

OPPOSE

Weakening An Argument



Weakening an argument is one of the Oppose style behaviors in the Sphere of Influence 360°.

Convincing others of your opinion can be pretty difficult, especially when your conversation partner is very confident about their point of view and has strong arguments.

Instead of repeating your arguments, it can be helpful to focus on your conversation partners' opinions. You may not be able to reject these arguments directly, but you might be able to spot minor inaccuracies in them. In this exercise, we will help you focus on these opportunities to weaken other people's arguments.



“Open your ears
before you open
your mouth.”

- Earl Nightingale

Exercise 1: What if ...?

Consider zooming in on the other person's ideas, opinions, or views when directly opposing them is not your best option (for example, if you are addressing your boss who does not like feedback). By generating scenarios that test the idea, you can explore whether their suggestion is strong. A few example questions include:

Step 1 in this exercise is to adopt a wait-and-see attitude so that the other person can elaborate.



Step 2 is to take careful note of whether the other person says something you can refute.

Pay attention to sentences like:

'We always...'

'We never...'

'That's just the way it is.'

Write down these inaccuracies in the looking glass.



Exercise 2: Open your mouth

If you find an inaccuracy, "open your mouth." You can use the following 3 steps:

- **Step 1:** Indicate that your conversation partner is incorrect.
- **Step 2:** Repeat what is incorrect.
- **Step 3:** Give them the opportunity to defend themselves.

Evaluation:

How did your attempt to weaken your discussion partner's arguments out?



1



2



3



4



5

What did you learn? What insights did you gain?

What went well? What would you repeat?

What can you do to improve your performance?

What is your next step?