

## Talkin' about a revolution...

Blog  
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If you're like me, and enjoy watching charming men with British accents cook, you've probably been watching Jamie Oliver's [Food Revolution](#) — a weekly show following one man's relentless drive to change how America feeds its children. Watching Jamie's "revolution", I've been reminded of the struggles that leaders face when trying to make substantial change happen — both inside their organizations and out in the world. For not-for-profits and their leaders, change is a double-edged sword. It is our ultimate goal. And yet we know it rarely happens quickly or easily — and it often makes people fearful.

So, what is Jamie's change management strategy? According to him, it's all about people: "When you are trying to move mountains, you want — and need — people on your side who want to move them with you."

It's obvious that, to Jamie, involving the right people is about more than just engaging those who are already passionate about the cause. In each episode, the disheveled-haired, big-grinned chef works tirelessly to gain buy-in from a variety of key influencers. It's fascinating to watch Jamie deliberately tackle negative influencers, such as radio DJ Rod whose dislike echoes across the airwaves through statements like, "we don't want to sit around and eat lettuce all day;" and Lunch Cook Alice who resists Jamie's attempts to stop her from cooking frozen chicken nuggets. Jamie also connects with positive influencers, such as a group of high school students he recruits to spread his message among their peers.

In the [final episode](#), Jamie seems to have progressed in his crusade to get processed foods out of schools. I believe this is because Jamie understands that to make large-scale change happen, you must **lead people to lead others**. Often, this means carefully choosing with whom you will spend your time. As usual, the 80/20 rule applies — if you work successfully with the top 20 percent of influencers in your organization, the other 80 percent will follow. According to the book, [Developing the Leader Within You](#), by John C. Maxwell, it is critical to identify influencers who: "first, are going somewhere; and second, are able to persuade others to go with them." And to make change take off exponentially, such people must be in positions that allow them to lead others.

So my question to you — as a leader in your organization — is: have *you* identified the "influencers" you should be working with? If not, try Maxwell's strategy. Make a list of all the people in your organization. Then ask: if this person acts negatively towards me, or withdraws their support from my initiative, what will the impact be? If you won't be able to function, put a check mark next to their name. These are the people you should focus on.

If Jamie created a list like this, Lunch Cook Alice was on it. Why? Because Alice leads the team that is responsible for rolling out Jamie's pilot project. Thanks to this effective strategy, when high level funders and decision makers eventually ask Alice for her opinion of the program, her response is: "Jamie has some good ideas".

Okay, so it might not be the most brilliantly compelling endorsement. But as we know, change takes time. After watching Jamie successfully convert Alice from arch nemesis to Ambassador for all Lunch Cooks across the school district, I am certain big change is coming.

And it can for you too!