

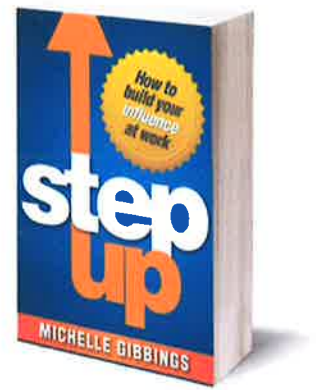


Michelle Gibbings
Founder and Director at
Change Meridian

STEP UP: HOW TO BUILD YOUR INFLUENCE AT WORK

by Michelle Gibbings (Major Street Publishing)

Biography: Michelle Gibbings is the Founder and Director at Change Meridian. She has facilitated a number of workshops at GRC Institute, and last year, facilitated a workshop at the GRC2015 called The Dangers of Decision Making, that looked at the challenges of depending on mental shortcuts in decision making, and how individuals can overcome their heuristic thinking by interrogating their decision making process.



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Step Up: How to build your influence at work is not a ‘How to’ book, in the conventional sense of the genre, but a successful combination of anecdotal experience, philosophy and psychology.

GIBBINGS WRITES THAT THE BOOK IS directed at the technically-skilled professionals. “People in technically-driven and functionally-focused roles often struggle to get heard in organisations.” What Gibbings hopes to demonstrate is that skilled professionals do possess the power to change this status-quo, simply by looking into themselves and their own processes. The book is aimed at professionals, at any level of the organisational chart. However, it can be used by anyone in either their professional or personal lives.

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Her way of sharing her own experience, to illustrate practical examples to some fairly complex concepts, creates the sense of a relationship with the reader—the exact kind of relationship GRC professionals should aspire to cultivate in their own organisations.

The text is divided into two major parts—the first focuses on the individual, and the second looks at the relationship of the individual and the organisation. With no solid distinction between the two sections, however, one gradually feeds into the other until the reader has no doubt that it is important for an individual to understand how they think before they can hope to understand how others are thinking.



Each chapter is broken down into a three-step process that readers can easily follow, while also looking at how they apply the ideas to themselves and their organisations. Gibbings does not pretend to have all the answers; thus, readers hoping to gain something from the book cannot simply use it as a recipe for success. Instead, Gibbings requires her readers to find the elements that relate to *their* specific circumstances. What she does make clear is that there are no easy solutions: a challenge, or so she poses, will only be insurmountable if the individual approaches it with a negative mindset.

Her call to readers—to be conscious of themselves—is not presented just through the extensive research and experience, but also through the form of the book, with “Step Up Tips”, diagrams and “Check Point Activities”, all of which refuse to

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permit a passive reading. As a result, the reader’s personal experience becomes enmeshed with the book’s subject matter, nudging the reader towards interrogating their own thought processes—both personal and professional.

It would seem that Gibbings’ end goal with *Step Up: How to build your influence at work*, is that readers are not only able to identify their strengths, but to notice where there might be room for improvement. Thus armed with Gibbings’ sound and practical advice, they can, hopefully, begin to make the necessary changes. ...

