

### **Three Different Responses to Power**

Research shows that there are three general human responses to power. First, there is an *automatic response*: following instructions without thought or questions. Second, there is a *manual response*: You understand that the person has power over you, you have second thoughts about doing what he requests, but you comply anyway because of his greater power position. Third, there is *resistance*: you know the person has power over you, but you do everything within your personal power to resist. Great persuaders need to be able to interpret individual reactions to power. That's because each reaction requires a different response.

Great persuaders have the ability to use power to put their audience at ease. Power has impact on the choices and actions of the people you deal with. Great persuaders can also sense when to use or not use certain forms of power. We know that power that is used in the wrong way has a repelling effect, the exact opposite of the persuader's intention. When you have the ability to customize your power with your audience, they are more likely to accept your advice. Understand that when we are unsure or have doubts, we always look to an authority figure or expert to help us make a decision.

Power, if used improperly, can make people feel controlled or manipulated. By wielding the wrong power, you may get the immediate results you're looking for, but they're not going to last. What's more, you're not going to have people's respect or friendship when all is said and done. Ultimately, this kind of manipulation will destroy cooperation and breed resistance. It will kill enthusiasm and stir up animosity. Great persuaders know how people handle the different types of power.

I would rather try to persuade a man to go along, because once I have persuaded him he will stick. If I scare him, he will stay just as long as he is scared, and then he is gone.

—GENERAL DWIGHT DAVID EISENHOWER

