

ANNE AUSTIN CROSSES OVER: SELLING A NEW PRODUCT IDEA, AND GAINING ACCESS TO AN OUT-OF-REACH JOB

This example illustrates many different strategies by which Anne Austin, a young employee at a Fortune 500 company, goes way beyond her current job to make a significant contribution to the organization, and in the process, to attain a position that was apparently closed to her, yet she very much wanted. Anne is a corporate entrepreneur, spotting a business opportunity, determining that it is viable, and selling it to those who will implement it. She is much more conscious of wanting influence than was Nettie Seabrooks, (another case on the web site), but like Nettie, she does good work, puts the organization's interests first, and finds ways to achieve interdepartmental influence in a rather rigid organization.

SUCCESSFUL USE OF MULTIPLE INFLUENCE STRATEGIES

Cosmarket Corporation* was a large, successful, but staid consumer products company with a few products that had long dominated their markets and several that were average. It was considered one of the best product-marketing companies to work for. When Anne Austin joined as a sales forecast associate, she was excited about creating and marketing quality consumer products. She knew that Cosmarket's tough requirements would make it extraordinarily difficult to work her way over to a brand manager's job in marketing where she would have the leverage to achieve her goals. The competition for marketing jobs at Cosmarket was intense, and only a very few had ever made it from within other functions at the company. Furthermore, Anne's undergraduate degree was from a good but lesser known college, which put her in a very difficult position for entry into a marketing organization dominated by MBAs from Harvard, Wharton, and Northwestern. However, she was determined to make it because she knew that was the way she could best contribute to the company's product lineup.

Anne's strong analytical skills had quickly boosted her to her present position of senior forecast analyst; and she had been rated in the top performance category two years running. Along the way, she had befriended two other managers who had managed to cross functions and make it into marketing. These colleagues advised her to do two things to increase her chances of moving into the marketing department: obtain an MBA and get experience with consumer goods.

OVERCOMING ORGANIZATIONAL BARRIERS TO MAKE AN EARLY CONTRIBUTION TO MARKETING

Anne entered an evening MBA program that allowed her to continue working at Cosmarket while pursuing her degree. To acquire consumer goods experience, she took advantage of a course requirement to conduct a consumer study of an about-to-be-

* All names and some details disguised, but the events are as described.

launched Cosmarket laundry product. Anne's findings had the potential to make a real contribution; she discovered that the product's package design did not communicate clearly to consumers the main feature of the product. Anne wanted to go immediately to the product's brand manager with her findings; but the vice-president of market research told her that, since hers was only a pilot project and she was not a professional researcher, she should keep quiet. Ignoring the warnings, Anne went informally to the product brand manager with her discovery and concerns. The product manager listened, agreed, and implemented a last-minute change that overcame the problem. Not only did the product make a successful launch, but Anne made a good friend and future ally in the grateful brand manager.

To do her project using actual Cosmarket data and customers, Anne had obtained permission from Henry Logan, vice-president of market research. In granting permission, Henry told Anne that her "school project" could only be pursued after office hours; and, although the project's outcome was beneficial to the company, Henry barely acknowledged her efforts. (See Figure 1 for a partial organization chart.)

The last course Anne took as part of her MBA program was "Intrapreneurship," which also required a project within an organization. Students were expected to find an activity that would generate at least \$1 million in sales or \$50,000 in savings, develop it, prepare a business plan, and present the idea to the relevant executives.

AN OPPORTUNITY: SPOTTING A POTENTIAL NEW PRODUCT

Timing and opportunity were on Anne's side; just as she began the course, she hit upon an idea that seemed to have great potential. As part of her job, Anne had been conducting a market segmentation study of shampoos, digging through a newly acquired research study for what she needed. In the process, she discovered that 10 percent of the shampoo sold had wheat germ added, yet Cosmarket had no wheat germ in its lines. She was shocked to find a "natural" product, one with sales as large as the dandruff or baby shampoo segments, sold by competitors but ignored by her company. The opportunity for a wheat germ-added shampoo in the price-value (inexpensive) end of the market seemed great; Cosmarket's "Dew Drop" brand line of products was a likely candidate for addition of this popular ingredient.

Because the company was very strict about allowing new product ideas to come only from marketing or from chemists who somehow discovered a new formulation, Anne knew she had to proceed cautiously. Furthermore, as a forecast analyst working for market research, Anne had no formal channel for initiating product ideas to marketing, the high status group in the company. And she correctly anticipated that Henry Logan once again would provide no support and restrict her to pursuing her idea only as a school project on her own time. Because he was a very thorough market researcher who operated by the book, Henry didn't get excited about a project developed in an unorthodox and informal way.

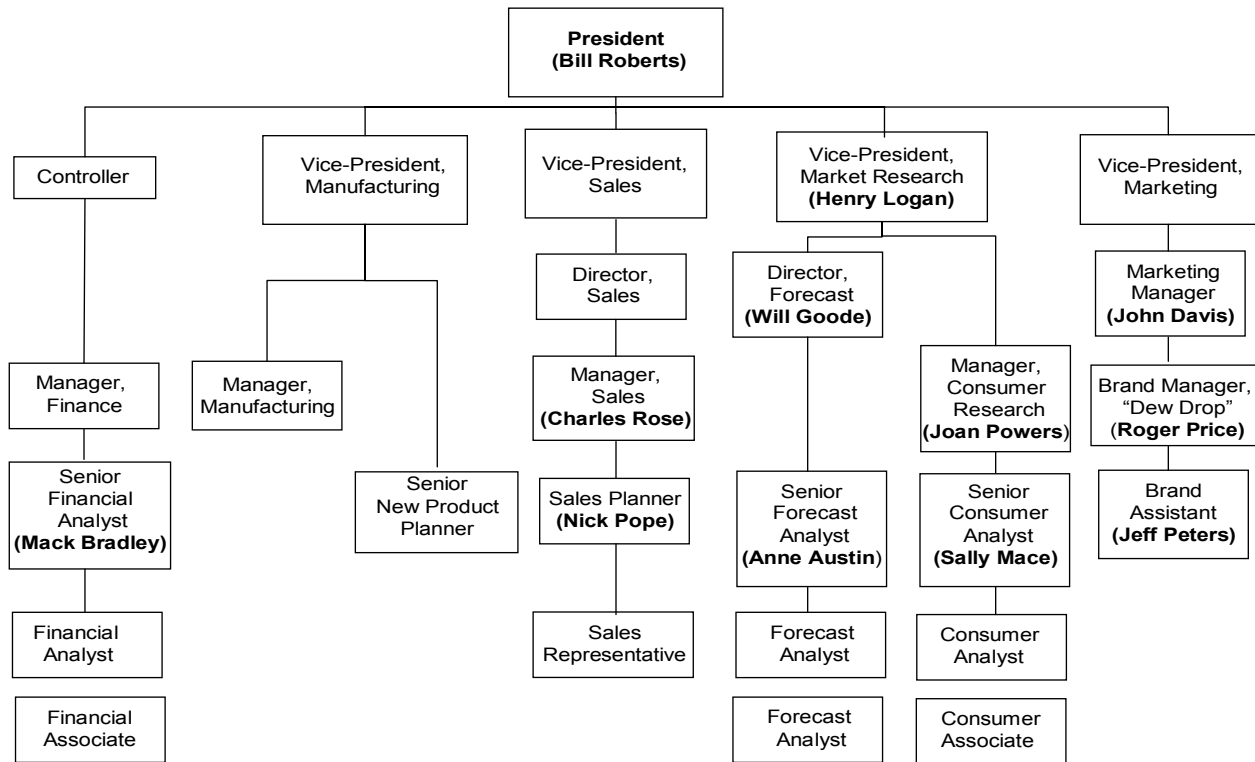
Anne sought advice from friends outside of work. One friend listened to her description of the restrictive rules and norms at Cosmarket and advised Anne to go to the president's office and demand that he listen to her idea. Anne realized that there was no way that the president was going to see her, let alone listen to her arguments for a product line extension. That would be blindly suicidal on her part.

Another friend advised her to quit and find a marketing job at a more receptive, less rigid company. That was always an option, but Anne was determined to make a serious effort before giving up. She knew that careful planning could make the odds of success much better, and she had confidence in her ability to figure out who the key players were, what they cared about and what she could offer them for their cooperation.

DO NOT COPY

Figure 1

PARTIAL ORGANIZATION CHART – COSMARKET CORPORATION.



FIRST MOVE: GET FEEDBACK ON HER IDEA (AND BUILD INTEREST)

Anne decided that her first move would be to test her idea on someone from the sales side. She approached Nick in sales planning, a peer with whom she was friendly. Nick had just returned from a field visit where he had seen the competitors' products on the shelves, and he reacted positively to Anne's idea.

After she spoke with Nick, Anne recalled that during her training period she had spent a week in the field with a sales manager who had pumped her for information about company plans. The salesforce was informed about new product launches only after everything was in place. As a result, sales personnel often felt uninformed and sought every scrap of information they could glean. If they got wind of a possible new product, they could become useful allies in encouraging Cosmarket to develop it. In addition, Charles Rose, Nick's boss and the sales manager, was too busy to get involved in exploring new product ideas. Having heard from Henry that Anne's efforts were merely a "school project," Rose was not likely to be much help.

Accordingly, Anne suggested to Nick that he run her idea by some district sales managers. As she hoped, the salesforce subsequently began to ask for the product.

OVERCOMING CONSUMER RESEARCH OBJECTIONS (AND LEARNING IN THE PROCESS)

Anne's next step was to approach Joan Powers, manager of consumer research, to get confirmation that wheat germ was an attractive additive and to determine who was buying the competitors' shampoos. To Anne's surprise, Joan was very negative. She declared that wheat germ was a dated product for "hippies" and totally inconsistent with the Dew Drop efforts to keep its image up-to-date. When Anne argued that the market was big and that significant segments of it were buying wheat germ shampoos, Joan's curt response was that it was a bad idea to go back to a product that had been dropped years earlier. Anne retreated.

But she didn't surrender. She went to Sally Mace, senior consumer analyst under Joan, who had traded information with Anne in the past, and requested to see results from a national consumer survey of personal care products, along with any available focus group data.

Still unsettled by Joan's reaction, Anne dug into the data. Careful reading of the studies led her to the belief that wheat germ product purchases were made by athletic consumers who liked natural ingredients. In fact, the majority of the purchases were of products that had protein additives along with the wheat germ. Her conclusion: The combination of both wheat germ and protein appealed to the athletic-minded consumer. This was good news; she now had a better story to tell, one that was more consistent with the new,

updated image of Dew Drop. Joan's negative reaction, and Anne's homework in response, had probably saved her neck!

APPROACHING THE BRAND MANAGER WITH A POTENTIALLY PROFITABLE CONCEPT

Using what she had learned, Anne prepared a sales forecast for a Dew Drop wheat germ and protein shampoo. She took it to Roger Price, brand manager for the Dew Drop line. Anne knew that Roger, who was young and well respected, had a reputation for getting things done in far less time than other brand managers. He apparently was more willing to take risks than most brand managers; he gave his assistants great latitude to work on a variety of projects instead of having them all work on the same project under very close supervision.

Anne also knew that Roger was highly respected by his boss, John Davis, the marketing manager. It was John who would make the decision about Anne's product idea, and who also held the key to her eventual entry into the marketing division. He was responsible for hiring new assistant brand managers.

Given what she knew about him, Anne reasoned that a direct approach to Roger would work best; she marched into his office and said, "I have an idea for a wheat germ and protein addition to the Dew Drop line; I think it will make you an incremental \$4.4 million a year in sales. Are you interested?" "Of course," he replied.

Anne told Roger what she knew so far: the forecast, size of market, competitors' wheat germ products, and the interest in sports among consumers. Although Roger liked the idea, he told her that she had a long way to go if she wanted to sell it to John. He mentioned a number of questions she had not considered, such as color of the shampoo, color of the bottle, sales dollars lost from existing products, purchaser consistency (repeat sales) in relation to wheat germ products, and so on.

Finally, however, Roger called Jeff Peters, his new assistant, into the room, asked him to help Anne, and told him "to make sure she gets everything she needs." Anne got the impression that Roger saw this as a chance to get an extra person working on his line. In addition, Roger enthusiastically remarked, "This is a great new product idea with a proven formula; I won't have to spend anything on market research."

Roger then contacted Anne's boss, Will Goode, and cleared the way for her to work on the idea. Since Anne had been a standout performer for him and could get her regular work done in far less time than the other forecasters, Will agreed, even though his boss, Henry, had said that Anne should work on the project only on her own time.

INFORMING HER BOSS'S BOSS TO AVOID PROBLEMS WITH HER BOSS

Anne knew that Henry sat on the operating committee, which had final sign-off on new products, and she didn't want to alienate him; so she made it a point to keep him informed by memo at every stage of what to him was still her school project. If the product actually made it into production, she wanted him to be able to say, "That's one of my people," She thought that Henry would be won over if other people, specifically people from marketing with whom he had to maintain his position, showed interest.

Nevertheless, Anne was concerned about how Henry would react to the absence of any budget for market research. His departmental budget had recently been cut, and she thought that he might be unhappy that marketing would develop a new product, with the help of someone from his organization, without spending money on research. Anne decided to turn again to Roger, in an attempt to head off any problems down the line with Henry.

OBTAINING RESEARCH FUNDS FROM THE PROJECT MANAGER BY PERSUADING HIM THAT HIS BOSS WOULD WANT TO KNOW THE ANSWERS

"Roger, remember how you asked me about whether wheat germ buyers always buy wheat germ or whether they switch around to other shampoos?" Anne inquired. "Well, there are no data on that now. You asked me, and so you know John will ask. It's probably a good idea to spend a little money on research so that we're ready for John," she concluded. Although he had not planned on any research expenditures, Roger was persuaded. He approached Joan Powers to negotiate for a research project. The request piqued Joan's interest and this time she reacted positively and got Henry involved. They established a research contract. Anne's behind-the-scenes efforts had worked to acquire support.

GATHERING MORE DATA THAT COULD HELP HER BE CONVINCING

Meanwhile, Anne gathered other information she needed. Having been introduced by Roger's assistant, Jeff, to people whose cooperation she needed, Anne secured cost data from the chemist and manufacturing data from the plant where Dew Drop was made. She found that the plant was not producing at capacity, which helped her arguments. Sometimes she got help from people who usually requested sales data from her; and she repaid them by thanking them profusely, as well as providing them with answers in less time than usual.

Anne found that if she told people she was working on a project for Roger and he wanted the data, she usually got cooperation. For example, she realized that she would need

profit-and-loss statements; if she herself prepared them, even though she knew how, John might not trust her numbers. So Anne went to Mack Bradley, a senior financial analyst, and said, "Roger has me working on this project. He wants you to run P&Ls on it. I'll give you all the information; when you're done, please give copies to Roger and me." This request created an obligation to Mack; later, she invited him to attend the presentation to John, to help defend the numbers if necessary. Mack was delighted to have the opportunity "to hear what's going on."

PREPARING TO APPROACH THE KEY PLAYER: THE PRODUCT MANAGER'S BOSS

During the research stage of this project, Anne had decided to allow Roger to be the one to keep John Davis apprised of what was going on. She assumed that Roger would have the most credibility with John and would have the best chance of selling him on the merits of the idea. But now Anne, having assembled her data into a huge report complete with statistical back up, was ready for her presentation to John. Roger didn't make it easy, however. He wasn't offering to set up the presentation, so the next time he asked Anne to do some marketing paperwork needed to get the ball rolling, she replied, "Be glad to, Roger. By the way, when can you set up the meeting with John?"

When Roger finally agreed to arrange the meeting, Anne made another request: "Roger, if we both want to look good at this presentation, I'd better know what John will ask. Can you show the report to him and get me an early read?" Anne had correctly assumed that Roger had been building her up to John; and if Anne came across as unprepared, Roger would look bad. John's preview questions caused Anne to scramble for answers. Her boss, Will, helped her with some of the questions; and she convinced Roger to have the chemist run a product cost analysis despite his reluctance to work on a product that he believed would be killed. As it turned out, wheat germ was actually cheaper to add than any existing ingredients, which made Anne's analysis of sales lost from existing products look even better. Replacement sales would boost gross margin, and additional sales would increase total revenue.

MAKING HER PITCH: THOROUGH PREPARATION FOR THE MARKETING AUDIENCE

The presentation meeting included John, Roger, and all his staff, plus Anne's invitees: Mack Bradley, the financial analyst; Joan and her senior analyst, Sally Mace; and Anne's boss, Will Goode. Anne worked long and hard on the presentation, especially the ending. As an outsider to the marketing "inner sanctum," Anne knew she had to be thoroughly prepared. She also realized the marketers in attendance had special expertise to offer; and she knew that leaving them room to create the final product would help avoid not-invented-here feelings.

Anne summed up her presentation in this way: "I'm an analyst. I specialize in forecasting. I've shown that a wheat germ-protein shampoo should sell, and that

Cosmarket can and should compete in this area. But there are decisions I can't make because I'm not a marketing person. One of these is packaging; we think we know from our research that people who buy price-value brands like certain colors, but we're thrown off by the fact that our competition has gone with other colors. Second, Dew Drop traditionally has used a transparent bottle, but our competition is using an opaque, cloudy bottle. It's up to the marketing group to decide whether a clear bottle is an important part of the image. Only marketing has the knowledge and expertise to address the packaging situation."

At the meeting, John made a tentative decision to proceed, and he assigned the remaining issues to Roger's group for resolution. He concluded with high praise for Anne, Will, and Roger; and he voiced special appreciation that such good, detailed work and a terrific idea had come out of the market research area.

CAMPAIGNING FOR AN ASSISTANT BRAND MANAGER'S POSITION USING EXISTING RELATIONSHIPS TO HELP

In a fairy tale, Anne immediately would have been swooped up by marketing and put in charge of something important. But that didn't happen. A few months passed, and Jeff Peters, the assistant brand manager who had helped her out, asked her if she knew that John was about to interview for a new assistant brand manager. In working with Jeff, Anne had learned a great deal about the actual tasks in his job, and she had helped him by introducing him to her contacts. They maintained their friendly relationship, and he tipped her off to the opportunity.

Anne believed she was ready for the move. She consulted Will about a course of action, and he recommended that she talk to the HR department. She made an appointment with a recruiting interviewer, during which meeting she was stunned to learn that there was "no way" she could be considered for a marketing job because marketing had a policy that mandated new staff be hired only from the outside. The recruiter explained that Anne could quit her current position and then apply for the new job; but, since she did not have an MBA from Harvard, Northwestern, or Wharton, she wouldn't even be invited for an interview! Incredulous at the Catch 22, Anne went to the head of HR, cornered him in his office at the end of a day, and expressed her outrage. He tried to calm her down by promising to talk to John.

Certain that nothing would be done on her behalf by HR, Anne turned to her network of company friends and associates. She sought help from a brand manager whom she had once helped overcome salesforce resistance to a new product, asking him how to get to John, how to present herself, and what marketing would look for. The brand manager not only offered to talk to John, but he also gave her the evaluation sheet used for recruitment interviews and coached her on how to meet the criteria. A few days later, Anne got her chance. Jeff Peters arrived in Anne's office bearing a request from John for certain data

he needed for a project. Anne smiled and said, “Tell John he can have what he needs by Monday morning if he'll give me five minutes to talk with him.” John met with Anne.

Anne stated her case with confidence. She told John that she wanted to join marketing, and that she knew she was damn good and could be successful. If he wouldn't consider her, she would respond to the inquiries she had been receiving from a major competitor and leave the company. John agreed to include Anne in the formal search process. A few days later, Anne's interview was confirmed.

More conversations with colleagues helped Anne prepare both the content John might ask about, and an appropriate interview style. As a result, she arrived armed with a list of five examples of things she had accomplished for each of the major qualities John required in potential hires, and she was ready for the particular questions John asked that had not been spelled out in the interview guide. At the end of the interview, John admitted that he had been impressed by Anne's performance on the wheat germ project but hadn't realized the range and depth of her experiences. She was offered the job.

ANALYSIS OF ANNE'S EXCHANGE STRATEGIES

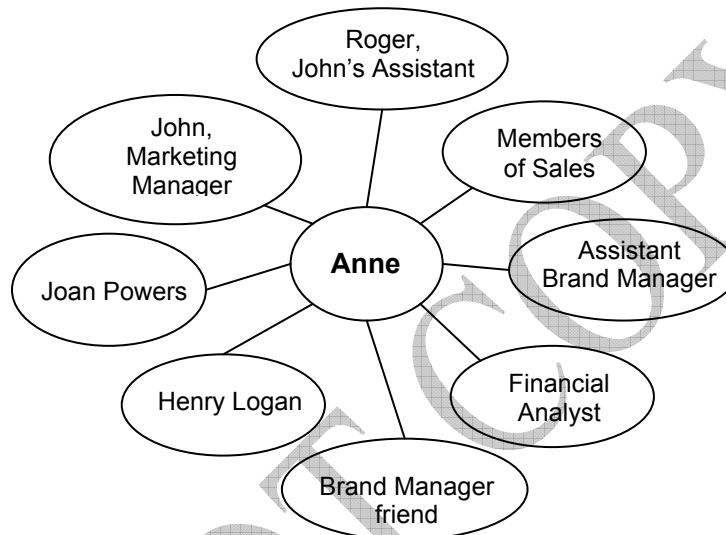
Let's look at how Anne Austin made the influence exchange process work for her. First, how did she think about the people she wanted to influence—as obstacles to progress or potential allies?

MOVING TARGETS: ANNE'S POTENTIAL ALLIES

There were numerous people for Anne to influence, and she couldn't easily tackle all of them. (See Figure 2) John, the marketing manager, was the person she cared most about, because he would not only make the decision about the new shampoo, but could open the door to a marketing job. Roger, John's subordinate, was also critical, since he was the brand manager. She regarded both of them as potential allies, and devoted considerable energy to thinking about how to get what she needed from them by connecting to their interests. She wanted to create alliances with them that would benefit all parties to the transaction.

Figure 2

IMPORTANT STAKEHOLDERS FOR ANNE IN HELPING
THE ORGANIZATION DEVELOP A NEW PRODUCT, AND IN BREAKING
INTO MARKETING



To a lesser extent, Anne perceived many other people as potential allies, including members of the sales force, the assistant brand manager, the financial analyst, her friend in market research, and so on. Because she had built prior relationships, some of these people were already strategic allies even though she had not yet called on them; she considered others as potential allies and approached them accordingly.

Yet, Joan Powers, the manager of consumer research, and Henry Logan, vice-president of market research, were kept at a distance. Whether Anne could have directly persuaded them to help her isn't clear, but instead of trying to engage their support, she worked around them. At the same time, she did not think of them as enemies; rather, she anticipated their concerns and avoided antagonizing them. She kept Henry informed in a general way so that he would not be surprised and sabotage her efforts. While this doesn't exactly constitute an intimate strategic alliance, she did think about his interests and accommodate them. It must have been very tempting to write Henry off as an old fogey, or to treat Joan as a closed-minded blocker; but, because Anne wanted to keep later alliance possibilities alive, she maintained her civility—and even acquired valuable information as a result of Joan's resistance.

Thus, Anne did not actively pursue every potential alliance, but she did consider many as potential allies at one time or another and always kept her options open. The person she made the least effort to influence was the HR manager, partly out of her frustration at the rigid, depersonalizing response he gave, and partly because she knew that the power to select her resided in marketing, not HR. She saw HR people as mindless gatekeepers who only followed rules, and she decided she could work around them. If marketing wanted her, HR would go along, and if not, she would leave the company anyway. Since she expected nothing from the HR manager, she was willing to risk alienating him in an attempt to make him uncomfortable enough to act. It isn't easy to embarrass a colleague into becoming an ally (a negative exchange), but sometimes even that may produce cooperation.

ANNE'S GOALS AND PRIORITIES

Anne had two goals: to get wheat germ shampoo accepted and to land a marketing job. But she understood that in order to achieve the second goal, she had to do an excellent job in researching and presenting the wheat germ proposal, so she tabled her personal job goal and moved it to the background. As a result, she had a sense of when to push and when to back off.

For example, when preparing her presentation to John, Anne knew that John would expect every "i" dotted and "t" crossed. On the other hand, Anne knew that marketing would want some ownership of this new product, and that the in-depth marketing expertise of John and his staff would certainly help determine the best way to package the product. If she were pursuing a singular goal of landing a job in marketing, Anne might have had trouble deferring to their expertise; she would have felt compelled to show off her preparation and knowledge. Instead, she was able to take the long view that a successful product introduction would be best for the company and eventually boost her reputation, and she made space for the brand management group to decide issues she knew less about.

MATCHING THE WORLDS OF POTENTIAL ALLIES WITH ANNE'S RESOURCES

Although it is conceptually elegant to separate the diagnosis of what matters to potential allies from the resources available to give them what they want, it is easier to discuss Anne's experiences by linking these steps. In this way, we can keep track of the players without an elaborate scorecard. For added convenience, we have included a table, Figure 3, which shows what was important to (the currencies of) the key potential allies we introduced.

Anne discovered a market opportunity for shampoo with wheat germ, but she was blocked because there was no formal organizational channel through which to introduce

her idea. She needed to get Roger, the relevant brand manager, on her side. Her first step was to put some pressure on him by getting a buzz going with the sales force. Remembering also from her earlier experience the sales force's hunger for any scraps of information about company plans, and wanting a constituency for her idea, she tested their reactions and determined the likelihood of their receptivity. The salesforce was an important part of Roger Price's world, constituents on whom he depended for sales of his existing products.

Figure 3

IMPORTANT INTERESTS OF ANNE'S ALLIES:
ROGER PRICE AND JOHN DAVIS

Roger Price

- Salesforce views and support (or pressure)
- Increased sales
- Extra resources for researching product-line extensions
- People who work directly and fast

John Davis

- Thorough proposals with all angles covered, all details thought through. Probably does not want to invest in losing products or his judgment would be questioned.
 - People who can be bold and have a marketing skills and mindset
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Questions from the salesforce about when they could expect a wheat germ product inspired Roger's interest. Anne realized that his goals for brand sales might make him receptive to a product that (almost) guaranteed a sales increase. The possibility of "free" help researching the idea was also likely to be attractive to him. A nice personal byproduct of Anne conducting the research was that she could thereby increase her visibility with marketing.

Similarly, Anne wanted to increase her credibility with John Davis, the marketing manager. She correctly surmised that, as someone who heard many proposals for new products in an industry where most new products fail, John valued extraordinary research thoroughness. Furthermore, she picked up on his preference for boldness, which told her to be assertive in insisting on his attention. Once again, Anne first determined what was important to a person she wanted to influence and the style he preferred, and tailored her approach accordingly.

OTHER RESOURCES MOBILIZED

Despite her lack of formal power as a sales analyst in a company dominated by marketing, she could still muster some valuable resources to trade. Earlier favors had resulted in friends who were glad to help her even though they were under no obligation to do so. For an apparently powerless person, Anne managed to muster quite an arsenal of valuable resources, several of which are listed in Figure 4.

Figure 4

RESOURCES ANNE DEVELOPED

<i>Person</i>	<i>Resources/Payoff</i>
Financial analyst	Invited to presentation: Visibility
Boss	Anne's excellent performance: Improved his effectiveness
Henry (market research)	Supplementary research finds

ANNE'S RELATIONSHIPS WITH HER POTENTIAL ALLIES

Anne's Past as Prologue to the Present

Anne barely knew Roger and John, her two most important allies, so she did not have to overcome a bad history with them. But because she came from the wrong side of the organizational tracks, she correctly anticipated that they might not take her as seriously as they would a marketing person with the same idea. She knew she would have to move quickly to position herself as a force to be reckoned with, a competent professional with marketing savvy even though she did not hail from marketing. She accomplished that goal by doing her homework and making a direct and confident approach.

She had, however, fostered many other relationships with potential and existing allies. A tradition of linking and building—rather than burning—her organizational bridges, made it easier for Anne to get help without having to start from scratch or seek desperately for valuable currencies. This freed her to focus her energy in areas where she had less of a history and needed to build relationships.

Anne's Present as Prologue to the Future

Anne definitely wanted to increase her reputation and relationships with the key players, since she planned to stay at Cosmarket if possible. For example, she gleaned from her

knowledge that Roger was a fast worker and that he was likely to respond to a concise approach. Thus, her direct appeal to him on the basis of a \$4.4 million addition to sales, without undue warm up, was tuned to the things that mattered to Roger as well as to his preferred work style. Anne both judged accurately and acted effectively upon the things Roger valued and the way he preferred to interact.

Anne practiced versatility, matching her style of interaction to the person she was dealing with. She was deferential to Joan and Henry; direct and challenging with Roger; bold but prepared with John; demanding and expressive with the bureaucratic HR manager who was trying to dismiss her (risking his displeasure); casual and friendly with peers.

In all her costume changes, Anne was never phony; she just called upon different aspects of her own personality, responding instinctively whenever she could to the preferred style of others. Indeed, she may have been too deferential to Henry, prolonging his treatment of her as a harmless student. When she persuaded Roger to provide funds for Henry's research area, she never went back to Henry to mention her part. She might benefit if she could develop rapport with conservative elders to expand the range of styles available to her. (See Figure 5 for some of the exchanges Anne made).

Figure 5

DIFFERENT EXCHANGE APPROACHES ANNE USED

<i>Approach</i>	<i>Example of When Used</i>
Compliance for mutual benefit	Received help from fin. analyst for giving him visibility
Compensated for costs	Found research funds for use of co. data
Swap of services	Gave faster response for desired meeting
Create costs, then remove	Expressed anger at HR manager, then backed off
Pay in advance for rainy day	Provided info to brand manager about packaging flaw without asking for return

GENERAL LESSONS FROM ANNE'S EXPERIENCES

NO WASTED MOTION: ATTENTION TO EXCHANGE HELPS YOU FOCUS YOUR WORK

Anne devoted a considerable amount of time to diagnosing John, Roger, Joan, and others, but because she was doing it to figure out currencies for exchange, it saved effort by letting her focus only on useful data. She didn't sit around spinning theories, getting angry, or reinforcing stereotypes with scraps of evidence; rather, she was able to determine who the key players were, what they wanted, what style they preferred for interactions, and what she could offer them. Although Anne rarely had to say in so many words, "You scratch my back and I'll scratch yours," she had a clear, intuitive sense of how exchange works, and it served to direct her attention.

If everyone is a potential ally with legitimate interests and viewpoints, opposition is a source of information about what matters to others and helps determine how to address their concerns. It doesn't guarantee that you can overcome all opposition—and if your opponent is right, it shouldn't—but it gets you into the right frame of mind to learn from resistance and to do the homework necessary to overcome it. Persistence is an important component of influence, as is willingness to learn. Mutuality is key.

THERE IS NO SUBSTITUTE FOR HARD WORK (EVEN IF SOMETHING ELSE IS ALSO NEEDED)

Although Anne had many interpersonal skills and intuitive understanding of influence techniques, her success, like Nettie Seabrook's, (on the web site) started with doing her homework. Hard work itself is not always enough, but is a prerequisite for sustained influence in organizations. Wheeling and dealing are no substitutes for having the right data.

FOCUS ON TASK SUCCESS FIRST, BUT PERSONAL INTERESTS COUNT, TOO

Neither Anne nor Nettie let personal ego and ambition get in the way of their influence attempts. It is critical to communicate that what you want is some kind of cooperation that will benefit the organization as you see it; and that you are not trying to gain influence for its own sake, or for pure ego gratification.

At the same time, it is possible to be too selfless, and get ignored. Anne's ambitions were important to her, and she took numerous actions to help gain the coveted marketing position. She had to inform John, the marketing manager she sold on a new product, about the breadth and depth of her knowledge and experience when she interviewed for a job. (Nettie was in a more disadvantaged position, so may have been right to keep ambition way in the background, but it is possible that she could have drawn on her accomplishments and relationships earlier). Although you don't want to come across as

self-centered, there is a trap in being too selfless—giving up too quickly, not being up front—for fear of appearing to boast.

REMEMBER: LISTEN TO EACH KEY PERSON OR GROUP AND TAKE RESISTANCE SERIOUSLY.

These steps not only reduce future negativity but let you learn what is important to others so that you can shape your strategy. And they may have information or views that should influence you. Also, tuning in usually pays them in currencies of *seeking their opinions, valuing what they have to say, and acknowledging their status and power*. Keep in mind the old saying, “Be careful what you wish for—you might get it and be sorry.” Sometimes you should thank a resister for preventing a disaster.

KEEPING PUSH FROM COMING TO SHOVE: EXCHANGE LETS YOU BE ASSERTIVE, NOT ANTAGONISTIC

Anne Austin was in an environment that did not make it easy for her to accomplish her goals. She could have become discouraged or nasty; once she ran up against arbitrary personnel policies, she let her anger show assuming that she had nothing to lose. For the most part, however, she was persistent rather than offensive.

She used everything from friendly inquiry to threats, often using currencies accessible to her without anyone’s permission. Once or twice she even went against what she had been told in order to deliver information that she was certain would be valued, thereby creating allies for future requests.

The dilemma for hopeful influencers often is that they cannot find any ground between angry bullying and passive niceness. The exchange process allows you to exercise influence by using hard-headed toughness without being abrasive.

The process is powerful precisely because the nature of exchange gives the recipient something valued. The assertive pushing is intended to help the potential ally also achieve desired objectives, not just at helping you achieve your goals. When you are aligned with an ally's goals you can push very hard on almost anything, including behavior you'd like to change—even if the ally is your boss. “If that's what you want, I'll be glad to support you, but you're shooting yourself in the foot by the way you're behaving,” is tough talk; but when it is linked to the ally's goals, it can be heard without offense. (For more on effectively speaking up to your boss or colleague, see the Practical Application chapters on influencing your boss, and on influencing colleagues, in *Influence without Authority*, revised edition).

CONCLUSIONS

Anne Austin had an ambitious agenda, and a difficult set of circumstances to overcome. Friends saw the situation as so difficult that they advised her to go-for-broke all at once, or quit. Instead, she drew on her many relationships, did a great deal of homework to be ready with a compelling proposal, found a variety of currencies to exchange for support, used a full repertoire of styles to fit the people she was trying to influence, and eventually got both a positive product response and a desirable job offer. She made a real, though unexpected, contribution to the company, and earned sufficient respect to overcome what was perceived as “the wrong” background. She intuitively used a full influence repertoire without the benefit of knowing a specific model; the influence model in the book can help anyone be as creative and persistent as she was.

In the next extended case on the web site, we will live through another talented person’s attempt to pull off an even more difficult product development task, against the active and rather nasty opposition of a long-respected senior technical manager. Monica Ashley did many things well, but she failed to work the relationships she had in a way that could gain the influence she needed for the company to be successful. We can learn from her experiences, too.