

The Power Perception Profile – Coaching Guide

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Overview of the Power Perception Profile:

- Understanding Power Bases helps the leader influence people’s behavior, compliance, and task completion.
 - There is no “best” way to influence people. Leaders should use all the Bases of Power to influence others.
 - Selecting the right Power Base to match the person’s (or group’s) Readiness increases the chances of success.
 - This tool encourages leaders to use the types of Power situationally.
 - Power Bases should be used in concert with Situational Leadership (Delegating, Participating, Selling Telling).
 - Leaders can work on developing all of the Power Bases.
1. Have the client start by taking the Power Perception Profile on page 7 before reading the article.
 - Expert
 - Information
 - Referent (position based)
 - Legitimate
 - Reward
 - Connection
 - Coercion
 2. Then have them read the article.
 3. Discuss the Bases of Power on page 1.
 4. Review their Profile scores using the Power Bases explanation above their totals.
 5. Have them come up with examples of people who use the different Power Bases to help them further understand each type.
 6. Use the Coaching Question below to lead the client through analyzing how they currently use the different types of power, how they could modify their use of the different Bases of Power to be more effective in different situations and with different people.
 7. Have the client repeat **The Power Perception Profile** in a few months to see if they’ve been successful with improving their use of the different Power Bases.
 8. When a client moves into a different position, you can have them retake the **The Power Perception Profile** and redo the debrief, because what Power Base they use in each position usually changes
 - a. Also, even if they are working with the same people, the Power Bases they use will change or should change.

Coaching Tips for Each Base of Power

Connection Power

- Help the client be creative with Connection Power. Connections can be: customers, vendors, experts in the field, a celebrity, other departments, your boss, the Board.
- Connection Power can be allowing connection to the leader themselves.
- Connection Power often works better with Extraverts, people who are motivated by social interaction, someone who is an “I” or sometimes an “S” on DiSC.

Coercive Power

- We want to guide Leaders not to over use Coercive Power. But, sometimes there is occasions/situations where it is warranted/needed. Overuse of Coercive Power can create more resistance.
- Overuse of Coercive Power often leads employees to display passive aggressive behavior or to try to undermine the leader. Long term consistent use of this kind of power can be detrimental for a leader.
- It can be just fear, it doesn't have to be fear of punishment. It can be just being intimidating, yelling, or bullying.
- There is a continuum of Coercive Power, from assertive to aggressive.
 - Often those that are afraid to use assertive Coercive Power end up letting frustration build up until they blow up and are aggressive. This is not the most effective use of Coercive Power and is not a choice, but a reaction. If we can help the leader use firmness earlier in the process and communicate their expectations clearly, we can help them not go to the extreme of the continuum of Coercive Power and they will be more effective.

Expert Power

- Doesn't have to be technical expertise, it can be leadership expertise, interpersonal skills, as well.

Information

- Can be any kind of information, including: technical, customer, vendor, industry, how communication flows through the organization, who is powerful in the organization, company cultural norms, the history of the organization, information on how to acquire skills, information on how to get ahead.

Legitimate

- Some leaders don't stand in their power as a leader or stand in the power of their position. We need to help them know that they have access to and can use Legitimate Power.

- Some people who are extremely humble have trouble using this type of Power. They may have a belief that gets in the way of their using it, like: “it’s unseemly to remind others you are the boss.” To shift behavior for these clients, we need to help the client dig deep and shift the belief.

Referent (Likability, Respectability, Ethical, Admirable)

- Often when people say someone is a natural leader, they are referring to their referent power. People follow this type of person because they like the person or respect the person.
- Some leaders who are introverts have the attributes to use referent power, but need to help people see these attributes. They don’t interact as much with people, so people don’t see the attributes.
- And, some leaders who are humble, like Legitimate Power, have beliefs that hold them back from wielding their Referent Power.

Reward

- Rewards do not need to be tangible, they can be a “thank you”, verbal positive feedback, public acknowledgment, a note with positive feedback, gratitude, getting to spend time with the boss, a smile even.
- Often leaders only use tangible rewards and forget about using intangible rewards.

Power Perception Profile - Coaching Questions

- How can you use more of each type of power?
 - With whom could you use a certain type of power more?
 - In what situations would using a different type of power work better?
- Which types of power does your boss use most?
- Which types of power do your peers use most? Peers? Subordinates? Customers? Board Members? Vendors?
 - How could knowing which types of power people use help you in working with them?
 - Where you need to assert more power, how can you counteract the type of power that person is using?
 - Are there people that are a challenge for you to interact with?
 - What is their Readiness (willingness, ability, confidence in performing the task)?
 - Which level of Power will work best for their level of Readiness?
 - Expert
 - Information
 - Legitimate
 - Reward
 - Referent

- Connection
- Coercive
 - What kind of power do they use?
 - How could knowing which type of power they use help you interact with them better?
 - How could you counteract the power they use?

Coercive Power Coaching Questions

- Do you use Coercive power too often?
- Are there certain people with which you use Coercive power too often?
- How can you reduce your use of Coercive power?
- If you seldom use it, are there places you need to use it?

Coaching Leaders with Cross-Functional Power (Without Legitimate Power)

- It's even important to:
 - Look at others' use of power
 - Which power bases do the people you need to influence use?
 - What does that tell you about how to influence them?
 - Look at how to counteract the power they are using
 - How can you counteract the power this person is using over you?
 - Look at who you *aren't* influencing
 - Who are you being unsuccessful in influencing?
 - How is the power you are using with them working?
 - How could you use a different power base with them?
 - You can use legitimate power, you still have some
 - How is the legitimate power you have, bestowed on you?
 - How could the person who bestowed this power on you, help you influence others?
 - How could you remind people that you have this power?
 - How could you use that legitimate power?
 - You can use your boss' or their boss' legitimate and coercive power
 - How could you leverage your boss' legitimate power?
 - How could you leverage their boss' legitimate power?