

## Moments of Social Power

There are moments of extreme power in human exchanges; instances where influence can be wielded for the good of both parties. One of these moments is when someone says, “*Thank you.*”

But we often handle these opportunities poorly.

A client thanks you for your help and we say, “*No problem would have done it for anyone.*” A co-worker thanks you for your assistance and you say, “*Sure, it was easy.*”

A supplier sends a note of appreciation and you leave it at that.

Not only are these relationships not furthered, but we may have actually damaged them. Making someone feel unappreciated, incompetent or not worthy of a response is a surefire way *not* to increase your influence.

Another potential problem is when the exchange is framed such that the other party feels they’ve just done a favor for Vito Corleone (*Some day I may call upon you to do a service for me.*) Saying things like, “*and now you owe me one*” is a sure fire way to build animosity and opposition.

So how can you avoid making this mistake?

Be prepared to use powerful language. Robert Cialdini, author of the seminal work, *Influence: Science and Practice*, suggests “*My pleasure, because I know if the situation were reversed, you would have done the same for me!*”

Watch as the other person nods furiously in agreement, and you have now used language to expertly and subtly earn a “chit” which is an informal influence credit. Practice this until you can use this (or other similar language) to create compelling yet conversational exchanges.