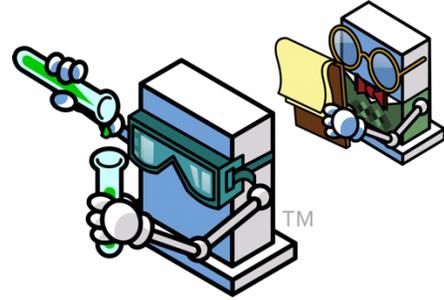


# Playmaker Academy

A Professional Certification Course and Clinic



## Description, Syllabus and Schedule

Class Sessions: 120 Minutes each

#1 - (day/mo/year)	TBD ET	(Room, Bldg)
#2 - (day/mo/year)	TBD ET	(Room, Bldg)
#3 - (day/mo/year)	TBD ET	(Room, Bldg)
#4 - (day/mo/year)	TBD ET	(Room, Bldg)
#5 - (day/mo/year)	TBD ET	(Room, Bldg)

Make-Ups: It is the responsibility of the absent participant to schedule a make-up session prior to the next week's session. Make-ups can be conducted over the phone or in person prior to the following session.

Instructor: Alan Kelly, CEO and Founder, Playmaker Systems, LLC

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## Course Description

- This professional certification course and clinic is the first of its kind – a frontier class based on the full-credit graduate course “The Elements of Influence” (JOUR 599/USC | PMGT 6265.18/GWU) taught at the University of Southern California Annenberg School for Communication and The George Washington University Graduate School of Political Management.
- This academy is intended for professionals in public affairs, public relations, investor relations, social media, corporate and product marketing. It comprises a series of interactive, case-based lectures and an intensive on-site clinic designed to improve participants’ awareness and mastery of public discussions and the competitive strategies that vie to influence them.
- Taught principally in-person (though some classes may be taught over the phone) by Alan Kelly, CEO and Founder of Playmaker Systems, coursework will emphasize the ethical application of *plays* in professional settings and seek to significantly improve a professional’s awareness and mastery of research-based strategies in all media, particularly mainstream social.
- *Plays*, to use the Playmaker’s game-based lexicon, are the essential strategies that practitioners of management, public affairs, corporate communications, public relations, advertising, marketing, sales, politics, media and law use to defend or advance an agenda and messages in busy marketplaces, whether by way of careful and quiet collaboration or pitched public battles.

- Five class sessions, assignments and examinations will be based on “The Elements of Influence” (Penguin 2006) and its framework of 25 strategies, called The Playmaker’s Table. Current case studies will serve as the primary platform for applying the lessons of this course.
- Playmaker Clinic
  - Full-day off-site
  - An intensive case-based workshop for enrollees and invited guests
  - Immediately follows five-session curriculum
  - Hosted and taught by A. Kelly and a Playmaker associate
- The Academy will seek to integrate marketing systems into labs, lectures, and the clinic. These may include, but are not limited to:
  - Playmaker Advisories
  - Private blogs showcasing successfully-run plays by participants
  - Monthly/quarterly media metrics reports
  - Influence Strategy Maps (both depictions and predictions)

## Course Outcomes

- Gives enrollees a professionally-portable method and reference framework for analyzing and describing how *players* (i.e., organizations and individuals in business, politics and pop culture) use actions, messages and symbols to develop, assert, defend or salvage their positions or agendas in media-saturated marketplaces.
- Accelerates a professional’s understanding of the basic stratagems that underlie the building of a policy, defense of an initiative, creation of a grassroots coalition, and management of media (both mainstream and social outlets).
- Adds to the professional “tool box” a practical and industry-tested lexicon for persuasive storytelling, strategic planning, coalition building, brand building, reputation management, media relations and spin de-coding.
- Develops a professional’s essential skills in “communication speed chess” – to rapidly assess and execute against the threats and opportunities of professional or governmental landscapes, be they attacks by activists or breakthrough innovations.
- Completes a professional’s understanding and mastery of Influence Strategy, the emerging counterpart to the disciplines of business and operational strategy, which explains how intangible assets – such as reputation, credibility and trust – are managed for competitive and collaborative advantage.
- Identifies, builds and empowers an expanding base of [Client] staff and/or its affiliates to learn, embody and put into practice the tenets and systems of the playmaker’s decision support system.

## Course Text, Web Resources and Readings

- Principle Text: Alan Kelly, “[The Elements of Influence](#): The New Essential System for Managing Competition, Reputation, Brand, and Buzz” (New York: Dutton, 2006 for hardcover or New York: Plume, 2007 for paperback).

- Supporting Infographics: Playmaker Influence System, Glossary of Terms and Taxonomy of Influence Plays
- Readings will include handouts, articles and links from citations in the bibliography of *The Elements of Influence* and applicable client advisories.

## Course Requirements

- Enrollees must be nominated by senior client personnel.
- Students shall attend sessions in-person but may, with the permission of the instructor and/or the client, participate from remote locations.
- Coursework is case-based with emphasis on discussion and Q&A, thus requiring substantial participation of the student.
- Enrollees may include client staff, affiliates and select consultants. At client's option, agency and consultant enrollees may pay tuition directly.

## Certification and Criteria

- Successful participants of this class series and clinic will be issued a certification of completion in recognition of their understanding and application of influence strategy. Certificates shall be issued on the following criteria and with the mutual agreement of the client manager and Alan Kelly.
  - Class attendance, participation, clarity of analysis, recall of readings
  - Understanding of Condition, Control and Engage classes and corresponding subclasses.
  - Understanding of surrogate players and their applications.
  - Conceptual understanding of Fit & Friction, Cycles of Influence, Factors at Play, and Alpha & Beta plays.
  - Ability to operate “three plays deep” (i.e., a player's ability to anticipate the consequences and counter-moves of plays).
  - Fast-action assessment of real-time threats and opportunities.
  - Ability to implement influence strategies to counter, bend and blunt said threats, opportunities and/or favorable market conditions to advance client's agenda and deposition, collaborate with, co-opt or confront client's industry rivals.
  - On the job application of the playmaker's system.

## Course Schedule

Weekly sessions will follow a discussion/lecture/lab format where participants will study the presence and application of influence strategies (the discussion); review fundamentals of the playmaker system, the tools and client-related topics (the lecture); and deconstruct actual plays of the professional's day (the lab). Topics and content are subject to revision and rescheduling.

## Pre-Academy Requirements

- Required Reading: Online review of the Playmaker Systems website at [www.playmakersystems.com](http://www.playmakersystems.com) and read pp. 1 – 86 *The Elements of Influence*.
- Required Reading: Porter, Michael E. *What Is Strategy?* Harvard Business Review, 1996. [[link to article](#)]

## About the Instructors

Alan Kelly, CEO and Founder of Playmaker Systems, LLC, is a visionary business strategist, author, and award-winning Silicon Valley public relations agency CEO. In 2006, Kelly founded Playmaker Systems, a Washington D.C. area management consulting firm specializing in the development and execution of influence strategy. He approaches his work with a simple but provocative charter – that the moves and counter-moves of business, politics, and pop culture can be mapped and managed for competitive advantage.

Kelly's development of a breakthrough [periodic table](#) of influence strategies in 2004 is testament to his vision for a comprehensive standard in the industries of influence – namely management, strategy, marketing, sales, advertising, public relations, public affairs, and even law. It is a system that names, describes and prescribes the work of playmakers everywhere, and which is exhaustively catalogued in his landmark [book](#), *The Elements of Influence: The New Essential System for Managing Competition, Reputation, Brand, and Buzz* (Penguin Books 2006).

Kelly is a former Adjunct Professor at the Annenberg School for Communication at the University of Southern California where he taught the frontier graduate course entitled, *Strategies of Influence*. Through the 2008 Presidential primaries and elections, he co-created and co-hosted [Plays for the Presidency](#) on Sirius XM satellite radio, P.O.T.U.S. 130, and its companion blog by the same name. In 2009, Kelly created and launched [Playmaker China](#), a code-cracker's blog to influencers and strategies of the Middle Kingdom.

Earlier, Kelly made his mark on the business landscape through his founding and leadership of Applied Communications Group, a San Francisco-based public relations and research firm that earned distinction for its quantitative grounding and unique philosophy of competitive communications. From its formation in 1992 to the sale of its assets in 2003, the firm garnered numerous best-in-class recognitions for its work with Oracle, Hewlett-Packard, Cisco, Sun Microsystems, Genentech, VeriSign, PayPal, Veritas Software, BEA Systems, TechNet and Informatica, among others.

Kelly, 51, holds a Master's Degree in Communication Research from Stanford University and a Bachelor's Degree in Public Relations from the University of Southern California. He is a member of the Arthur W. Page Society and a Senior Fellow at the Society for New Communications Research. Kelly lives with his wife and two children in Maryland and enjoys racing his Etchells one-design sailboat, *Playmaker*.

## Session 1: Underpinnings of Influence Strategy and Conditioning Plays

### Advance reading

- *Preface and Introduction to The Elements of Influence and Vision section of the Playmaker website at [www.playmakersystems.com](http://www.playmakersystems.com)*

### Discussion

- Course overview and orientation

### Lecture

- Establish conceptual and practical need for strategy
- Influence strategy as a counterpart to business and operational strategy to manage intangible assets
- Underpinnings of the Playmaker Influence System and Influence Strategy
  - What's a Play?
  - Who's a Playmaker?
- Condition class plays of the [Taxonomy of Influence Plays](#)
  - Probe and Frame subclasses
  - The seven associated plays

### Homework for Session 2

- Online review of the Control class and associated subclasses at [www.playmakersystems.com](http://www.playmakersystems.com)
- Submit a max. 40-word description of a play in business, politics or pop culture (**due evening before Session 2**).

## Session 2: Control Plays

### Discussion

- Discuss homework submissions.

### Lecture

- Control class plays of the [Taxonomy of Influence Plays](#)
  - Divert and Freeze subclasses
  - The eight associated plays

### Homework for Session 3

- Submit a max. 40-word description of a play in business, politics or pop culture (**due evening before Session 3**).
- Optional Reading: Review of the Confront class and associated subclasses [here](#), and read pp. 184-251, 252- 267, *The Elements of Influence*

## Session 3: Confront Plays and Surrogates

### Discussion

- Discuss homework submissions.

### Lecture

- Confront-class plays of the [Taxonomy of Influence Plays](#)
  - Press and Provoke subclasses
  - The seven associated plays
- Surrogates review
  - Partner, Proxy and Plant

### Homework for Session 4

- Submit a max. 40-word description of a play in business, politics or pop culture (**due evening before Session 4**).
- Required Reading:
  - Review of Surrogates in the [Taxonomy of Influence Plays](#) and read pp. 252- 267, *The Elements of Influence*.
  - Cluster Play Types and Harmonics pp. 268 - 270, *The Elements of Influence*
  - Online review of Cycles of Influence infographic and read pp. 275 – 287, *The Elements of Influence*.
  - Read Fit & Friction, pp. 287-291 *The Elements of Influence*.
  - Alpha and Beta Plays pp. 291 – 293, *The Elements of Influence*.
  - Online review of Factors of Influence infographic and read pp. 294 – 295, *The Elements of Influence*.

## Session 4: Fit & Friction, Harmonics, Ethics, Clusters, Factors of Influence, Cycles of Influence, Scope and Elevation

### Discussion

- Discuss homework submissions.

### Lecture

- Principles of Fit & Friction
- Harmonics and Clusters
- Alpha & Beta plays
- Ethics and influence strategy
- Understanding Variables: Factors of Influence
- Running Plays: Cycles of Influence (basic and full)
- The idea of Scope and Elevation

### On-site Clinic Homework

- Study for off-site examination

## Session 5: Off-Site Clinic

- Off-site clinic will focus on applications of the playmaker's system. Specific cases and topics will be determined upon completion of Sessions 1 – 4. Session will be game-focused and include Strategy Simulation exercises and mini-wargames based on real-time industry events pertinent to the participant's day-to-day activities.
- A written and oral examination form will be administered to gauge an individual participant's acumen and understanding of the playmaker's system. Content will be based largely upon the lecture and reading materials.