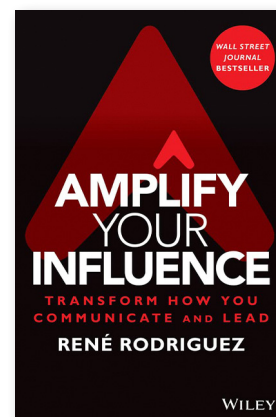


Amplify Your Influence

Transform How You Communicate and Lead

by **René Rodriguez**



Contents

The Power of Influence

Page 2

The Hidden Drivers
of Influence

Page 2

Four Steps to Influence

Page 3

Frames, Messages,
and Tie-Downs

Page 4

The Art and Science
of Storytelling

Page 5

Communicate with LOVE

Page 6

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

We all have ideas to share with the world. Whether we do that successfully in business and in life depends on getting others not only to listen but also to act on what we say. That's the power of influence, the capacity to have an effect on an outcome and to positively influence change. Here's some good news. Influence is a science that can be learned. Whether it's a manager trying to inspire their team, a parent providing guidance to a child, or a salesperson working to close a deal, the goal is the same—to influence an action or decision. Basically every profession and worthy act of life requires some level of influence for us to find success.

In *Amplify Your Influence: Transform How You Communicate and Lead*, author René Rodriguez uncovers the hidden drivers that shape our decisions and behaviors. He shows readers how susceptible we are to the influence of others. He teaches how people make purchases and decisions subconsciously as a result of the stories they share and how sequence—the order of things—matters more than substance. Learning to harness the power of influence—to AMPLIFII™ it—can transform our lives, increase our happiness, and help us find new levels of success.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- The five hidden drivers of influence.
- Four steps to influence.
- The AMPLIFII Formula of frame, message, and tie down.
- Skills to amplify your influence.

Part 1: The Concept

The Power of Influence

The AMPLIFII™ Formula = Frame/Message/Tie Down

AMPLIFII™ can influence your business and your life for the better. But to share its powerful message, we first must be persuaded to listen. That's the most crucial challenge in the world of influence—getting others to listen to what we say.

We live in a world where seemingly everyone competes for our attention. We're constantly bombarded with emails, text messages, social media, meetings, advertisements, movies, television, and more. The reality is that all these distractions clamor for our precious attention.

So do you.

You want an audience to listen to what you say because you also have an agenda to market, whether you're selling a product, teaching a class, sharing a vision, managing people, or simply talking with another person.

If someone wants to influence an outcome or decision, they must first eliminate the distractions—external or internal. To deliver our ideas and messages, whatever they are, we must first figure out how to present them in the best possible setting or situation. That means eliminating the distractions so that others will listen and act on what we say.

Unfortunately, many people don't understand the extent of influence and miss opportunities to advance their careers, earn greater income, and make a bigger impact on the world around them. That's why learning to harness the power of influence—to AMPLIFII—it is a crucial tool to increase success and improve the quality of life for us all.

Influence is the “how” of leadership. Influence would be at the center of a manager's professional development, too, because in a world where people have choices, it takes more than command, control, or title to affect outcomes. Human beings don't respond well to being forced, obligated, or pushed into doing something. They respond best when they are inspired to do so.

The Hidden Drivers of Influence

More than 2000 years ago, the Greek philosopher Aristotle was the first to recognize the power of persuasion and its role in argumentative thought. He identified three critical elements, three of which became known as Aristotle's rhetorical triangle. Those three critical elements include logos

(logic), pathos (emotion), and ethos (credibility).

He took his thoughts further and included two additional, often overlooked appeals, *kairos* (timeliness), and *telos* (purpose). An in-depth understanding of these appeals is crucial to the AMPLIFII formula. Mastery in these areas will propel you even further and garner bigger results, with the latter appeals being even more important to influence and persuasion today. Let's look at these motivational appeals more closely.

Ethos: Would you take advice on how to lose weight from someone who was overweight or how to make money from someone who is broke? Of course not, because they have no credibility. They lack ethos. Ethos is your credibility and character. Ethos is not something you own. Instead, your audience owns your ethos; they grant you credibility.

Ways someone can build their ethos include:

- Having a great social media presence.
- Be the one in front of the room or on the stage.
- Publish a book or article.
- Create a well-crafted introduction instead of a boring resumé.
- Get an endorsement or referral from a trusted third party.
- Have a professionally designed website with updated photos.

Pathos: Pathos is the ability to reach someone else via a story, humor, or any appeal that moves that individual to connect emotionally. It's the ability to create empathy in others. Vulnerability is truly a superpower when it comes to pathos.

Your ability to share your story, your struggle and not your success, is what matters. Imperfection is what makes us human, and someone who can't or won't tell that story has a hard time sparking passion in others.

In today's highly competitive business environment, developing and managing relationships with customers or potential customers is a crucial differentiator. The emotional connection—pathos—is at the core of those relationships we build that lead to the person answering your call, responding to your email, or truly listening to your offer.

Logos: Logos is the logical argument, the appeal to our sense of reason, the facts and figures. Today with the dominance of social media, ethos and pathos tend to carry a stronger appeal, but we still need logos/logic to buy into the message.

... when we add the idea of getting our hearts to speak in that neurological sequence, we can achieve the ultimate goal of maximum connection and impact.

In business, logos is critical and is what remains after pathos wears off. Without logos, we are left with buyer's remorse and cognitive dissonance. Logos is the plan, the steps, the agenda, the goals, the process, the rationale, the budget, the numbers, and the data.

Kairos: Kairos translates from ancient Greek into "the right time" or timeliness. In the discussion of persuasion and rhetoric, kairos refers to relevance to the current era, or current zeitgeist. In other words, it's about taking advantage of the perfect moment to deliver a message and delivering it in a way that's relevant to those listening. The key word is relevant.

Lacking kairos can cause you to lose ethos. Word choice matters. Using outdated terminology, such as *stewardess* instead of *flight attendant*, can cause you to lose relevance. But kairos goes far beyond being politically correct; it's about being relevant and timely.

Using kairos well means you tailor a message to your audience based on who they are and their current needs. It shows that you are current and in touch with the times versus out of touch and dated.

Telos: In Greek, the word telos means literally "the end." As it relates to understanding influence, telos is the end game, the purpose, the essential aim of a speech, a sales pitch, or a presentation. It's the point you hope to convey to your audience.

Sequence is EVERYTHING

Sequence—the order of things—plays a major role in how effectively we influence others. It's a driver of whether the audience gets the message, takes it to heart, and then acts on or rejects it. We must accept the reality that there is a sequence to how people process information and more importantly, accept ideas. Sure, there's a beginning, middle, and end to every story, but beyond that when a message follows the right sequence, it's easier to understand and repeat.

For the purpose of amplifying your influence, sequence is positioning your message and delivery of a message, story, or presentation in a way that aligns with the biological and

neurological makeup of how our brains are wired to receive it. What's more, when we add the idea of getting our hearts to speak in that neurological sequence, we can achieve the ultimate goal of maximum connection and impact.

Successful communicators intuitively use this kind of sequence. But for many people, this is a new kind of sequence. At first it may feel counterintuitive and at times paradoxical. But once understood, the AMPLIFII sequence—the formula for delivering an influential message—will explain many confusing or mysterious aspects of life, seriously. The goal is for you to understand this sequence explicitly and be able to replicate it consistently.

Four Steps to Influence

Our brain shuts down to new ideas under stress. There is a sequence that helps calm the primitive defense mechanisms that get in the way of change, innovation, relationships, conflict resolution, presentations, and selling.

Step 1: Am I Safe?

The first job of the brain is to keep us alive so the amygdala is constantly searching for threats. The hypothalamus is the area of the brain that oversees our autonomic functions, including fear and the flight/fight/freeze response. Only one question concerns the hypothalamus: "Am I safe?" If that question can't be answered or is, "No," then the brain will not be open to new ideas, change, or influence.

When it comes to our audiences, we can encourage the feeling of psychological safety by making people feel comfortable voicing their opinions without fear of being judged. For a leader, psychological safety also could mean ensuring that a team is part of the decision-making process by listening to the team's needs and tailoring the message with those needs in mind. The best way to create safety is to establish structure, orders, and predictability.

Step 2: Do You Care About Me?

After someone feels safe, the next step is to ensure they feel valued. The absence of feeling valued creates more stress, which leads to cortical inhibition we want to avoid. The

limbic system controls our emotions and our memory as well as our values. It is affected by outside influences and allows us to connect to our audiences.

It is the part of the brain that is primed for relationship and rapport building. It actually buys your products. Go back to the fundamental things we learned in school and from our parents. Listening, eye contact, smiles, and validation are simple ways to value people.

Step 3: Is This Engaging?

Once we have an audience's attention, we need to keep it by not being boring. We do that by fluctuating between stimuli and novelty. In a business setting, the use of visuals, colors, powerful music, dynamic voice inflection, and body movement all contribute to making things more engaging.

Step 4: Is This Inspiring?

The final step is to engage the brain's prefrontal lobe to align future actions with personal values. This part of the brain constantly creates scenarios and looks to the future. Especially fascinating about the prefrontal lobe is how it connects to the limbic system when trying to decide your next move. That connection determines if the move is aligned with your values. If it's aligned, you act. If not, you don't. When values are engaged, we will stop at nothing.

Self-Awareness

The No. 1 skill of a leader is self-awareness. Every reputable leadership course teaches it, and every top leader exhibits it. Self-awareness is the power that enables us to effect change in our own lives and the lives around us. Self-awareness isn't just a soft skill. It has a significant impact on a company's bottom line.

Research from Kern Ferry, a global organizational consulting firm, found that employees at poor-performing companies, as measured by stock performance, were 79 percent more likely to have low overall self-awareness than those at firms with solid rates of return.

Even with scientific data supporting the importance of self-awareness, it remains an elusive skill for many in the workplace. Anyone can learn the skill of influence, but if we lose sight of how our behaviors affect those around us, those skills are for nothing.

On the other hand, a self-aware leader has the power to inspire us to effect change in our own lives and the lives of those around us. As leaders, people are watching us wheth-

er we like it or not. Self-awareness is a skill that can be learned. We have to AMPLIFII our level of self-awareness with time, conscious effort, and practice.

Part II: The Formula

Frames: Window to Your World

Frames are constructs of reality that provide psychological context to help us understand our world. The more familiar terminology is frame of reference—the concept of drawing on past experience or knowledge to help understand something in our current reality. The list of possible frames is endless. Someone who frames an experience as fun will respond differently from someone who frames it as humiliating.

In communication, either the speaker provides the frame or the listener will provide one subconsciously. To truly master the art and science of influence requires us to unlearn old habits. That includes ceasing to answer questions and deliver messages without first proper framing.

The AMPLIFII Formula: Frame, Message, Tie Down

Frames

For centuries, stories have proven to be a powerful way to convey a message. Origin stories are a strong basis for framing but there are many other frames and types of framing devices. Props, jokes, quotes, statistics, memes, third-person stories, and music all influence the experience. The influence objective is to “claim the frame” to preempt or prevent an undesired response and shift it to the one that is desired.

A well-thought-out and well-constructed frame is a strategic advantage in the marketplace and can pay handsomely in the long run. In this battle of whose frame will win, a sales professional should be able to understand the viewpoint of their potential client. But the professional also must have a strong belief in their value and be able to communicate it with conviction through metaphor, story, props, and examples. That's how to win the battle of frames.

Messages

When people think of communicating, they usually mean the message to be delivered. We as communicators and leaders do everything from overthinking how to deliver the message to not thinking about it enough. Most people don't put much thought into the message they are trying to communicate. They just talk, assuming the audience will figure it out. They feel like they understand their

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message. They have an intuitive sense of what they want, but articulating it isn't so easy.

A good message is clear enough for the listener to understand the actions expected of them. The goal is to eliminate, as much as possible, the need for any assumptions. Consider some possible messages that might need to be communicated:

- Value propositions
- Concepts
- Key messages
- Mission statements
- Differentiators
- Action items
- Feelings
- Expectations

Some of these messages are more easily accepted than others. But all of them risk being misunderstood and can cost time, energy, relationships, and money. The frame in which they are presented, though, will determine how they are received. In essence, the message often helps determine the best frame.

Ties-Downs

Because I have your attention doesn't mean that I have influenced you yet. Influence happens through tie-down. The tie-down is the most powerful way to ensure a message is not only received but that it is understood exactly as intended. The tie-down easily cuts through confusion and erroneous or negative frames and locks in the exact message. The tie-down explicitly outlines the precise value of the message in the context of what is important to the audience and their current needs. When you can accomplish all that, the magical outcome is influence.

When we speak in person, our audience constantly searches for:

- What this information will mean to them

- What value it will add to their lives
- How it will help them achieve their goals

The tie-down answers the specific question of *what this message means to you*, the audience. The tie-down allows you to funnel the emotion (pathos) created in the frame to a specific action. That action is your influence objective.

When we learn to connect with people through a clear frame, message, and tie-down—the AMPLIFII formula—the listener not only is engaged but influenced.

Part III: The Skills

The Art and Science of Storytelling

Stories are everywhere if we learn to look for them. The part of our brains that says, “Yes, listen” or “Forget about it” is designed to discern what is important. When stories become important to us, we will create a category for them in our minds and begin to see them everywhere. The power of storytelling is to completely transform and shift our experience and reality.

It is also true that storytelling is the most powerful way to engage an audience in complex concepts and ideas. The right story can move audiences to support extremely complex business ventures and give money to finance them.

Very much like framing, science and storytelling represent two different ways to construct reality. Science searches for objective patterns that outline general truths about the world, while narratives outline the connections through the human experience that help us create meaning and value around our reality. Regardless of their differences, both are essential because they help us make sense of the world and find our place within it. If trust is established, stories can influence how people think and make decisions.

Body Language and Presence

Your body introduces you before your words. More than ever before, today people make snap judgments based on first impressions. That's why body language is central to the influence

tool set. The same holds true for nonverbal cues such as tone of voice, eye contact, and how close we stand to someone. Those cues convey specific messages that affect influence.

To understand the cues you give and receive requires self-awareness, mindfulness, humility, empathy, emotional intelligence and discipline—the basic skills of leadership and influence. There are tools, techniques, and even some secrets of successful body language. But the reality is that when we speak with authenticity and passion, our bodies know exactly what to do and how to be congruent with our words.

Interpersonal Communication: LOVE and Other Things

Mastering the art of conversation has a massive impact on relationships and the ability to influence. Unfortunately, the skill of how to be a good conversationalist has become a lost art form for many. There is a natural sequence to connect with others comfortably.

A powerful sequence that follows what the best communicators do is all about L O V E. That's an acronym for:

- **Listen:** We clear our minds and listen without an agenda.
- **Observe:** Physically observe body language and how it matches to the tone of voice as well as the other nonverbal messages someone sends when they speak.
- **Validate:** Authentically reflect back what that person said that influenced us.
- **Expand:** Go beneath surface-level topics that do nothing to reveal who we are and what we value.

None of this is easy. It takes discipline, self-awareness, and intentional effort. When we master this art, we can take a cold relationship and warm it relatively quickly.

The Stress Factor

All the methods, techniques, sequences, scripts, and values you learn do not matter if you can't access them when you are stressed. Let that sink in for a minute. It's easy to lead when times are good, but to spark an idea in the mind of the opposition, to have the emotional discipline to not react in the face of hostility, and to find your best strategic response requires advanced skills that are rooted in understanding the role stress plays in our lives day-to-day.

Stress hinders your ability to perform at your best and therefore sabotages your ability to influence. What really sets the elite apart is their ability to perform under stress, period. One

way to learn to control stress is to understand the science behind it and why sometimes we can't totally control it.

Since stress is a physiological response, you can use physical approaches to calm it. Breathing techniques, progressive relaxation, 5 minutes of alone time, meditation, laughing, and more are effective ways at activating the parasympathetic nervous system to calm the body and mind and reduce stress.

Putting It All Together and More

It's true joy to watch someone who has struggled to communicate their message embark on the journey to uncover their own story and discover the discipline to learn the skills to communicate effectively. When all this comes together, someone's life changes in an instant.

The clarity of focus they find is inspiring. The effortless way they tell their story and transition to powerful and relevant tie-downs is like watching a gymnast nail a perfect 10 at the Olympics. People also begin to see themselves differently. They stand taller, speak louder, and take bolder steps.

Having confidence and knowing that you can communicate any message so people will not only listen to but also act on it is energizing. Having the self-awareness to know when people resist and the skills to overcome that resistance to deliver a message opens doors to opportunities.

The ability to influence in areas where others can't truly has a powerful effect on the world. To spark an idea in the opposition—"I never thought about it like that before,"—is the kind of influence we need in today's world.

The exploration of your own story is not an easy one. The discipline to learn the skills to deliver your message in a way that is congruent with your values is not an easy one either.

But the most difficult task in front of you is to have the courage to use these tools in the difficult times when it matters the most, when no one around you is listening or cooperating. To be an effective leader, you must have the ability to influence. True leadership is revealed in the struggle.

You now have the tools to completely transform your life and influence those around you. You must find your voice, put in the work, and take the bold steps necessary to positively influence the world. You are here to inspire people in a way that matches your purpose and story.

Uncover it, practice it, and live it boldly. Every day. It may not be easy, but it will be worth it, and the world needs it. Now go and let your heart speak in sequence.



Considered by many as the leading authority on leadership and influence, Rene Rodriguez is a best-selling author, keynote speaker, leadership advisor, and transformational speaker coach. For the last 27 years, René has been researching and applying behavioral neuroscience to solve some of the toughest challenges in leadership, sales, and change. As an entrepreneur and CEO of multiple companies, Rene integrates a practical business approach that inspires his audiences to take action. Through his keynote, bootcamps, workshops and proprietary Amplifi™ course, he helps us own our backstory to build the frame for not only our unique value propositions but also a beautiful picture of life.

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