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THIRD EDITION

WORDS THAT CHANGE MINDS

The 14 Patterns for Mastering the Language of Influence

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Words that Change Minds

Book Highlights

Why Language Shapes Influence

➢People perceive the world through filters formed by history, identity, beliefs, and values, and these filters shape how they decide and act.

➢When you identify how others think and what motivates them, you can build deeper rapport and communicate more effectively.

➢Using this approach reduces conflicts, eases change, and makes implementation smoother in organizations.

➢The book offers practical patterns to map thinking styles and adapt language to influence outcomes

Motivation Patterns: Proactive and Reactive Styles

➢ Proactive (Toward) people are driven by goals and progress, while Reactive (Away From) people focus on avoiding problems and loss.

➢ Putting proactive people in situations they dislike but cannot change will frustrate them deeply.

➢ To motivate reactive people, match their tempo and frame requests in ways that respect their need for time and reflection.

➢ Knowing a person's direction helps you present outcomes as either gains to pursue or risks to avoid.

Criteria & Active Listening: Hot Buttons and Hierarchies

➢Active listening means paraphrasing the other person's words to show you understood their Criteria and priorities.

➢People use a hierarchy of Criteria when making choices, and coaching often requires clarifying what each Criterion means in practice.

➢When someone vacillates, it may indicate overlapping Criteria, cause-effect beliefs, or two labels for the same experience.

➢Observing body language and verbal cues helps you identify which Criteria are most important in a decision.

Direction: Toward vs. Away From Patterns

➢ In any context people either move toward goals or away from problems, and both orientations are normal and measurable.

➢ Approximately 40% of people are mainly Toward, 40% mainly Away From, and 20% balance both in work contexts.

➢ Those with strong Away From patterns may fixate on problems and need help prioritizing what truly matters.

➢ Presenting options as either a way forward or a way to prevent loss will resonate differently with each group.

Source of Motivation: Internal vs. External Standards

➢Internal people fuel their motivation from personal standards and prefer making their own judgments.

➢External people rely on outside feedback and direction to know how well they are doing, and they prefer clear external signals.

➢To engage an Internal person, present information as data to consider rather than directives to follow.

➢To engage an External person, provide explicit feedback, benchmarks, and social proof they can respond to.

Identification & The Macho Test

➢Identification questions reveal whether someone checks their work against internal standards or external opinions.

➢The Macho Test is an editing technique to avoid triggering defensive reactions by not implying superiority or blame.

➢Use suggestive language that honors the other's expertise, such as asking how they have solved a similar problem.

➢Framing feedback as "information you might want to consider" invites Internal people to reflect without feeling coerced.

➢Showing kindness even when in a fight is what binds people together.

Reasoning Styles: Options vs. Procedures

➢Some people reason by exploring Options and like starting new ideas without feeling compelled to finish them.

➢Others prefer established Procedures and look for a right way to do things; both styles affect how they weigh choices.

➢When asking "Why did you choose…," an Options person answers with a list of Criteria, revealing their decision logic.

➢Matching your explanation to their reasoning style makes your suggestions easier to accept and act on.

Scope: Specifics vs. General Perspectives

➤ Self-focused people judge content more than tone or body language.

➤ Other-focused people read faces, gestures, and emotions first.

➤ For Self types, use logic and clarity over rapport tactics.

➤ For Other types, show warmth and expressive communication.

➤ Adapting the level of detail to your audience prevents confusion and keeps attention aligned with their scope.

Practical Patterns & Communication Tips

➢Play back key words and Criteria to show understanding and to mirror the other person's priorities.

➢Avoid jargon and test language with the Macho Test to prevent defensive pushback and maintain collaboration.

➢Tailor your requests to the person's Direction, Source, Reasoning, and Scope for maximum influence.

➢Use concise checks like the Two-Sentence Principle to gauge interest and avoid overloading your listeners.

Disclaimer

This is just a summary. This summary is as per my interpretation and Learning, Please excuse any errors.

For a better understanding, reading the book is highly recommended

Please excuse any errors.

Thank You For Reading

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