

Figure 4.5. Goleman's leadership styles.

Style	In a Phrase	When Best
Coercive	“Do what I tell you.”	In a crisis, to kick-start change, or with problem employee
Authoritative	“Come with me.”	Change requires new vision or strong direction
Affiliative	“People come first.”	To heal rifts in a team or to motivate people during stressful circumstances
Democratic	“What do you think?”	To build buy-in or consensus, or get input from valuable individuals
Pacesetter	“Do as I do, now.”	To get quick result from motivated, competent team
Coaching	“Try this.”	To help employee improve or develop strengths

What, then, really makes a leader? With all due respect to the glories of emotional and other sorts of intelligence, there is only one essential that can be observed from all the different perspectives of managers, theorists, and philosophers. There is no leader without followers. So the question converts to a practical equivalent: What does it take to develop and maintain a following? Why would a person follow another or do another's bidding? Generally, because the latter has power.

Supervisory Power to Influence

Sometimes a supervisor's best move is not to lead but rather to get out of the way and let workers do what they know needs to be done in the way they know how to do it. In the normal course of events, though, supervisors in agriculture want to initiate employee action or at least modify its direction. They need the power to influence.

One conceptual scheme identifies five types of power, each related to a different basis for followers accepting the influence of a leader. The five types and their respective bases are listed in Figure 4.6. **Coercive power** is based on fear or the threat of punishment. A worker's belief that failure to accept influence (i.e., to follow directions) would subject him to disciplinary action, undesirable task assignments, firing, or physical harm would vest power in a supervisor who is able to bring about these consequences. Possessors of **reward power**, on the other hand, can provide something of value to the follower. Pay raises, promotions, training opportunities, better work assignments, inside information, recognition, and other forms of approval are among the rewards that employees usually accept influence in order to obtain.

Figure 4.6. Bases for accepting influence.

Types of Power	Based on:
Referent	Attractiveness, identification
Expert	Knowledge, skill
Legitimate	Position in an organizational system
Reward	Ability to provide something of value
Coercive	Force, threat of harm

Legitimate power is associated with official position in an organization. Most people accept that they should comply with the expressed wishes of those who outrank them in hierarchical systems (such as most farm businesses). The very titles “supervisor,” “foreman,” “Mom,” and “principal” all provide their holders with some legitimate power vis-a-vis others on the same farm or ranch. People who have knowledge, skill, or expertise that others see as useful possess **expert power**. Workers more readily welcome influence from leaders who know what they are doing, especially when faced with complex tasks. This typology is rounded out by **referent power**, based on a person’s identification with or admiration of a leader. It is no secret that supervisors who are liked, all other things equal, have greater influence than those who are not.

These five types of power are not perfectly exclusive of one another, but they clearly indicate that the power to lead can grow from various roots. By definition, first-line supervisors have legitimate power, and they may have other types as well. Reward and coercive power, along with legitimate, can be considered “positional,” since some of each tends to come with the job.

Different responses to positional and personal power

Supervisors’ prerogatives to reward and threaten have been greatly reduced over the years through legislation, worker advocacy group efforts, and personnel policies that reflect new management outlooks. Of course, one does not need legitimate power to have influence. Whereas the other three stem mainly from position, expert and referent power are “personal.” The informal leaders who exert considerable control over ongoing operations in most work organizations, despite never having been officially designated to do so, are generally possessors of expert or referent power.

Does the exercise of each type of power have the same effect on workers? While immediate acceptance of influence might be achieved through any of the five, people tend to be more committed to and feel better about following a leader who operates from personal power. Sheer use of positional power, particularly coercive, often produces immediate compliance along with long-term resentment and a determination to get even or resist supervisory influence in the future.

What type of power, then, is best for supervisors to have? Not Plato, not Aristotle, not Shakespeare, nor even Gardner or Goleman could say it any more concisely than Al Capone did. “You can get a lot more from people with a kind word and a gun than a kind word alone.” What this notorious theorist was advising was not really to carry weapons in the workplace but rather to combine types of power if at all possible. The greater the number of power bases a supervisor can work from, the greater his or her capacity to perform effectively in the role.

The likable, knowledgeable individual with some control over valuable rewards and punishments within a clear, respected organizational hierarchy is well equipped to lead. But woe is the first-line supervisor armed with only a job title. Supervisors simply have to recognize this fact, and higher level managers do even more so. Managerial actions affect the amount and types of power that supervisors have.



Managing Supervisory Work

Veteran supervisors face trials, but a person who has been working mainly at the operational level has to cope with the additional challenge of adjusting to a supervisory role. Self concept, relationships with former coworkers, and the use of time all have to change. The selection, guidance, and management support of first-line supervisors, particularly new ones, have expansive impacts.

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