

Types of power

[Business](#), [Management](#)



Referent and Expert: The Most Effective Types of Powers Leadership is an act of guiding and influencing other individuals through actions, words, and ideas (Manning & Curtis, 2003, p. xvi). Leaders have different possession and use of powers. It may be referent, reward, expert, coercive, and legitimate. Among the types of power, the most effective types of power based on the leadership definition are referent and expert. Referent power is defined by Stone, Singletary, and Richmond (1999) as identifying oneself with a leader because of respect. Respect is difficult to gain and takes long duration before a leader earns it (p. 113). To gain this type of power, a leader must also be respectful to other people, hardworking, industrious, collaborative, and sensitive to the needs of others. Referent power influences employees or individuals because the manager or leader serves as a role model that everyone must follow. When individuals have perceived that leaders deserve respects, they will instantly comply. The leader will no longer use the legitimate power to command or influence other people.

Furthermore, expert power “ exists when the agent has specialized knowledge or skills that the target needs” (Nelson, 2011, p. 177). Based on the tutorial, the agent is making suggestions on the best wine and food to be served. It shows that a leader is more knowledgeable and reliable on the services that might be significant to an individual. When the target acknowledges the expert’s suggestion, it signifies trust. Therefore, in order to be accredited as an expert, a person must trust and rely on the given information. The expert power is relevant for leaders because followers allow them to shape their behavior, beliefs, principles, and attitudes. The followers often accord with the expert’s advice. They intend to listen carefully because

of the trust factor. Generally, these two types of powers are the most effective because they do not force other people to follow. Other types of power coerce people to comply, but it is only temporary. On the other hand, expert and referent influence people to act even though they are not physically present. Thus, they result in long term commitment and motivation.

Powers may vary in their usage depending on the situation. In my case, I could use expert power in my field of study when other people have no frame of reference. I could suggest on special matters that need my knowledge on business. Moreover, reward is the easiest to use, wherein a person is bribed to accomplish a task. It is the method of motivating other people, which offers a leader to exchange thing that has a value for a person. However, a person's performance will be affected if the reward has no significant value to another person.

To improve leadership and management skills, invest in the two types of powers: referent and expert. They have a positive impact on motivating other individuals to perform better. They require hard work, discipline, respect to others, perseverance, and knowledge to influence individuals to abide. Moreover, continue to evaluate yourself so that you will know the areas that need improvement. Lastly, educate and learn from other people and your own experiences, as well.

References

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Stone, G., Singletary, M., & Richmond, V. P. (1999). Clarifying communication theories: A hands-on approach. USA: Iowa State University Press.