

Niki Grady
How to Win Friends & Influence People

Dale Carnegie authored “How to Win Friends & Influence People,” a blue-print encompassing how to effectively interact with one another among any social setting. The purpose of this literature was to establish guidelines for successful behavior techniques that had yet to surface in the author’s time. The underlying concept is that a person is capable of controlling the extent to which potential relationships are formed just by contouring one’s response relative to the matter in discussion. To organize Carnegie’s theory, the book is outlined in four sections: (1) Fundamental Techniques in Handling People, (2) Six Ways to Make People Like You, (3) How to Win People to Your Way of Thinking, and (4) Be a Leader: How to Change People Without Giving Offense or Arousing Resentment. Each section is based on the notions that every person desires appreciation and to feel important. These notions are the necessary components that prompt the parameters of this text.

Another aspect of the work comprises leadership. Though leadership is not an explicitly repetitive term expressed in this writing, it is certainly a prevalent theme. Successful leadership requires effective communication. Therefore, Carnegie’s concepts and leadership go hand-in-hand, and are useful tips when attempting to perpetually progress in business or self-improvement. For instance, the foundation of the publication outlines three principles, and they are essential for any figurehead to prevail. The principles state (1) don’t criticize, condemn, or complain, (2) give honest and sincere appreciation, and (3) arouse in the other person an eager want. These standards are the equivalent of what pertinent techniques must be enforced in order to motivate your team or subordinates. Motivation is the key to leadership as it encourages productivity, if applied. The belief that any negative attitude, lack of sincere appreciation, and insufficient ambition is any way valuable to the growth of a business or person serves to be questioned in retrospect of historically prosperous organizations and individuals. In regards to

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leadership, the most distinctive and discerning advice the text offers lies in the fourth subsection of part four. That is that no one likes taking orders. I, myself, am not a fan of authority, and nothing irks me more than an overbearing, power-obsessed supervisor. This chapter suggests asking questions instead of giving orders, and in turn this will endow an individual with their own sense of authority over their duties. To illustrate, the book advocates asking questions such as “Do you think that would work?” or “You might consider this,” versus “Do this or do that,” and “Don’t do this or don’t do that.” Accordingly, this recommendation will incite cooperation, foster creativity, and provide a way to preserve one’s pride when pointing out errors as Carnegie emphasizes. The proposal is so contradictory of a typical trait found in leadership, which is to give orders to your subordinates or followers, and thus makes an interesting and significant point for redress.

Emphatically, the writer’s concepts of his ideas are expressed effectively. Also, Carnegie is not obtuse to think that his theory is a precise science amongst conversing, and thereby indicating exceptions to the rule. Yet, the text lacks proposition for an alternative approach. The author quickly rejects punishment as an appropriate and operative method for resolving any indiscretion, but offers only his doctrine as a remedy. Equally important is the contradiction the book endorses by condemning punishment. Implicitly, the writer’s success depends on an amenable reader. However, by rejecting a technique different from his own therein lies inconsistency. Carnegie could have researched positive forms of punishment that could be utilized when taking corrective action. I agree that punishment tends to promote resentment, but I do believe that it can be effective for some and maybe even applied in conjunction with the concepts of the writer’s guidelines. Additionally, a constant anxiety the book is concerned with is resentment, which surfaces because of one’s sensitivity to reproof. With this in mind, it seems

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that “How to Win Friends & Influence People” aids to a nurturing behavior of the mass, and rears a hypersensitive society. This result can be lethal in a time where insensitivity is demanded to prevent future mishaps, such as in a time of war. Critical errors can lead to mass destruction, and though insensitive authority can create resentment, sensitivity lacks priority for good reason. Despite the minor inadequacies of the content, Carnegie’s theory has proven very effective in the many examples he provided within the book. The most important lesson learned is one I already knew: “do unto others as you would have others do unto you.” I rarely practice this simple rule because it is less apparent when I am in the moment of a heated discussion or in sharp disagreement with my opposition. I tend to speak before I think, whereas I should consider how I would react before speaking my thoughts. Overall, I enjoyed this book and would recommend it to family and friends because it encourages diplomacy and a positive attitude. I believe if it were read with an open mind, then maybe it would allow for more discussions as opposed to arguments.