

SITUATION

This explains the situation and introduces the main characters.

A

DISCUSS

Technique	Example phrases
Stress the benefits.	- The main benefit for you would be ... - This would enable you to ...
Cultivate trust.	- In my experience we should ... - Believe me, this worked very well in my last project.
Be transparent.	- I've divided my explanation into two sections. - My motivation for saying this is ...
Use logical arguments.	- The main reason behind my argument is ... - The figures show that ...
Focus on the relationship.	- I totally understand your feelings. - You know me very well, so ...
Be strong.	- There is absolutely no other solution. - It would be crazy not to do this now.
Look to the future.	- My vision is ... - I'd like to tell you a little story.
Be confident.	- I am totally confident that ... - I have absolutely no doubt that ...
Show optimism.	- I'm very optimistic about this, because ... - The best-case scenario is that we can ...

Taken from *Communicating Internationally in English* by Bob Dignen, York Associates 2011

VIEW

- 1 People use different influencing styles – some use data and logic, others rely more on relationships. Influencing colleagues based in other countries is also difficult because of a lack of authority, e.g. you are not project leader, or they have a manager at home.

- 2 Be aware that people have different influencing styles, and that they respond to different styles – so use the right style and be creative; be patient if things aren't going as you want them to.

REFLECT

- 1 Consider what you already know about the styles of your colleagues and how they react to different situations.
- 2 Other challenges might include cultures where 'face' is an issue (see module 4B of the Trainer's Notes), or situations which are time-sensitive, for example.

B

DISCUSS

Consider that Gabriella and Lucas are from different cultures and didn't know each other before the start of the project.

VIEW

- 1 Lucas expresses conviction that it's important to start the pilot. He says that 'data' shows that Gabriella's region is ideal. He stresses benefits: speed and cost efficiency.
- 2 She does not support Lucas's view. She says that it is not her decision to begin the second pilot.

REFLECT

If possible, watch Part B again to observe how Lucas and Gabriella interact with each other in terms of their body language as well as what they say.

C

DISCUSS

Think about the conversation from both Lucas's and Gabriella's perspective.

VIEW

- 1 Bob says the conversation did not go well, and that Lucas failed; there was a breakdown in communication.
- 2 Lucas thinks his arguments are good because the time is right for a second pilot. Gabriella is not convinced.

D**VIEW**

- 1 Lucas thinks Gabriella is making it difficult for him to get his point across and that no one is willing to invest time or effort into the project.
- 2 Rachel thinks that Gabriella is willing to support Lucas, but that because her boss back home is resisting the project, she can't (her hands are tied). Pushing her therefore won't work.

REFLECT

Rachel advises Lucas to try to understand Gabriella, be a little bit more patient, and use a different approach which may help her.

E**DISCUSS**

Learning points should include what needs to be communicated and how to do it.

VIEW

Firstly, we need to see the bigger picture when communicating across cultures, what's going on in the background, e.g. if local managers of team members support the international projects or not.

Secondly, be aware that communicating about this matter may be difficult; team colleagues may not be able to talk openly.

REFLECT

- 1 A 'push' style generally means trying to convince people by explaining with logic and/or applying pressure in some way. A 'pull' style of influencing uses many more questions and tries more indirectly to persuade.
- 2 Neither style is necessarily more effective than the other; it will depend on the situation.

F**VIEW**

- 1 He takes her a green tea, and asks if they can have a little talk. He then apologises for speaking to her as he did earlier.
- 2
 - a understand
 - b the second pilot is a crazy idea
 - c get things moving
 - d move things along; have any ideas

G**VIEW**

Lucas is showing more sensitivity to the pressure Gabriella is under and understanding that there are political influences he has to take into account.

H**VIEW**

- 1 Gabriella agrees to help set up a meeting between her manager and Lucas's to discuss the second pilot.
- 2 Lucas offers to help Gabriella with her workshop.

I**VIEW & REFLECT**

Bob thinks Lucas has been successful in engaging Gabriella to help set up the meeting, and re-establishing a better working relationship with her. But he is not yet sure if the management meeting will deliver the results that he wants.

J**VIEW**

- 1 He needs to be more sensitive to people's way of working and the pressure they are under. Applying more pressure can be unproductive.
- 2 Asking more questions and listening more.

K**VIEW**

'Pull' influencing:

Most professionals who move from a local job to work in an international context say that they use a more pull-oriented style to manage greater diversity: more questions, more listening and less pressurising.

'Push' influencing:

Sometimes a pretty tough pushing style will be necessary and that will work – it may even be the cultural norm.

REFLECT

Many professionals lack the patience to listen for long periods and the skills to ask the right kinds of questions which can engage and persuade.