

Types of power

An important facet of leadership is making the most of opportunities that you have, and using other means to exert influence when possible.

We all have multiple types of power at our disposal: legitimate power, such as that of a mother or father or a supervisor; reward power, such as promotions or awards; coercive power, such as the power of persuasion or even threats; and the four powers that are most important to networking: *reference power, expert power, information power and willpower*. Let's concentrate on those that relate most to networking.

Reference power is true networking in action. By providing and seeking references – personal and professional contacts – you direct your destiny and the destinies of others. I demonstrated this very clearly with my actions to get President Clinton to come to the Netherlands. The power of my references played a key role in getting his scheduling officers to listen to me, and in securing the visit.

Expert power is sharing your expertise and, likewise, tapping into the expertise of others. Everyone has strengths and skills. Determine what yours are and utilize them to get you where you want to go, and to help others.

For example, I've based my entire life around networking. As a result, I'm regarded as an expert on the subject, and have taken on the designation of NetworkKING (cleverly conceptualized by Stephanie Ward of Firefly Coaching in the Netherlands, www.FireflyCoaching.com). Turning networking into a pure and practical science – by giving my HAND Networking Program, by providing the impetus for networking opportunities via my Network-Club.com website, and by speaking to groups and writing this book about networking – has given me the power to be a networking expert. People in my network now recognize me as the NetworkKING. That's expert power.

Information power is sharing your basic knowledge with those who can benefit from it and, in return, growing and learning from the vast pool of knowledge at your fingertips.

Information power levels the playing field. The more information you have, the more prepared and confident you will be, whether it involves your business, a purchase or the test you have to take tomorrow. When you “know who is coming to dinner and what's on the menu,” so to speak, you

