

Q) describe how stalin became supreme leader by 1929, using the source and your k...

[Politics](#), [Marxism](#)



Q) Describe how Stalin became supreme leader by 1929, using the source and your knowledge. (8) - this is a short timed essay intended to be written in 20 mins. - When Lenin died in 1924, everybody expected Trotsky to take over the leadership. However, Stalin schemed his way into power, using his position as General Secretary, and series of ruthless political moves. His moves can be categorised into two groups; Stalin's Strengths and Trotsky's mistakes. The first of Stalin's strengths was to cunningly make the Russian people believe that he had close relations with Lenin. He tried to do this because Lenin was loved and very popular with the people, up until his death in January 1924. His popularity can be seen in the source. The source shows mourners lining up outside the Mausoleum for his funeral, were thousands of people openly wept in the streets. Stalin hoped that if he won the support of Lenin's mourners, he could come to supreme power through popularity. One of the ways that Stalin won the support of the people was by organising Lenin's funeral, along with the other members of the Politburo. However, the biggest way that he managed to win the popularity of the Russians was by trying to illuminate his competition. He tried to shows Trotsky in a bad light by telling him the wrong date of Lenin's funeral, so that consequently he arrived late, thus making Stalin appear more dedicated to he memory of Lenin than Trotsky. This led to people disliking Trotsky. Despite the bad image that Stalin was making for Trotsky, Trotsky made lots of mistakes, self destroying his image too. He appeared to be a poor politician. He was described as vain and arrogant in the views of his party members and his examples of irritable attitude, such as turning his back on this colleagues and storming out of the room whilst they spoke, led to him having no friends

in the Politburo. Consequently, Stalin was able to build up his popularity by becoming friends with those who hated Trotsky. One of Stalin's strengths was abusing the split in Politburo to get people behind him. The Politburo structure was in total chaos and Stalin got between the two parties to isolate Trotsky. The Politburo was divided into two halves. The Leftists (Zinoviev and Kamenev) wanted world revolution, and to abolish the NEP, but they had hated Trotsky because they thought he was too ambitious. The Rightists (Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsy) wanted to continue the NEP until the USSR was stronger. Stalin played one side against the other to take power, staying in the middle. First in 1925, he allied with Zinoviev and Kamenev to cover up Lenin's Will and to get Trotsky dismissed and in 1928 Trotsky went into exile. Then, he advocated 'Socialism in one country' as he said that the USSR should first become strong and then try to bring world revolution about, and allied with the Rightists to get Zinoviev and Kamenev dismissed in 1927. Trotsky had an idea of World Revolution which did not appeal to the Russian people. Finally, he argued that the NEP was against communism, and got Bukharin, Rykov and Tomsy dismissed in 1929. Another of Stalin's strengths was that, whilst he was General Security, he put his supporters into the Politburo. This meant that the people that he had appointed had to abide by his rules because he had given them jobs, to which they should be grateful. Other factors that led to Stalin coming to supreme power in 1929, was the fact that Lenin's Testament was not read out. This resulted in the majority of Russians failing to know what Lenin had really thought of Stalin, so Lenin's supporters continued to support Stalin. In conclusion, the biggest factor that led to Stalin becoming supreme leader in 1929, was the chaotic structure of

the Politburo. This is so because, Stalin was able to get in between the two parties and manipulate them, whilst isolating Trotsky. Getting in between the two parties and staying in the middle meant that he could slyly consolidate his power and build an empire.