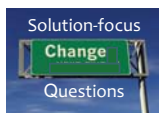
Change Questions: These three questions create positive direction, momentum and creativity–fast. **Goals?** This question can focus us on long term objectives or the very next action we need to do. It gets us back on track. **What works?** This helps us build upon momentum by first asking about our past successes; then broadens our focus by learning from others' best practices. **What else?** This gets us brainstorming new ideas, adapting past practices and innovating. This is also where we get focused on our next steps–keep moving.

Bowling Study[4]: In one study researchers used video to record a bowling match. For the one team, they edited out everything done right and used the traditional training method of showing the team its mistakes and strategizing how to correct them. For the second team, the experimenters edited out all of the mistakes and showed the team the film of everything they had done right. While both teams improved … The team seeing what they did *right* had **100%** greater improvement than did the team that was shown its mistakes.

10:1 - Ideal Positive:Negative Balance[22]: Using a "Capture Lab" researchers saw a strong average correlation between positive language and performance. Low performing teams communicated 1 positive for every 3 negatives – 1:3; Medium teams averaged 2:1; High performing teams ranged from 6:1 to 11:1. Too much positive, 12:1 or more, "calcifies a team", making necessary change and adaptation difficult. Sustainable marriages[18] apparently need at least 5 times as many positive emotions regarding one's partner as negative–5:1.

Problem focus: Problem focus often does work. It is a legitimate and natural approach. Drawbacks: It usually takes a longer to get to the solution. It creates more resistance along the way. Advantages: It is more intuitive, particularly under pressure. There are times where a brief time focusing on the problem is necessary before moving to solution focus; specifically venting, acknowledgment, empathy and/or apologies. These may be helpful at times to rebuild trust and get back to a solution-focus. At times analyzing past problems may yield useful data.

Mental Screen: Our body follows the image on our internal screen. Highly successful athletes often visualize successfully accomplishing each step before attempting it. Jack Nicklaus wrote, "*What we tell ourselves causes the whole body to respond to what the mind imagines is possible.*"

Placebo Effect on Us: We all have an "inner newsreel" going continuously in our minds, projecting ahead of ourselves both optimistic and fearful images. Scientific research is full of examples of our beliefs and internal images heavily influencing our capabilities. The placebo effect even helps people recover from many illnesses. Research on patients recovering from heart surgery has shown that; those who fared the most poorly had a 1:1 ratio of good:bad images or worse; those that recovered the best had a 2:1 ratio of good:bad images.

Placebo Effect on Others: Teachers in one experiment were told that certain children were gifted, and certain children had difficulty learning. In truth all the children were randomly selected. The teachers unconsciously began to treat these two groups differently. Even more remarkable was how the teachers' actions affected the children. The "gifted" children's performance improved and the "difficult" students' performance deteriorated. The effects, positive and negative, lasted for years. In a 2007 article one student admits that he is still negatively. One poll of fortune 500 senior executives revealed that every one had a mentor that believed in them when they first started managing.

Placebo Principles: We form certain expectations of people or events. We communicate those expectations with various cues. People tend to respond to these cues by adjusting their behavior to match them. This is especially true for those who depend on us. They even adjust their self-concept!

Reframing: Reframing our language helps us to influence the mental images that we and others see. This can make a huge difference in how others perceive us and what we're telling them. This is also true with family and friends. This truly can help "Make Friends and Influence People". Because of our amygdala, our immediate gut reactions are often to focus on risks and only see problems. This can quickly create F Responses in ourselves and others. Solution-Focus reframes focuses people's minds on the goals and how to achieve them.

Power Reframes: This tool can create more motivation, guide positive action more powerfully and have a longer lasting affect than regular reframes. This is done by creating multiple positive images and feeling states. The first images influence every one after that. Thus the key is putting the benefits FIRST. This helps to create positive images and feeling states before talking about the actions.

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<u>Other Strength Based Development Resources:</u>

° Daniel Goleman's "Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than IQ"

° Martin Seligman's "Learned Optimism"

° Positive Deviance Method: positivedeviance.org

° Soothing the Amygdala: http://lifeatthebar.wordpress.com/2007/05/11/anger-managing-the-amygdala-hijack/

<u>Some organizations that use strength-based approaches</u>