



Develop your lateral authority

The stakes

In today's business context, managers can rarely complete projects or assignments without at some point requiring the support of their peers and/or staff from other units or functions. Even when there is a clear mandate from the top, the various constituents must be willing to cooperate. So, to get the support they need, managers are strongly advised to cultivate their credibility with the rest of the organization.

Drivers of lateral authority

In the absence of formal authority, **providing a clear picture straightaway of the facts driving your actions** enables you to legitimize your requests.

- Systematically evoke the broader vision supporting your initiatives.
- Keep your messages consistent over time to provide a clear sense of direction.
- Be transparent about your objectives. Everyone might not agree with you, but your frankness will be appreciated.

If you promise more than you can deliver, you won't be trusted and people won't be willing to help you out the next time. On the other hand, you will **build lasting credibility** if you are frank about your limitations and keep your word.

- Promise only what you are sure to deliver, even if this means promising less.
- Ensure that you have the required resources before making commitments.

