

**Three Tips** for  
**Women in Leadership**

# **Increasing Your Political Acumen**

**Allison Horak** | Instructor



# What is political acumen?

Your ability to navigate  
the subtle undercurrents of  
office politics and  
interpersonal dynamics  
to achieve organizational goals



# AGENDA

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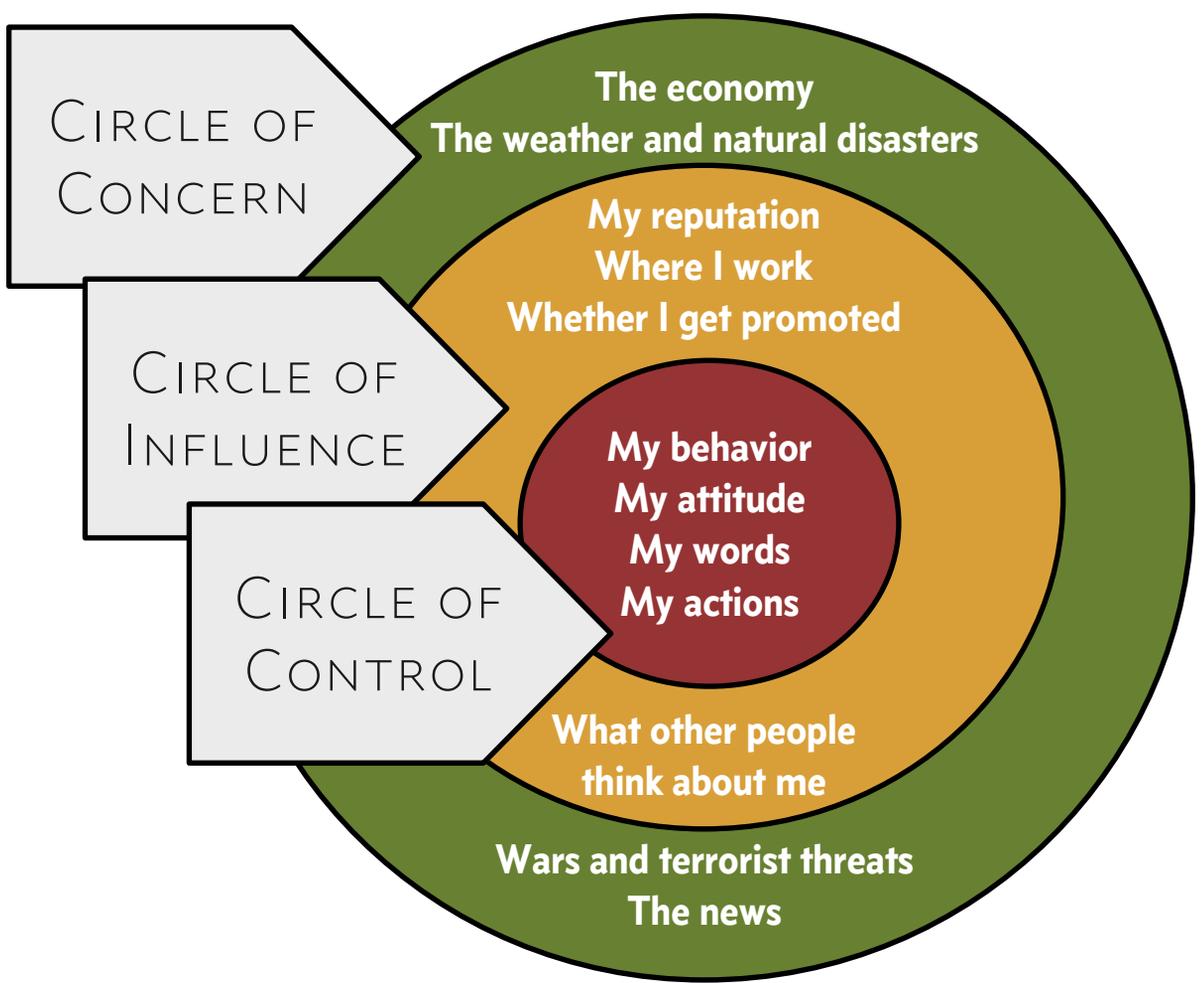
**1.** Focus on what you can control

**2.** Use your relationships to influence

**3.** Find and support your allies

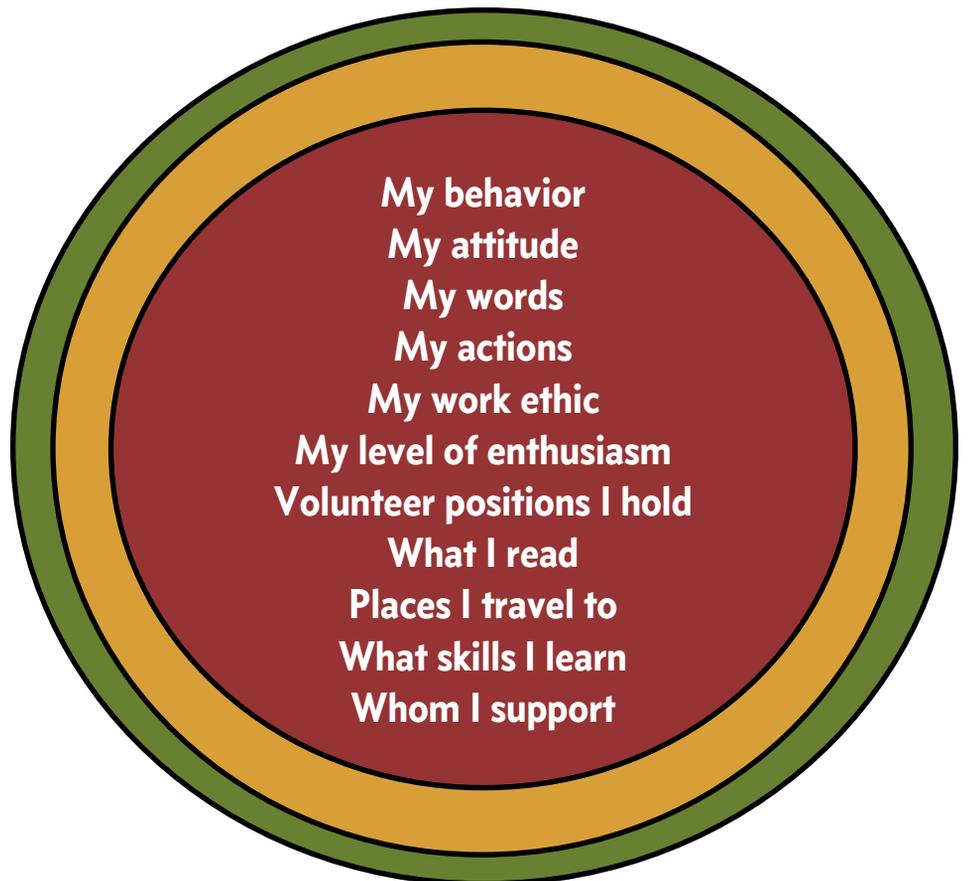
# Circles of Control, Influence, and Concern

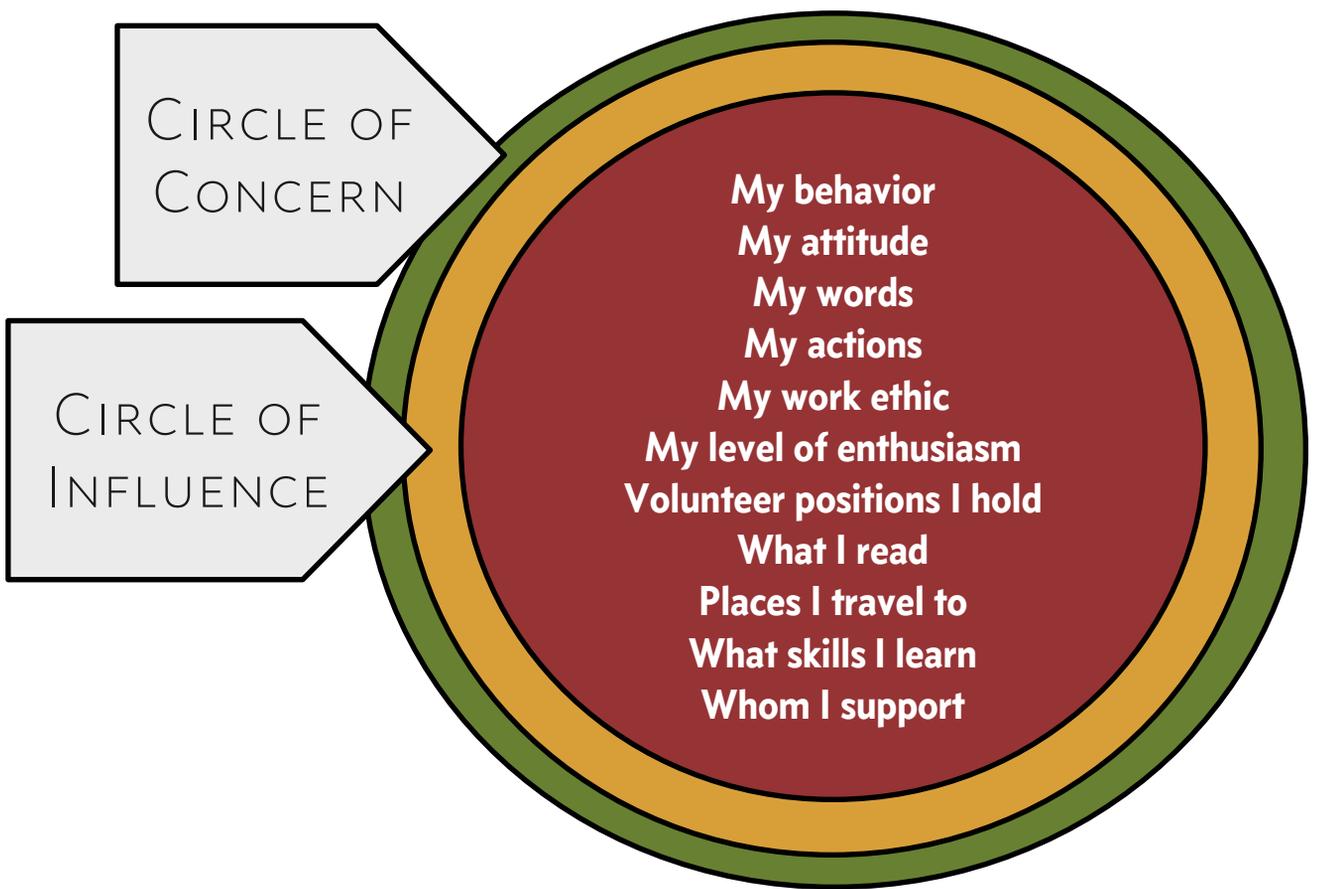
from Steven Covey,  
*Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*



## Proactive mindset:

Most of our time and energy is focused on issues that are within our **control**.





Focusing our energy on issues that are within our **control** grows our **circle of influence** and shrinks our **circle of concern**.

**How does this work?**

# Approaches to Influence

# 3

## APPROACHES TO INFLUENCE

1

LOGIC AND REASON

2

EMOTIONS

3

RELATIONSHIPS AND  
SOCIAL APPEALS

# RELATIONSHIPS AND SOCIAL APPEALS

Engaging others through:

1

asking questions

2

seeking advice

3

involving them in the problem or solution

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Engaging others through:

1 asking questions

2 seeking advice

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**Example:** Asking existing analysts to help identify recruitment and onboarding strategies for new analyst hires.

**Limitations:** Using relationships to exert influence typically works poorly when you are **manipulative**. People will catch on if it's not a sincere attempt to pick their brains or involve them.

**Sincerity is key!**

# RELATIONSHIP AND SOCIAL APPEALS

Engaging others through:

1 asking questions

2 seeking advice

3 involving them in the problem or solution

## How does this strategy work?

When someone provides input or collaborates, they feel more involved and committed to ensuring success. Building these **alliances** provides a strong source of influence.

# Find and Support Your Allies



# Where can you find your allies?

Your manager?

Your teammates?

Yes, but your list of allies goes much further than this!

There are a lot of people to whom you can offer support and who would be happy to reciprocate.



Where can you  
find your allies?

**Brainstorm categories of allies**  
(current or potential)  
**at your workplace.**

# HOW TO BUILD AND KEEP ALLIANCES

**Be supportive.** Start by offering your support to others when you see that they need it. The more openness, support, and positivity you offer, the more likely they will lend you theirs.

**Don't ask for too much.** It's important to be realistic about the level of support you expect. Remember, others have to manage their own roles, tasks, and priorities—and, to them, those priorities may be higher than yours!



Our next session is:

**June 7**

See you there!

**Allison Horak**