



FORMS OF POWER IN THE WORKPLACE

(Adapted from John French and Bertram Raven)

- **Coercive power:** The ability to offer punishments to deter certain actions. In the workplace this is the power of a supervisor to provide a poor performance review or to discipline.
- **Reward power:** The ability to give out rewards for desired behavior. This would include the power to make desirable assignments, provide access to helpful resources, or to use influence to advance someone's career.
- **Formal power:** This is also called legitimate or titular power. This power comes from one's actual title and role, such as CEO, who can act to affect the lives and wellbeing of many people because their role gives them access to the levers to do so. Examples include, layoffs, across the board pay changes, reorganization, selection, etc.
- **Connection power:** This is the ability to offer access to certain people or resources. For example, a board member who can connect an employee with a prospective employer.
- **Referent power:** This is influence that comes from being liked by others. For example, a charismatic staff member may be considered more believable than their boss or colleagues when criticizing the organization, or, conversely, can rally others to support a positive change.
- **Informational power:** Influence that comes from knowledge and information. We sometimes refer to this as someone who "knows where all the skeletons are buried," but can include the person who does HR for an organization or keeps the books.
- **Expert power:** Influence that comes from having exceptional skills. In a congregation, even though clergy may not be "management," their training and talent confers power and influence on them.



PERSONAL REFLECTION

TYPE OF POWER	WHERE HAVE I EXPERIENCED THIS TYPE OF POWER?	HOW DOES THIS SHOW UP IN MY WORKPLACE/PROFESSIONAL LIFE	GENDERED?
Coercive Power <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Punishment to deter actions			
Reward Power <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Rewards for desired behavior			
Formal Power <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Title and role confer power			
Connection Power <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Relationships and access			
Referent <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Well-liked and believed			
Informational <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Have information that can be useful			
Expert Power <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Training and skills			

PROMPTS FOR GENDER/POWER MINDMAP EXERCISE (YOU MAY COLOR OUTSIDE THE LINES)

- Where did you find that you perceive power to have an association with gender?
- How does power show up differently for men, women, nonbinary persons?
- Think about the different forms of power and consider which types are most susceptible to misuse in the workplace, and how that shows up.
 - Are there, in your experiences, gendered forms of misuse of power?
- How do stereotypes affect our perceptions of power?
- In organizations that are not diverse based on gender, are the issues and challenges around power different than those that are?

PRESENTATION NOTES: