

The Six Sources of Influence Model – A Powerful Model for Change



	MOTIVATION	ABILITY
STRUCTURAL	make it the default	make it easy
PERSONAL	make it what they want to do	equip them to do it
SOCIAL	make the norm	help them do it

The six sources of influence model is a powerful model for change.

Overcoming Motivation Barriers	Overcoming Ability Barriers
Create relevancy – connect the action which is required to what matters to the users who need to change	Incentivise trial - use incentives to get users to try and ultimately adopt an action and get them to realise the value of and their capability for adopting change
Leverage Influencers – enlist the help of those who or stimuli which can influence users views and motivations	Enable tools, training, products / services – give users what they need to successfully engage in action
Change Incentives - develop incentives/ rewards / benefits to motivate	Change the environment – alter the physical environment to increase the likelihood of the action
Create accountability - develop enforceable or persuasive standards that redefine the accepted norm of conduct or values	Offer new choice constructs - change the choices or how they are presented to encourage the action

Change Anything with Skill

Workshopping the 6 Sources of Influence for people, simply make a 2-column table.

The one column is **motivation** and the other is **ability**. Then slice the table into 3 rows: **personal, social, and structural**.

That's it. That's all it takes to frame out and analyse your worst problems that you want to change.

The model scales up and down from changing yourself to changing the world. I've included an example of using the Six Sources of Influence to lose weight at the end of this post to help show the model in action.

Six Sources of Influence

Here is a tickler list for thinking about the six sources of influence:

- **Source 1 – Personal Motivation** – whether you want to do it.
- **Source 2 – Personal Ability** – whether you can do it.
- **Source 3 – Social Motivation** – whether other people encourage the right behaviours.
- **Source 4 – Social Ability** – whether other people provide help, information or resources.
- **Source 5 – Structural Motivation** – whether the environment encourages the right behaviours.
- **Source 6 – Structural Ability** – whether the environment supports the right behaviours.

Key Strategies

Here is an outline list of the key strategies organized by each of the Six Sources of Influence:

Source	Strategies
Source 1 – Personal Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy: Consciously connect to values
Source 2 – Personal Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy: Demand Deliberate Practice
Source 3 – Social Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy 1: Pave the Way.• Strategy 2: Enlist the power of those who motivate.• Strategy 3: Seek the support of those who enable.
Source 4 – Social Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Strategy 1: Pave the Way.• Strategy 2: Enlist the power of those who motivate.• Strategy 3: Seek the support of those who enable.

Source 5 – Structural Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 1: Link rewards third and in moderation. • Strategy 2: Link rewards to vital behaviours. • Strategy 3: Use rewards that reward.
Source 6 – Structural Ability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategy 1: Use the power of space. • Strategy 2: Use the power of data and cues. • Strategy 3: Use the power of tools.

Analyse and Execute

Before you make an action plan, you can analyse the Six Sources of Influence. To do so, you simply walk each source and ask relevant questions. Similarly, you can execute against each source. This table summarizes how to analyse and execute against the Six Sources of Influence:

Source	Analyse	Execute
Source 1 – Personal Motivation	Do I enjoy it?	Make the undesirable desirable.
Source 2 – Personal Ability	Am I personally able?	Surpass your limits.
Source 3 – Social Motivation	Do others motivate?	Harness peer pressure.
Source 4 – Social Ability	Do others enable?	Find strength in numbers.
Source 5 – Structural Motivation	Do “things” motivate?	Design rewards and demand accountability.
Source 6 – Structural Ability	Do “things” enable?	Change the environment.

Example – Losing Weight with Six Sources of Influence

Here is a quick example of analysing losing weight using the Six Sources of Influence.

Source Analysis

Source 1 – Personal Motivation	<i>Do you want to lose weight? For example, if you don't really want to lose weight, you're not really going to try. It can't just be for other people. It has to be for you.</i>
Source 2 – Personal Ability	<i>Do you have the skills, knowledge and techniques that work for you? Chances are, you may know the patterns that work for you, or at least the patterns that don't work.</i>
Source 3 – Social Motivation	<i>Do your friends want to go out drinking every night or</i>

encourage you to eat a lot at your favourite haunts?

Source 4 – Social Ability

Is there somebody in your social circle that might have the knowledge or resources you need to get an edge?

Source 5 – Structural Motivation

When you go home, are you greeted by a big bowl of candy or a big bowl of fruit? Your environment can motivate you in a good way or a bad way.

Source 6 – Structural Ability

Do you have a way to workout at home? This can give you a big advantage in the long run.