

# How did napoleon create and maintain power history essay



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In George Orwell's famous novel *Animal Farm*, Napoleon used many tools of propaganda to gain power and control over the farm. The sheep perhaps were his most important tools throughout the novel. They were, without doubt, a deciding factor in Napoleon's rise to power.

From the very start Napoleon had been an obvious leader among the pigs because he was well known for "getting things his own way". By contributing to the various debates that took place in *Animal Farm*, he often received lots of attention from the animals. He also gained support from some animals that were too shy to express themselves; he connected with them and persuaded them to share his views. Hence, he became a representative of these animals.

Napoleon also used propaganda in various situations to gain power. The sheep were the most susceptible to these methods and were a great help to his campaign. Snowball, the other pig who shared the position of leadership with him did not agree with him on many occasions. However, naturally he was a good speaker and could easily reach the animals' minds and gain support with his speeches alone. So, Napoleon trained the liable sheep to start chanting their favourite slogan 'four legs good, two legs bad' at crucial parts of Snowball's speeches to drown him out, which made it incredibly difficult for him to express his point of view to them. Because of this, Snowball could not gain much support which was exactly what Napoleon wanted. All Napoleon had to do was to put down Snowball's ideas to gain support as the animals could not be convinced by Snowball if they could not listen to him.

Napoleon gained total control over animal farm through exiling Snowball. Regardless of Napoleon's efforts, Snowball managed to get most of the animals support on the matter of the windmill. Napoleon knew Snowball was a great threat to his position. If Napoleon did not act soon, Snowball would soon become the undisputable leader of Animal Farm. So he got rid of this threat. Using the dogs he had secretly trained, he banished Snowball from the farm. Without Snowball around, Napoleon became the undisputed leader himself. He then banned the debates and told the animals they would follow orders instead. He did this so the animals would be powerless in any decisions made on the farm. Napoleon would be running the farm without anyone there to disagree with any decisions he made.

He later sent Squealer to justify his actions. Squealer twists the truth with lies to confuse the animals to think Napoleon was right in exiling Snowball. Some phrases he uses are; " Do not imagine leadership is a pleasure" and " it is a deep and heavy responsibility" [1]. These make Napoleon seem sacrificial, which will help gain the animals' sympathy. He also uses the animals' fear of Jones coming back to persuade them that Napoleon is right.

He creates power using many methods. Making the animals March past Old Major's skull is reinforcing his leadership and also allies himself with the loved pig. It makes the animals respect the new leader as much as the old leader. In Napoleons' speeches he uses the word ' sacrifice' and ' own contribution' to make the animals think that what they are doing is for a greater cause which convinces them to " sacrifice' for the ' greater good'.

Napoleon uses Squealer to explain anything and everything to avoid making mistakes himself. Squealer uses complicated vocabulary which the simple-  
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minded animals do not understand. When the animals protest, squealer quickly persuades them with help from the threat of violence from the dogs; it makes the animals stop with their complaints. The sheep are then used to ease the mood by bleating their slogan. It is then not possible for the animals to protest again. Throughout the novel, it becomes routine for the dogs to be seen in public with Napoleon to reinforce his power through violence.

Napoleon also makes the animals work so hard that they are so tired and they forget how they are being turned into slaves by their leader Napoleon. They also have no time to consider rebelling against him. He does this by making the animals build the snowballs windmill that he considered useless when snowball thought of it. To explain this, he tells the animals that it was originally his idea. Napoleon exploit's the animals' weaknesses. When he changes the seven commandments to justify his actions, the animals are doubtful because they remember that the seven commandments were different. However Squealer tells them that they are wrong and it is just a figment of their imagination. The animals think that if napoleon says so then he must be right and so they let him get away with it.

Napoleon is an opportunist. When he realises that he can turn a situation, whether good or bad, to his advantage, he does without a second thought about whom or what might have to be removed in order for him to succeed. For example, when the windmill collapses, he tells that Snowball destroyed it and turns the animals against him. From that point onwards he makes Snowball a scapegoat. Whenever something goes wrong, it is because of Snowball. This makes the animals feel that they are lucky to have Napoleon as a leader. It is also an easy way out as it keeps the animals from finding <https://assignbuster.com/how-did-napoleon-create-and-maintain-power-history-essay/>

out who is really to blame. This reinforces Napoleon's leadership position as he will not be blamed for anything that goes wrong and creates the vision that Napoleon's is a perfect leader. With his decision regarding the timber, he uses Snowball to back him up. Since the animals are against him, the farm he is not selling to will have Snowball hiding there. This makes the animals support his decision.

He maintains power through various means. By rarely appearing in public he makes it seem that he has more important matters than the animals and that they should be lucky when he does appear. Through the various killings, he eliminates anyone who is a likely threat to his leadership such as the four porkers. The others who are killed had always angered him in some way or form, such as the hens who decided to rebel; they were killed as a warning not to disobey him. At the same time, he further destroys Snowball's reputation by making the animals confess that he was planning to kill Napoleon. By using statistics, another form of lies, he convinces the naïve animals that the farm has grown and flourished under his rule, again making him appear an admirable leader.

There are other methods he uses to maintain power. He is given titles like 'Protector of the sheepfold' to make the animals see his acts of sacrifice and his birthday is celebrated which makes him appear like a god, as the animals must celebrate the day he was born to thank god for his birth. He even has a poem about his greatness inscribed on the wall with a portrait of him next to it just opposite the seven commandments. This makes him appear as powerful as the very principles of animalism.

He is guarded by dogs and has a food taster so that he cannot be poisoned. He spreads rumours about the terrible state that the animals on other farms are kept to make the animals feel privileged to be in animal farm. He shows his 'brilliance' by letting the animals see the banknotes he traded for the timber. This shows the animals that there are many luxuries to be gained under napoleon's rule. He makes everything seem like a victory to cover up his mistakes and to keep the animals from blaming him. An example would be the blowing up of the windmill. It makes the animals feel that although there was a 'slight' loss they still won. This can be seen when he uses the phrase "readjustments instead of reductions" [1] to make reducing of food seem not too bad. There are more celebrations to cover up the animals hunger and needs.

Animal farm is also proclaimed as a republic, with Napoleon as its president to make it appear as if he is just watching over the animals and not controlling them. He allows Moses to remain when he returns as he spreads false hope which makes the animals continue labouring, hoping that if life is bad now, maybe one day, Moses' stories might come true and life will be better. When Boxer, the highly respected horse and role model among the animals is taken away to be slaughtered, the animals are told that he received the best medical care available but was unable to be kept alive. Boxer's death is then manipulated to Napoleon's advantage. Napoleon tells the animals that Boxer's last words were Napoleon is always right. Since this was one of Boxer's favourite mottos, it is a likely lie. The animals then make this their own motto to respect their beloved Boxer. This works out incredibly well for Napoleon.

Napoleon was a treacherous character and very much an opportunist of the worst kind. He used brilliance, cunning, treachery, propaganda and many other tools to gain, create and maintain power. Animal farm remained under his tyranny throughout the entire novel.