

How power relationships control the workplace

[Sociology](#)



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

How Power Relationships Control the Workplace Every workplace environment in the world has power relationships, as various people within the organization are placed at different levels within that organization. Those relationships have an effect on how quickly one person can advance through the ranks, in addition to things like level of pay, time spent on the job and the types of assignments given to an individual. Those who can handle these power relationships well are more likely to advance within their careers, while those who do not understand the power that is held by a select few will likely falter. Power relationships do not always occur in a boss to employee manner either, since an individual's expertise on a particular subject can make him or her a more viable option to complete an assignment, which, in turn, grants that individual with more power. The first way in which power relationships control the workplace is through positional power. When one person has a higher position within the company than another does, that individual automatically has more power within the relationship. If the higher individual is a direct superior of his or her co-worker, the direct power that he or she has increases even more. Those with direct power over a co-worker are able to control when an employee receives a promotion, which, in turn, gives him or her power over the wages that the employee makes. This is the most obvious type of power within a workplace because everyone is aware of whom their bosses are and acts according to this power relationship. The power held by the bosses of an organization also influences the physical attributes of the workplace. On a construction site, the physical attributes of whatever is being built are influenced by the architect and how that plan is carried out is decided by the supervisor. If you are just a general laborer on this job, you do not have any power over these issues. Those with the power

<https://assignbuster.com/how-power-relationships-control-the-workplace/>

in the relationship tell you what to do and you have a choice either to complete what is being asked or to cease working at this job. In an office, the manager or president of the branch or company assigns offices to people, which alters the physical layout of the office. The CEO of the company also has power, as he or she likely chose the location where the office building was placed. Another type of power seen in the workplace comes through an individual's ability to gain allies within that spectrum. People who have charisma can sometimes gain more power in a relationship, simply by their ability to communicate. These people are generally able to influence others and even though they might not have legitimate power in the workplace, it appears as though they do because they are able to get people to naturally follow them. These people usually end up with legitimate power, since they are able to use these traits to get promotions. Having this inherent charisma can alter the power in a relationship without any real world power actually existing. If someone within an organization has expert status, that individual likely has more power than someone who is not an expert. This is because the organization needs this expert knowledge on a subject more than it needs someone to carry out the actual plan. Once again, on a construction site, an architect designs the building before it is constructed. Even though that architect does not construct the building, he or she is probably paid more than anyone else involved in the project is. This is because the expertise that the architect is valued by the organization, which gives him or her more power. Keep in mind, however, that this power does not carry over to other areas. You will not see the architect standing on site telling the supervisor what to do, since that is beyond the architect's area of expertise and, therefore, out of his power relationship. One thing to notice is that <https://assignbuster.com/how-power-relationships-control-the-workplace/>

throughout all of these power relationships in the workplace, the person with the power ends up being paid more money. In many of these cases, this is because the person with the power in the relationship control how the money is divided up among the employees. In order to keep the most powerful people happy, they must be awarded more money. This is the reward system for having the expertise or interpersonal skills needed to acquire power within a relationship. If you are the type of person that can acquire this power easily, you are rewarded through monetary gains. Those with the power in a relationship, however, are also able to penalize those who do not meet their standards or who try to gain too much power too quickly. Therefore, workers must identify the power structure within the workplace and go along with the power relationships that exist as a result. To succeed in the workplace, people must identify those who hold the power and make them believe that they can handle more power in their relationships with others. For those working construction, it is important to work hard on a daily basis and learn how to do as many jobs as possible. It is also necessary to take a leadership role when new people join the team. If a supervisor notices that one person has been helping the others, he or she might recommend that individual for a supervisor position in the future. In an office setting, those who work hard and are able to develop a following among co-workers are likely to receive a promotion because of their ability to attract followers. These individuals, however, must go along with the current power relationships that exist within the workplace, as attempting to step over these boundaries has the opposite effect. In the end, the power that an individual ends up with depends on his or her ability to stay within his or her role within these workplace power relationships.