

# Trotsky's contribution to the success of the bolsheviks up to 1922 essay sample



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Leon Trotsky was a key member of the communism in the 1900s. He had been interested in politics from an early age and had worked hard to get to where he was. Trotsky had a vital role in helping the Bolsheviks to their success by using his skills productively in his influential propaganda, the civil war and to help them gain power. Trotsky got arrested during Tsarist regime by writing revolutionary propaganda. Behaviour like that showed his dedication to his communist beliefs and gave him his nickname 'the pen'. He continued to write compelling speeches and soon the Bolshevik party realised how powerful his words were.

He became the prominent speech writer for the party and he influenced the masses spectacularly. During the civil war, Trotsky travelled along the front line in an armoured train, boosting soldiers' morale and urging them to fight a disparaging battle. They were severely outnumbered but his speeches helped them; leading to their victory. Later, Trotsky decided to start a newspaper called 'Pravda' which became the leading newspaper of the Soviet Union and the official voice of the Communist Party. It ran for decades and was eventually closed down in 1991 by order of President Yeltsin.

Alongside propaganda, Trotsky also played a fundamental part in helping the Bolsheviks seize power. When Lenin was planning the capture of Russia's capital Petrograd (now St Petersburg), Trotsky planned to take advantage of Kerensky's continuously weakening government and persuaded Lenin to postpone by just one week. By then Kerensky would find it harder to resist. Trotsky organised everything; he distributed leaflets; arranged the plan for food for the people of Petrograd; decided what parts of the city to take control of, like the telegraph stations.

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It was an extremely successful takeover and there was nearly no gunfire. He had made the right judgement people started to see how important he was. Historian Schapiro claimed, in 1918, that " Lenin's role fell short of Trotsky's" showing that people were beginning to believe that " Trotsky's view was preferred". It was his amazing tactical ability that secured the Bolsheviks future in ruling Russia. Regardless that Trotsky had had next to no previous experience; Trotsky was made the minister of war for the red army.

He sculpted an army of nearly 1, 000, 000 by introducing officers from the Tsars army to lead them. Because these officers couldn't be trusted to help the Communists, Trotsky decided to use commissars to watch and guard them. These people had the right to shoot them if the officers didn't obey the orders of Trotsky or tried to do anything to sabotage their efforts. This meant that the Red army was now more strategic and efficient. Trotsky had very strict reprimands with his troops and is strongly against desertion.

He enforced conscription; party controlled blocking squads and compulsory obedience which put fear into his army and also his opposition. Occasionally, Trotsky would send his troops out to fight and threaten that if they returned then they would all be executed with guns. This was very drastic but it made his army try and risk defeating the Whites instead of facing certain death from their leader. Even though all the three of the main ways that Trotsky contributed to the Bolshevik's accomplishments were extremely beneficial, personally, I believe that without his propaganda they would have fallen apart.

Underneath it all, Trotsky used his speeches and the media to boost people confidence about the Communist Party and influence them to support and believe in what they stand for. Trotsky's speeches motivated hundreds of thousands of people and encouraged them to win a battle where the odds were clearly against them. Manipulation of the newspapers provided Lenin lasting moral support that ensured him his victory. Without Trotsky, I don't believe that the Bolsheviks would have had enough support to win and so he gave the greatest contribution of all.