



Effective Use of Power

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Power

Effective Use of Power

- Impact Belief
- Socialized
- Avoid Personalized

Notes/Action

Effective Use of Power

A leader’s use of power can have a very positive impact on people and the organization. And the use of power can also have a very negative impact. To understand this, we have to understand the three characteristics of power motivation in leaders — Impact Belief, Socialized Power and Personalized Power

Impact Belief

This pertains to a leader’s belief that what he/she does will have an impact on the organization. This leader sees a strong cause-and-effect relationship between his/her behavior and change, and believes that he/she can “make it happen.”

Socialized Power — Benefiting Others

Socialized Power has to do with why a leader wants power. In this case, the leader values power for the “good” that can be done with it. Power is seen as instrumental in bettering the organization and meeting the needs of others.

Avoiding Personalized Power — Benefiting Self

The third characteristic for effective leadership is avoiding the use of power for personal benefit. Effective leaders desire power to influence others to achieve positive goals for the benefit of others and the organization. Ineffective leaders use power to belittle others, assert dominance and heighten their own self-importance.

Effective Use of Power

Effective leaders have a strong belief in their personal impact. They use their power to benefit others and to fulfill their role. They avoid the use of power for asserting dominance over others.

The Power Focus Assessment —Directions

Following are statements relating to how leaders might feel about their influence and impact in an organization. Choose one of the best, most effective leaders with whom you have worked and for whom you have a high regard. Rate him/her using the questions and scale on the next page. Or choose one of the worst, least effective leaders with whom you have worked and would not want to work for again. Rate him/her using the questions on the next page and scale below.

SA = Strongly Agree
 A = Agree
 N = Neither Agree nor Disagree
 D = Disagree
 SD = Strongly Disagree

1. Believes in the importance of what he/she does because of the potential impact the actions have on others and on achieving organizational goals.

SA A N D SD

2. Sees the “perks” that demonstrate their importance to the organization and others as the most significant aspect of his/her leadership position.

SA A N D SD

3. Sees the real value of power as being able to influence the organization and people toward worthwhile goals.

SA A N D SD

4. Believes that his/her actions as a leader do not really affect people very much.

SA A N D SD

5. Sees that the great advantage of having a position of authority is being able to get people to do things without pointless discussion or debate.

SA A N D SD

6. Has little concern for having power except for its use in attaining goals.

SA A N D SD

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7. Is most satisfied with the leadership role when he/she sees that his/her actions have a clear-cut effect on what other people do.

SA A N D SD

8. Especially likes doing exactly as he/she pleases, because of the position of authority held in the organization.

SA A N D SD

9. Sees his/her influence as a means to direct the organization toward programs and goals that have a positive effect.

SA A N D SD

10. Believes that no one person makes very much difference in terms of how the organization functions.

SA A N D SD

Scoring Instructions

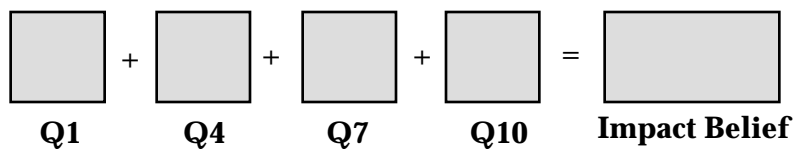
Transfer your responses from the Power Focus Scale to the scoring grid below by circling the number that corresponds to your response for each question.

		Question Number									
Response	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	
SA	5	1	5	1	1	5	5	1	5	1	
A	4	2	4	2	2	4	4	2	4	2	
N	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	
D	2	4	2	4	4	2	2	4	2	4	
SD	1	5	1	5	5	1	1	5	1	5	

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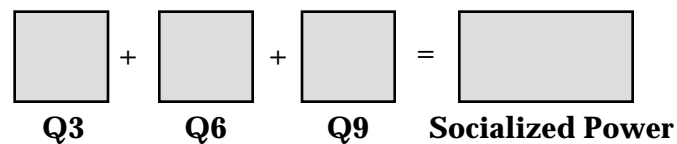
Impact Belief

The first score is obtained by adding the points for Questions 1, 4, 7, and 10. This score indicates the extent to which you think the person believes her/his actions have an impact on the organization. Effective leaders tend to have a strong belief that their own actions really make a difference to the organization. The higher the score, the stronger the belief.



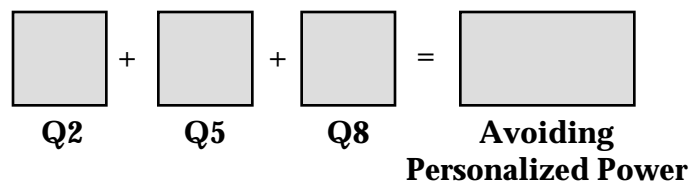
Socialized Power

The second score is obtained by adding the points for questions 3, 6, and 9. This score indicates the extent to which power is valued for the good that could be achieved through its use: good, that is, for the organization and its employees. Effective leaders value power less for personal benefit than for its positive effect on the organization. The higher this score, the greater the value placed on the positive use of power.



Avoiding Personalized Power

The third score is obtained by adding the points for Questions 2, 5, and 8. The higher this score, the less the person desires power for personal benefits and goals. That is, the higher this score, the less this leader needs to dominate others.



Effective leaders will tend to have high scores in Impact Belief (16 - 20) , Socialized Power (12 - 15) and Avoiding Personalized Power (12 - 15).

Ineffective leaders will have low scores in Impact Belief, Socialized Power and Avoiding Personalized Power.

There are leaders who have high Impact Belief Scores and low scores in Socialized Power and Avoiding Personalized Power. In the short run this leaders can have a high impact on performance improvement. In the long run, because of their need for Personalized Power, they can have a very negative effect on the organization.



**Leaders with
Personalized or
Socialized Power**



Notes/Action

Using Power Effectively: Personalized and Socialized Power

As we have seen, leading and managing well requires an appreciation of and a desire for having impact and influence. The power motive must be stronger than either the goals for personal achievement or the need to be liked by others. Each manager must work to expand his/her bases of power and enhance the power potential of his/her job role or position.

But, regardless of the amount of power a manager has, whether or not we call a manager effective depends on the image he/she projects and for what purpose he/she uses power. Understanding this requires distinguishing between what Saskin (1986) calls Socialized Power versus Personalized Power.

Socialized Power — Benefiting Others

Socialized Power is the opposite of Personalized Power. Managers oriented towards Socialized Power tend to direct their power motives at influencing other's for the common good. Power in this form is valued as a means to an end and used on behalf of subordinates, the organization, and, at times, for altruistic purposes. Power is not used for personal benefit. It is used to achieve goals and to bring the best out of people and the organization. The characteristics of managers with Socialized Power include the following:

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- ◆ Oriented toward justice
- ◆ Values working and likes the job
- ◆ Organization-minded, a joiner
- ◆ Collaborative, win/win
- ◆ Concerned with realistic goals
- ◆ Non-defensive, willing to seek help
- ◆ Builder of systems and people
- ◆ Develops people to replace them
- ◆ Source of strength and self-insight for others

Personalized Power — Benefiting Self

Personalized Power is when a manager's desire for impact, strength and influence may take the form of using power for personal gain, self-aggrandizement and benefiting himself or herself. The power motive used in this way is directed at gaining dominance, personal enhancement, or personal advancement. Managers oriented towards Personalized Power tend to belittle others, assert their dominance and/or try to inflate their own self-importance. The characteristics of a Personalized Power orientation include the following:

- ◆ Impulsive and erratic use of power
- ◆ Rude and overbearing
- ◆ Exploitative of others
- ◆ Oriented towards dominance
- ◆ Values the position, may not like the job
- ◆ Self-reliant, a loner
- ◆ Competitive, win/lose
- ◆ Big risk taker
- ◆ Defensive, protective of self-importance
- ◆ Long on inspiration, short on substance
- ◆ Keeps people dependent
- ◆ Source of direction and control

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Suggested Readings on Power:

French, Jr., John R.P., Raven, Bertam H., "The Bases of Social Power," *Studies in Social Power*, eds. Dorin Cartwright, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan, 1959.

McClelland & Burnham, *Power: The Inner Experience* Source: Power Management Inventory, Teleometrics International, Woodlands, TX

Raven, B.H., and Kauglanski, W., "Conflict and Power" , in P.G. Swingle (ed.), *The Structure of Conflict*, New York: Academic Press, 1975, pp. 177-219.

Sashkin, Marshal , *How to Become a Visionary Leader, Organizational Design and Development*, 1986.

Thomas, K.W., *Power Base Inventory*, Xicom, 1985.