

ZIG ZIGLAR'S SECRET INFLUENCE FORMULA

HOPE
IDENTITY
WILL
SKILL
REFILL





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Zig Ziglar impacted and influenced millions of people around the world during his lifetime. This influence continues through his legacy. Legacy is simply the sum total of lives you influence, who they influence, and so on, and so on. If you desire to influence those around you, and your motive is to leave a powerful, positive legacy, then I believe you will benefit from the influence formula that Zig Ziglar used.

As the son of Zig Ziglar, I had the privilege to grow up at the foot of the stage where the world's best speakers, most powerful titans of business, celebrities, and experts of all types shared their secrets to success. I would take copious notes as I heard each speaker, thinking to myself, "That is the answer to my problem." Almost always I would review my notes six months later and realize I had done nothing. Sound familiar?

About 20 years ago Dad asked his assistant Laurie Magers to pull the testimonial letters we received through the years and count them. File after file was pulled until it became clear we had too many to count! Story after



story of positive life change, improved careers, saved marriages, weight loss, sales records – the list goes on and on. Since that time we have received tens of thousands more testimonials. When Dad passed away, over 13,000 [Facebook](#) followers shared how Dad had impacted their lives.

The big question: How did Zig Ziglar inspire people to take action and change their lives, when the vast majority of people who inspire us fail to get us to take action?

At first I thought the answer to this question was simple: Zig Ziglar's combined charisma, integrity, love, skill, and style made him arguably the best speaker who ever walked the stage. The problem with this answer is I can never be Zig Ziglar! And neither can you! As I dug in, though, I realized it was much deeper and much simpler. Dad had a formula. In my conversations with people I call it his "secret" formula because I don't believe he realized he was doing it. He learned through giving thousands of speeches and studying tens of thousands of hours what was needed in order to influence people to take action. The result: he organized his presentations strategically. And you can do the same! It doesn't matter if you are working with someone one-on-one, in a small group, or a room of thousands, the formula will work for you. Here it is:

Zig Ziglar's Influence Formula

1. Hope
2. Identity
3. Will
4. Skill
5. Refill



You start with Hope. Dad believed everyone needs hope and encouragement. He knew that without hope people will not even try. Because of this he started almost all of his presentations with a couple of questions. First, he would ask the audience to raise their hands if there was anything they could do in the next week to make their personal, business, or family life worse. The audience would respond with a nervous laugh, not really expecting such a question from Mr. Motivation! Of course you can make your life worse. You can cut off your finger, bite your tongue, yell at your boss, etc. Then Dad would ask if there was anything they could do in the next week to make their personal, business, or family life better. All hands went up again. He would close with this: "Ladies and gentlemen, without realizing it, you have determined in your mind that you have the power to make things better or worse. The choice is yours." This is where hope is born. The hopeless won't



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even try. When you realize you can do something, you have hope, and action follows hope.

The lesson for you is simple. When you seek to influence someone, you must create hope and help them realize they can do something to improve their situation. When you create hope, action follows.

The second step is Identity. Never underestimate the power of your personal story. It is your greatest asset. I didn't fully understand this until I read the book *The Talent Code* by Daniel Coyle. He includes an example of a classroom study. Math students were introduced to a new branch of Algebra. The teacher explained the branch of Algebra was discovered by a certain mathematician long ago and gave a brief background on the mathematician. The teacher then explained how to solve problems using the formula. At the end of class, a test was given covering the new information they had just learned. But there was a twist. The middle of the test contained a brief bio of the mathematician with his birthdate included. Half the class was given a test where the mathematician's birthday and the students' birthdays matched. For the other half of the class, the birthdates didn't match. They filmed the students taking the tests. The students who thought their birthday was the same day as the mathematician's birthday worked on the problems 30% longer than those whose birthdays didn't match! Isn't that incredible! Because they identified with the mathematician they worked 30% longer to solve the problems.

When people went to hear Zig Ziglar speak they would walk into a room of thousands of people and think thoughts about him like this: "Wow, this Zig guy is really good. He is smart, funny, charismatic, a great speaker. He knows all of the rich and cool people. He is good looking, wealthy, etc. I could never be like Zig Ziglar." Then Dad would tell his personal story: "I was born in L.A. ("Lower Alabama") and raised in Yazoo City, Mississippi, during the heart of the Great Depression. I was the 10th of 12 kids. My dad died when I was 5 and I was raised by my mom who had only a fifth grade education. I started working at 6 years of age selling peanuts on the street corner and have worked ever since. I never did well in school; in fact, I was in the part of the class that made the top half possible! I entered the Navy after high school, then went to college and didn't do well or graduate. I got a sales job and didn't sell anything for two-and-a-half years. Well, I did – I sold my furniture, my car...you get the picture. Then one day everything changed." At this point in Dad's speech you could almost feel the audience change. People began to think to themselves: "Well if he can, maybe I can."

This is the power of Identity. The mood in the room had changed. "If he can, maybe I can." No longer was Zig Ziglar some unknown expert with super powers, he was "just a normal person like me who has had to overcome enormous challenges just like I have." Not only did people take notes, they took action. Because they identified with him, they took action 30% longer on his recommendations and that extra 30% was just enough for them to get a positive result, so they tried the next thing he recommended, and the next, until their whole life had changed. You have this power of Identity as well. The people you are trying to influence need to know your story. They need to know it wasn't always easy, you have scars, have overcome great challenges, and have made some bad decisions along the way. When they see the transparent, real you, they identify with you. When they identify with you, they will try what you recommend 30% longer and get results.

Steps 3 and 4: Will and Skill.

Zig Ziglar believed in order to be successful in life you need to work on your Will and your Skill daily. Will is the heart, the desire, the want to, the passion, the attitude. Skill is the how to, the process, the system, the technique. Success in anything we do requires both. Every day we need to fill our minds with things that build our Will and Skill like positive books, CDs, seminars, and associating with the right kind of positive, uplifting people. This is what people did when they left the event. They had Hope they could improve their position. They identified with Zig, because, "If he can, I can," and they spent 30% longer working on the Will and the Skill.

Don't underestimate Refill. Refill is the daily reminder we all need to remember to Refill our Will and Skill. In life we never stop learning or growing. Every day presents a new challenge. This is perhaps the simplest secret for the truly long-term success stories. People who experience success year after year constantly Refill themselves with life-changing Will and Skill material.

If your goal is to influence your family, your team, your company, a large audience or an individual, remember these simple steps. Everyone needs Hope. The more you share your story with people the more they will identify with you, which means they will try whatever you recommend 30% longer. When you recommend a course of action, make sure they know how important it is to work on Will and Skill daily, and why the Refill is key to long-term success. When they see you practicing Will, Skill, and Refill, that will encourage them even more! **(By Tom Ziglar, CEO of Ziglar, Inc. Tom can be reached at TZiglar@Ziglar.com or Ziglar.com.)**



BIO: TOM ZIGLAR



Tom Ziglar is the CEO of Ziglar, Inc., and enjoys speaking around the world on the subjects of:

- Leadership
- True Performance
- Personal Development
- Success

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