

3

Power Roles

Members, Leaders, and Ethics

CHAPTER OBJECTIVES

- Understand the power of groups
- Explain the types of power in groups
- Understand how members can influence group behavior
- Explain the structural process of individual power
- Introduce coercive forms of power
- Distinguish the two basic types of leadership in groups
- Comprehend the importance of power and ethics

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Defining Power

Types of Power

Group Members' Influence

Group and Structural Processes

Coercive Methods Create
Dysfunctional Group Processes

Leadership Power

Designated Leader
Emerging Leader

Power and Ethics

Ethical Principles

Summary

KEY TERMS

Power

Position power

Personal power

Bullying

Charisma

Agentic state

Fundamental
attribution error

Identification

Internalization

DEFINING POWER

Group work cannot exist without some form of authoritative power structure. Power is an essential element to group life because it gives the group the ability to effectively complete its goals. Authorities use power to control the behaviors of others and to coordinate their activities. So what is power? How do we achieve power? Where does it come from? Does every member of the group have power? In this chapter, we will explore the concept of power and influence, and its application in group work. Let's begin by defining power. I'm sure you've heard people say that they have power over someone else because they can manipulate them or get them to do things they don't want to do. And they can do this in a number of ways. These people may define power as the ability to manipulate or control the activities of others. Others may say that they have power to get people to do things because of their charisma or charm—that they have a natural ability for power. Yet others may say that just the idea that they can make someone else do something is power. In some senses, they may all be correct.

Basically, power is simply the ability to get things done the way one wants them to be done. However, we need to define power, and there are many definitions of power, just as there are many types of power. One definition of power states that it is the ability to “influence and/or regulate and/or control outcomes.”¹ Another source defines power as “... the ability to induce a person to do something he or she would not otherwise have done.”² I like M.F. Rogers' simple definition of power as “the potential for influence”³; however, it falls short of one other concept—compliance. I prefer to view power as a form of influence and a means for compliance. I can influence someone to do something and get him or her to comply in many ways. It is a much broader concept for understanding power in group work. If we view power as a potential for influence and compliance, we can modify the way individuals think or behave. In group work, the concept of power is closely associated with the concept of leadership.

In order for any group to function, there must be distribution of power. Someone has to tell someone else what to do, and the person who is doing the telling must have some reinforcing means so that the other person will comply. **Power** is a resource that enables a person to bring about compliance from others or to influence them. It is a person's **influence potential**.⁴ In organizations, we tend to see two kinds of power—**position power** and **personal power**. There are those individuals who can get others to comply because of their positions in the organization, such as the CEO or any of management's officers—they have position power. And then there are others who get their influence from their personality and behavior, such as individuals you admire—they have personal power.⁵ Some people have both, while others seem to have no power at all. Must people who have power always exercise it? No, but they do have the capacity or potential to do so.

Power

A resource that enables a person to bring about compliance from others or to influence them.

Position power

Those who can get others to comply because of their positions.

Personal power

Those who get their influence from their personality and behavior.

Types of Power

There has been substantial research performed on the notion of power. What is considered to be the “classic among classics”⁶ in power research was done by John R.P. French, Jr., and Bertram Raven, published in 1959.⁷ They identified five different types of power in groups, organizations, or among individuals: **reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, and expert powers.**

- 1. Reward power** is defined as power whose basis is the ability to reward. If your manager gives you a raise because he or she says that you’ve worked hard, then that is a reward—that person has reward power. The degree to which your manager has reward power is determined by his or her ability to provide that award. If your manager says that he or she will recommend you for a raise because you worked hard, that is still reward power, but it lacks the strength that the first example provides. You may or may not receive your raise. The raise is the incentive or reward for you to continue to work hard.
- 2. Coercive power** is the opposite of reward power because it uses threatened punishment as a way to gain compliance. The strength of coercive power depends on the degree or magnitude of the punishment. If your manager tells you that the next time you’re late for work you’ll be docked two hours pay, that’s coercive power. It is a punishment designed to get you to come to work on time. Similar to reward power, the degree of coercive power is determined by the manager’s ability to provide the punishment. However, unlike with a reward, the employee threatened with punishment may quit, thus rendering the power useless.
- 3. Legitimate power** is defined as that power that is inherent in an individual’s position or office in which others have an obligation to accept his or her influence. In all forms of legitimate power, the notion of legitimacy involves some sort of established code or standard. Your teacher has a degree of legitimate power, as does a police officer or your employer because of the structure of the system each are in. Each one is granted a legitimate power as a result of an established code within that system. And that code also describes the general behaviors of those to whom it grants that power.
- 4. Referent power**, unlike reward, coercive, or legitimate power; referent power, has its basis in the identification of one person with another. By identification, I mean the feeling of oneness that one person has for another or a desire for such an identity. It is the influence inherent in the respect and admiration others have for an individual. Individuals with referent power are perceived as credible, wise, and as role models, for example. Sports figures such as Michael Jordan, Brett Favre, Michael Phelps, and Eric Chavez are role models who have referent power.



5. Expert power is a result of someone's knowledge, skill, and/or experience. The strength of the expert power that is given to someone varies with the knowledge or perception that others attribute to him or her. When you need legal advice, you generally accept an attorney's advice in legal matters. Or perhaps there is one auto mechanic who has a reputation for being the best in your area. You prefer to get your car fixed by this person because of his or her reputation as having the best skills. These are examples of expert power.



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In today's electronic world, we need to identify a sixth power, although it can be argued that it belongs as a subheading of expert power according to the research performed by French and Raven:

6. Informational power derives its strength from individuals who know how to retrieve information. Today's electronic media (which includes the internet) make it virtually impossible for one individual to know how and where to retrieve all relevant information. Power is ascribed to those people who have this expertise.

There are three more powers that need to be recognized in group work:

- 7. Earned power** results from effective performance that earns approval and respect from others.
- 8. Political power** is derived from those activities that are not required as part of one's group role but that influence, or attempt to influence, the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the group. It is political behavior that relates to the promotion of the self and group interests rather than being a part of the formal roles regulated by group norms and goals.⁸
- 9. Social power** is the capacity to influence others, even when these others try to resist influence.⁹ A powerful person can use and control others for his or her own ends.



In group work, because no two group members have exactly the same resources, each member operates from a different power base. People develop power in a group because they can provide or render service to that group through information, expertise, rewards, and punishment; or because they have been elected or appointed; or because they are well liked or have status in the group.

GROUP MEMBERS' INFLUENCE

When a group is newly formed, all members, save the leader, have equal influence. It is only through interaction and interpersonal communication that some members gain influence over others. There are two types of influence that have

a tendency to be destructive to effective group work: **bullying** (a coercive influence) and **charisma**. Bullying, or aggressiveness, is a dysfunctional behavior because individuals ignore the rights of others by using offensive and hostile behaviors.¹⁰ Bullying has a tendency to generate negative feelings such as guilt, fear of consequences, and alienation, which can inhibit or prevent effective group work. Aggression is a behavior employed to get one's way and stifle dissent or discussion. Unchecked, it can create groupthink and the possible extinction of the group. Bullying behavior should be challenged the moment it is first used.

The second type of influence is charisma. What is charisma? Good question! It is defined by such words as “charm, personality, appeal, personal magnetism, allure, and dynamic character,” just to mention a few. Charisma is premised on individual perception. All of us know someone who we have said has charisma.

We'd do just about anything for the person if we were asked. And that's the problem with charismatic influence in group work—it has a tendency to replace substance with charm, especially when it comes to making decisions. Do we decide based upon the facts, or are we persuaded by a member's charisma? It's easy to spot bullying, but not so easy to identify charisma. What we want to achieve is **interpersonal influence**, which is a complex process that can take a great deal of awareness and sensitivity.¹¹

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Bullying

A dysfunctional behavior which ignores the rights of others.

Charisma

A trait called “charm, personality, appeal, or personal magnetism.”

GROUP AND STRUCTURAL PROCESSES

As we noted, within every group there exists a power structure. A person's power in a group and a person's responsibility for what happens in that group generally go hand in hand. A structural process that addresses power and responsibility within group work is called the **superior/subordinate hierarchy**. A superior is someone who has authority over the group, usually the group leader, while a subordinate is someone who follows the directions of the superior, a group member. This structure relies on subordinate members to be obedient to the superior—to follow orders so to speak. Sometimes, members will follow orders even if they believe those orders to be questionable or wrong. There have been extensive studies in social psychology on interpersonal theories of behavior focusing on obedience in organizations and small groups. One of the most famous of these studies is Stanley Milgram's **Agency Theory** (1973). Milgram analyzed power by creating small groups in his laboratory at Yale University. He attempted to explain why obedience to authority, especially a malevolent authority, has such a strong hold on our behavior.¹² This theory suggests that at

Agentic state

When a group member or members exhibit undesirable, destructive, or evil behavior.

any particular time a person is in one of two distinct psychological states: the first is the **autonomous state**, in which behaviors are seen as self-directed. In this state, individuals make decisions based on their own ideas, beliefs, and experiences. The second or **agentic state** is a situation in which people see themselves as agents of a higher authority. In this state, individuals give up their own responsibility, deferring to those of higher status. When a person transitions from the autonomous state to the agentic state (the agentic shift), he or she follows orders without considering the consequences or whether the request is appropriate. This shift in responsibility means that the person no longer monitors his or her own behavior—he or she “just follows orders” and does not consider himself or herself responsible—“It’s not my fault, the boss told me to do it.” These individuals feel responsibility to the authority, but no responsibility for their behavior because some higher authority told them to do it. Individuals who have positions at the bottom of the hierarchy tend to do as they are told by those of higher status.¹³

We learn to function in these two states from an early age. When you were growing up, your parents acted as agents, instructing you in ways of behaving and the importance of obeying others. This will be with you your entire life, with different people taking on the role of agent, for example, teachers, law enforcement officers, employers, and others who hold positions in the social hierarchy above your own.

Another interpersonal theory of social behavior suggests that group members are more likely to follow orders from authority rather than to rebel against them.¹⁴ Forsyth (2006) says that “interpersonal theory assumes that each group member’s action tends to evoke, or ‘pull,’ a predictable set of actions from the other group members... friendly behaviors are complimented by more friendly behaviors” (p. 266). However, if group members act in dominant, firm, directive ways—issuing orders or taking charge—then interpersonal theory suggests that other group members would behave submissively. The **interpersonal complementary hypothesis** predicts that (1) positive behaviors evoke positive behaviors, and negative behaviors evoke negative behaviors; and (2) dominant behaviors evoke submissive behaviors, and submissive behaviors evoke dominant behaviors.¹⁵

One form of influence used to gain member commitment in group work is the **foot-in-the-door technique**. This is a classic sales technique for eliciting compliance by preceding a request for a large commitment with a request for a small one, the initial small request serving the function of softening up the target person.¹⁶ The expression foot in the door comes from the days when door-to-door salesmen sold their merchandise on the doorstep. Each salesman knew that if he could just get through the door with his sales pitch, the client was likely to make a purchase. The foot-in-the-door technique works in small group work because the more a member goes along with small requests or commitments; the more likely that member will continue in a



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desired direction of attitude or behavioral change and feel obligated to go along with larger requests. The group member who starts up a casual conversation about philosophy or religion or who asks that you complete and discuss a survey on such topics may be employing the foot-in-the-door technique.¹⁷

COERCIVE METHODS CREATE DYSFUNCTIONAL GROUP PROCESSES

With some similarity to the agentic state, when a group member or members exhibit undesirable, destructive, or evil behavior, we tend to blame the person's character rather than the powerful group processes at work that forced him or her to behave that way in the first place. Social psychologists call this the **fundamental attribution error**.¹⁸ We have a tendency to underestimate the importance of external group pressures and to overestimate the importance of the individual's internal motives and personality when we interpret behavior. Forsyth (2006) argues that "... obedience is not a reflection of the individuals in the group, but an indication of the power of the group itself. By controlling key bases of power, using power tactics, exploiting the nature of the subordinate–authority relationship, and prefacing large demands with minor ones, authorities exert great influence on group members" (p. 270).

As we have learned, there are numerous types of power and forms of influence in small group work. But once that power is used, how will members react? The exercise of power creates changes in both those it influences and those who use it.¹⁹ The power holder can not only use power over group members, but can use it against group members. Forsyth (2006) says that in some cases, when the power holder only produces compliance, "... the group members do what they are told to do, but only because the power holder demands it" (p. 271). Members may yield to the pressure, even if they privately disagree with the power holder. This yielding to pressure only happens when the power holder closely watches the group. What happens when members admire the power holder? They begin to act like him or her; they create a nexus with that person called **identification**. When group members identify with the power holder, their self-image changes as they assume the behaviors, characteristics, and roles of the person with power.²⁰

If a member or members maintain a prolonged period of identification, it can lead to **internalization**. When internalization occurs, group members are no longer carrying out the power holder's orders; rather, their behaviors reflect their own personal beliefs, opinions, and goals as conscious or subconscious guiding principles. The group members will perform the required actions even if the power holder isn't present; their actions reflect their private acceptance of the authority's value system.²¹

Not all group members acquiesce to these types of power tactics. Some members refuse to be coerced into obeying the power holder. They do this by either leaving the group or applying influence themselves. Forsyth (2006) says that "In many cases, members contend against those in power individually—particularly when they feel that others in the group have more power than they

Fundamental attribution error

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Identification

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Internalization

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do. But when members feel a sense of shared identity with the other low-power members of the group, they are more likely to join with them in a **revolutionary coalition** that opposes the power holder” (p. 272). A revolutionary coalition is defined as a subgroup formed within the larger group that seeks to disrupt or change the group’s authority structure.²² Members are more likely to rebel against a power holder if they believe that the power holder is responsible for decision making.

Another type of resistance to authority occurs by group members when an authority lacks referent power, but instead employs coercive influence methods and requires group members

to carry out unpleasant assignments. This is called **reactance**—individual group members attempt to reassert their sense of freedom by affirming their individuality or autonomy. Group members undergo complex emotional and cognitive reactions when they feel that their freedom to make choices has been threatened or eliminated.²³

Coercive tactics can produce negative emotions within group members, such as fear, anger, hostility, and depression.²⁴ Even when mildly coercive methods, such as threats, are used, members have a tendency to overreact and respond with even stronger threats. Over time, coercive power can cause group members to lose interest in their work, which eventually can cause a loss of member productivity when they are not monitored. The conflict created by coercive influence can disrupt the ability of the group to function.²⁵ Coercive tactics can also disrupt or undermine the quality of any interpersonal relationship members may have with each other or with the power holder.

Power can also compel those who have it to become more aggressive in dealing with members who are nonconforming or outspoken. When members work in a group for an extended period of time under the influence of powerful others, they tend to become inhibited. A member who initially is outspoken or nonconforming may be cajoled or ridiculed over a period of time to the point that he or she eventually becomes silent or conforms to the power holder’s influence. In doing so, these changes are consistent with an **approach-inhibition model of power**.²⁶ Forsyth says that in this model there are two basic types of reactions to environmental events. “One reaction, approach, is associated with action, self-promotion, seeking awards and opportunities, increased energy, and movement. The second reaction, inhibition, is associated with reaction, self-protection, avoiding threats and danger, vigilance, loss of motivation, and an overall reduction in activity. Significantly, the approach-inhibition model suggests that power increases approach tendencies, whereas reductions in power

trigger inhibition. In consequence, those with high and low power display contrasting emotions and actions across situations” (p. 275).

Generally speaking, then, when a person exercises power over others, the power holder gains the impression that the others do not control their own behavior, or, in other words, they are not autonomous. Therefore, they are seen as less worthy. In short, a person who successfully exercises power over others is more likely to believe that he or she is less deserving of respect. These people thus become good prospects to be exploited.²⁷

LEADERSHIP POWER

What is leadership? We know that it is not the power to coerce others, or that we are born to be leaders as suggested by trait theories.²⁸ One definition of **leadership** is the process by which an individual guides others in their pursuits, often by organizing, directing, coordinating, supporting, and motivating their efforts.²⁹ This definition makes leadership a complex interdependency between a leader and group members, whereby cooperating individuals are allowed to influence and motivate others in order to advance the achievement of group and individual goals. Another definition of leadership is the process of influencing people to direct their efforts toward the attainment of particular goal(s).³⁰ By their very nature, both of these processes require the use of effective communication skills. In addition to effective communication skills, leaders must be both efficient and effective. **Efficiency** is the ability to do things right. **Effectiveness** is the ability to do the right things. Leaders who are efficient know how to utilize their resources. And leaders who are effective know how to maximize group member productivity and respond to both the internal and external environments in order to achieve group goals.



Designated Leader

Within the group context exists two basic types of leaders: the designated leader and the emerging leader. A **designated leader** is a person who is appointed by an authority outside the group to head the group or is elected by the group members. These types of leaders have the power to control the fate of others and thus have considerable power to coerce those under their leadership.³¹ A designated leader has a special responsibility to maintain the group's perspective and to ensure that all of the necessary leadership services are performed. A designated leader may determine the group's goals, give directions that must be obeyed willingly or unwillingly, and in some cases, impose punishments on nonconforming members. A designated leader has the potential to reduce interpersonal interactions between him or herself and group members, thereby decreasing interdependency. This relationship enables the leader to influence group members while making the leader less susceptible to any influence from them.

Some people believe that it's necessary to designate a leader because it provides stability to the group. One argument for a designated leader is that someone must immediately organize meetings, obtain resources, represent the group, and facilitate participation. Another argument for this type of leadership is premised on the specific problems the group may encounter. That is, a designated leader may be important when member tasks are complex, or member personalities are so different that conflicts appear inevitable and someone has to take responsibility for managing them, or when the group needs a strong spokesperson.³² Research shows that groups with designated leaders accepted by the members have fewer interpersonal problems and have a tendency to produce better outcomes than groups without designated leaders.³³

Emerging Leader

The process of **leadership emergence** or **emerging leader** is determined by the group members themselves and not imposed by an authority outside the group, such as in a designated leader. One individual in the group begins as an equal with other members but emerges as the perceived leader. There are two kinds of emerging leaders: those who emerge from leaderless groups and those who emerge alongside an existing leader to meet particular needs. One benefit of this type of leadership is the fact that members get to know each other to some degree and the group has time to select the right person.

The difference between a designated leader and an emerging leader is not the amount of power but the basis from which the power is derived.³⁴ One common basis of power is the control of resources that are necessary or desired by others. The emerging leader may be the only member to have access to needed resources, such as money or materials, or the leader may possess organizational skills that other members don't have.

An emerging leader needs to maintain interpersonal relations with members because the relationship between an emerging leader and group members is reciprocal. The principle of interdependence permits the emerging leader to lead at the discretion of group members. In other words, the basis for an emerg-

ing leader's power is by the consent of the governed. If the group feels that the leader no longer leads effectively, or fails to satisfy the majority of members, his or her power is diminished. When this happens, the leader may be removed at any time.

Members respect and willingly comply with the leader because they perceive the leader to be helping them make progress toward their group goals. Aubrey Fisher (1980), known for his work on the communication dynamics of small group decision making, says that, "Perhaps more important than any other definitive characteristic, the leader is the person who consistently acts like a leader by performing leadership acts" (p. 193). A good leader, with good ideas, who gives directions well and who is goal-directed and self-assuring, can generate enthusiasm, support, and cohesion in a group.

POWER AND ETHICS

"Power tends to corrupt, absolute power corrupts absolutely." Lord Acton, historian and moralist, expressed this opinion in a letter to Bishop Mandell Creighton, Bishop of London, Church of England, in 1887 regarding the papacy of Rome.³⁵ He was referring to an observation that a person's sense of morality has a tendency to lessen as his or her power increases. Leaders have a responsibility to exercise their power ethically. Philosophers have studied ethics for centuries, and as they have discovered, there are no easy answers as to what constitutes good or right human behavior. Each culture, each generation within that culture, redefines proper human behavior. We can determine much about a culture by studying its established code of ethics.

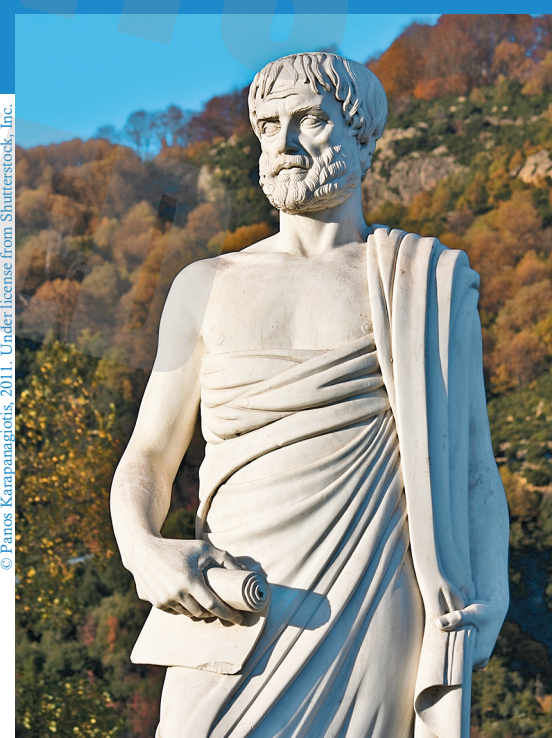
Aristotle, an Athenian Greek philosopher in the fifth Century B.C., wrote extensively in *Nichomachean Ethics* regarding **moral virtues, the mean, and proper behavior**, that³⁶

"Each moral virtue is a mean or lies between extremes of pleasure of action—doing or feeling too much or too little. The absolute mean is different from the mean as it is relative to the individual.... Morality, like art-work, requires that one neither under-do nor over-do. One must hit upon the right course (steering between too much and too little). This requires practice. Virtues are good habits or dispositions to do the right thing developed by means of particular virtuous acts. Means themselves do not admit of excess and deficiency (one cannot have too much courage, etc.)."

The **Table 3.1** lists examples of the golden mean taken from Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics (Book II)*.

The golden mean is important because it reinforces the balance necessary in life. Good judgment requires that one find the mean between extremes. Aristotle believed that moderation between two extremes was the key to acting virtuously.

When we speak about ethics, we are talking about a code of conduct that regulates human behavior. The *Encyclopedia*



Britannica defines ethics as the “branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of ultimate value and the standards by which human actions can be judged right or wrong. The term is also applied to any system or theory of moral values or principles.”³⁷ The *Columbia University Press* defines ethics as “the study and evaluation of human conduct in the light of moral principles. Moral principles may be viewed either as the standard of conduct that individuals have constructed for themselves or as the body of obligations and duties that a particular society requires of its members.”³⁸ D.D. Raphael (1981) says that “Moral philosophy is philosophical inquiry about norms or values, about ideas of right and wrong, good and bad, what should and what should not be done” (p. 8).³⁹ Moral philosophy addresses the question, “What ought I to do?” and an answer to that question requires much more than delivering the fundamental principle of morality.⁴⁰ The term moral philosophy has been used synonymously with ethics, the philosophical discussion of assumptions about right and wrong, good and bad, considered as general ideas and as applied in the private life of individuals.

It can be said, then, that ethics is the term we use to indicate the moral choices a person makes regarding his or her behavior. Ethical conduct defines how people should behave toward one another in a civil society. The ethical guidelines that an individual or group holds are closely linked to their culture. We can argue that a group can be defined by its ethical code of conduct. A group’s values and expectations influence an individual’s belief of what is right and wrong. The group and its ethical standards are intertwined; one influences the other.

TABLE 3.1

Vice (Defect)	Virtue (Mean)	Vice (Excess)
Cowardice (too little confidence)	Courage	Rashness (too much confidence)
Foolhardiness (too little fear)	Courage	Cowardice (too much fear)
Insensibility (too little pleasure)	Temperance	Self-indulgence (too much pleasure)
Meanness or Stinginess (too little giving)	Liberality	Prodigality or Wastefulness (too much giving)
Undue Humility (too little honor)	Proper Pride	Empty Vanity (too much honor)
Inirascibility (too little anger)	Good Temper	Irascibility (too much anger)
Shamelessness (too little shame)	Modesty	Bashfulness (too much shame)
Surliness	Friendliness	Flattery


Ethical Principles

There is an ancient Chinese proverb called the Wind-Grass Theory. It says that the will of the people bends to the will of the emperor, just like the blades of grass bend to the blowing wind. So it is in group work. A leader who unethically exerts his or her power will eventually influence those members who resisted that influence to change their personal ethics as exemplified in the agentic state. Leaders should serve as a model for members to follow—lead by example should be their motto. There are several **ethical principles** for leaders that are relevant for small groups:⁴¹

- 1. Avoid deceptive or misleading messages.** The leader should always communicate the truth to members so they have all relevant information to act upon, especially in decision making, whether it supports the leader's position or not. This allows members an opportunity to evaluate all information in an unbiased and fair way.
- 2. Maintain member autonomy in choice-making.** Do not impose choices on members. They have free will and the right to make their own choices.
- 3. Practice fairness in work assignment.** Work assignments should be made with equity between all members as a primary consideration. Members should not be singled out and given too many or too few assignments.
- 4. Treat all members fairly.** In dealing with members, the leader should always treat each one fairly and not show favoritism or dislike.
- 5. Place concern for others above concern for personal gain.** A leader should not take advantage of the power of the leader position for personal gain or advantage. Hidden agendas, whether they are the leader's or member's, should not be allowed to interfere with the needs of the group.
- 6. Maintain confidentiality.** A leader should always maintain confidentiality when communicating with a member or members outside of the group context, especially when caucusing with individual members. A leader will lose member trust if he or she breaks that confidentiality.
- 7. Support members when they carry out policies and actions approved by the group.** Ethical leaders support members who carry out the plans of the group. They do not protect themselves by leaving group members to fend for themselves.
- 8. Seek the greatest good for the group members.** The success or failure for completing the group charge is a collective effort. The leader should always seek what is best for group members.
- 9. Impartiality—treat members consistently, regardless of sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, or social background.** Members are valued for their contributions to the group. Ethical leaders minimize external status differences to encourage participation by all members.
- 10. Establish clear policies that all group members are expected to follow.** Ensure that all members clearly understand group procedures and rules. The leader is expected to follow the same rules and procedures outlined for members.

11. **Participate in task assignments whenever possible.** The leader does more than lead. He or she should assist other members with task assignments whenever possible.
12. **Respect the opinions and attitudes of members, and allow members the freedom to consider the consequences of their actions.** This principle supports democratic, group-centered leadership that encourages equal opportunity for all members to participate.
13. **Avoid retaliatory tactics.** An ethical leader will never attempt to retaliate against members because they voted against the leader, disagreed with the leader's opinion, and so forth.
14. **Do the right thing.** When in doubt, the leader should always do the right thing for the welfare of the group.

SUMMARY



Power is an essential element to group life because it gives the group the ability to effectively complete its goals. While there are limitations to the amount and kinds of power in group work, it is necessary in order to control the behaviors of others and coordinate their activities. In order for any group to function, there must be distribution of power, whether that is given from an authoritative body to the group or by the group itself. Power is the resource that enables a person to bring about compliance from others or to influence them.

Underlying power are two types of influence that have a tendency to be destructive to effective group work: bullying (a coercive influence) and charisma. Bullying is a dysfunctional behavior while charisma is perceptual. Both can have negative influences on members.

Within the structural process that addresses power and responsibility is the principle of superior/subordinate hierarchy. A superior is someone who has authority over the group, usually the group leader, while a subordinate is someone who follows the directions of the superior, a group member. This structure relies on subordinate members to be obedient to the superior. Milgram's Agency Theory attempts to explain why obedience to authority, especially a malevolent authority, has such a strong hold on group behavior. Milgram suggests that at any particular time a person is in one of two distinct psychological states: the autonomous state, in which behaviors are seen as self directed; and the agentic state, a situation in which people see themselves as agents of a higher authority.

Leadership and power go hand in hand. Leadership is the process of influencing people to direct their efforts toward the attainment of particular goal(s), requiring the use of effective communication skills. In addition to effective communication skills, leaders must be both efficient and effective.

Ethics is a code of conduct that regulates human behavior. It is the branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of ultimate value and the standards by which human actions can be judged right or wrong. Ethical conduct defines how people should behave toward one another in a civil society. Small groups are guided by a code of conduct that members must follow if they are to function as a synergistic and cohesive body.

DISCUSSION

1. Two concepts related to power are **reward power** and **coercive power**. Are these merely two sides of the same coin, or are there aspects of reward power and coercive power that make them more complicated than just being mere “opposites” of each other? What relationships between people are necessary for reward power to function in their communication with one another? What relationships are necessary for coercive power to function?
2. **Referent power** is linked to role models and those we identify with. How significant do you believe role models are in our lives? How close a relationship do you have to have with a person for that person to have referent power? Could an athlete like Michael Jordan persuade you to change your behavior from a televised appearance, or would you only change your behavior based on the influence of someone closer to you?
3. What are some group contexts in your life (family, classes, teams, youth groups) where you have observed people (perhaps yourself) engaging in **reactance** and trying to reassert autonomy and independence within a group? What conditions have led individuals to assert themselves in this way, in your experience?
4. As a member of a group, in most cases would you be *less* likely to trust the decisions and messages of a **designated leader** or an **emergent leader**? Why? Consider the answer you chose: what are some choices that type of leader (the one you would be *less* likely to trust) would need to make to effectively influence you and to gain your trust?
5. Recent years have seen an increasing focus on whistle-blowing in organizational settings, which happens when a member of an organization discloses secret information to those outside the organization because it reveals wrongdoing on the part of the organization. Consider the ethical principles on pages 79 and 80; which of these would discourage whistle-blowing, and which ones would encourage it?

NOTES

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