



## TRANSCRIPT

### Episode # 1: Getting Comfortable with Your Power

Well, hi there, everyone—here we are in Episode #1, and let's start talking power!

In future episodes, we'll be exploring the power skills of influence, persuasion and presence. These are the skills you'll want to master in order to move your ideas forward and increase your win rate.

But today, let's talk about power itself. What is power anyway? And how do you become comfortable with it?

These are smart questions to ask ourselves. We get a lot of confusing signals about power. Understanding what it is and then getting comfortable with it can be a hard thing to do when there are so many unhelpful thoughts and ideas floating around about it.

For example, I had one leader who I was coaching say to me, “I want to be a leader, but I don’t want power. I’ve seen the people who want power, and I don’t want to be anything like them.” That’s an example of one unhelpful idea.... that power is distasteful and that it corrupts the people who seek it.

And I had another leader say to me, “I never have to work hard at influencing and persuading people. My inner power and confidence are all that I need.” That’s an illustration of another unhelpful idea---that power is just another form of self-confidence. When you have that belief, you don’t think of power as a skill set.... as something that you can grow and acquire. Instead, you see it as a matter of identity. It’s something that you either have or that you don’t, like self-confidence.

All these conflicting ideas kind of leave us stuck, don’t they?

We instinctively know that if we want to have influence and impact in our careers, we need to have some degree of power. As a rule, if you’re powerless, you don’t have much impact on what’s happening, right?

But we’re surrounded by people who either tell us power is a bad thing or instead they tell us that all we have to do is be “confident.”

So how do we get unstuck from these confusing messages? How do we develop an idea of power that's useful and also accessible to all of us?

Well, I'm a bit of a word geek, so whenever I see a situation where there are a lot of conflicting thoughts and ideas, I ask myself "Where did that word come from? What's its origin?" Sometimes when we look back to how something started, we can get a lot clearer on what it means for us today.

So, I decided to explore the origin of the word "power," and it turns out that in Latin, the word for power is "potencia." Now, it's not often that in a business podcast you hear the host talking about ancient Rome! But bear with me a moment, and I think you'll find this particular detour interesting.

To the Romans, the word "potencia" didn't equal command and control, the way we often think of power in the work world and elsewhere. In fact, the word didn't have any inherent negativity to it. It wasn't a bad thing. Instead, it was a neutral thing. Potencia simply meant the ability to get things accomplished.

So, think about that...the ability to get things accomplished. That's neither bad nor good. It just is.

But there's even more, and this is the really cool part. It created a real light bulb moment for me. I suddenly had more insight.

The word "potencia" ---in other words, the Latin word for power... created other words for us, and those words are pretty positive concepts in our lives.

For example, the word "potencia" led to the English word "potential." And potential means "having the capacity to become or develop into something in the future." And the Latin word "potencia" also led to the English word "potent" which mean "having tremendous strength or influence."

So taken together as a cluster of words, we can begin to see a different and a more useful concept of power.

In this concept, power generates things—it brings things into being. It's less about command and control, and more about creation and blossoming.

In fact, we might think about power in the same way that we think about electricity. Electricity has a strength that can be dangerous.... or even destructive.... if not managed wisely.

But electricity also has the strength to energize countless valuable things and to create light, warmth and safety. Electricity "empowers"—its strength makes things happen. And of course, power in the workplace does the very same thing.

When you have it, you can make things happen. You can create value that wasn't there before.

And when you don't have power? Well, you may be competent and skillful at your job. But you won't have much of an ability to make things happen. Your voice won't count for much when the decisions get made.... even if you're smart and capable. Even when you have a great title or degree.

So, let's bring this all back to you. The purpose of today's episode is to start you on an exciting journey, a journey where you begin to get comfortable with your own power and grow it. The farther you go on that journey, the more you'll increase your win rate and accelerate your career.

And to begin that journey, here are 3 things I'd like you to think about.

First, if you want to move your ideas forward.... to bring them from a quiet place inside your head into the hustle, bustle, and complexity of a real-life organization.... you need the ability to get this done.

You need power. You need to cultivate it. You need to embrace the concept of empowerment. And the first person who needs to be empowered is you. You can't empower other people if you have no power of your own.

So, it's important that you consciously accept this and intentionally think about it if you want to make a meaningful difference in the workplace and the world.

Secondly, how powerful you become...how effective you are in making things happen and getting your ideas out in the world.... depends on your skill in growing your power.

In other words, it's not enough to have power. You also need to think about growing it. And the sooner you start growing it, the better. Don't wait until you have a job with a big title. The power skills can be learned and used at any time, and this podcast can be a great resource to you as you do that.

And lastly, remember that power itself is neutral—it's neither inherently good or inherently bad. It's simply the fuel, the energy source, that gets things done. What makes your own power either good or bad, is your intent as you use your power. Are you using your skills to take everyone's needs into account and develop valuable solutions? Then you're likely exercising good power.

On the other hand, are you using your skills to further your own self-interests?  
Well then, you're likely exercising bad power.

Now clearly, I'm in the camp of exercising good intent, and after years of hanging around the C-suites of hundreds of organizations, I actually think most leaders feel the same way. They generally don't have bad intent when they exercise power.

Does that mean they always exercise their power well? Of course not. Some do an excellent job of that.... and others do not. But often poor use of power comes from lack of skill, not lack of good intent.

Sooooo, my friends, there you have it.....3 thoughts about power to get you started on your journey.

Now here is my wish for you, especially if you have good ideas that will make a difference in your organization.... or even in the wider world.

Get comfortable with having power and in earning even more of it. Come to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of it. Embrace your potencia.... your power to make things happen, and to bring great ideas and concepts into being.

And cultivate your skills so that you have the impact that you were always meant to have.

Think about that.... without a doubt, you have the potential to bring about valuable change in your organization. Change that could make things better for many people.

And I.....for one.....can't wait to see what you accomplish!

All right, everyone, it's been great spending time with you in this first episode of Mastering the Power Skills, and I'll see you in our next episode!

We're celebrating the launch of the podcast here, and I'd like to include you.

I'm going to be giving away AirPods Pro to five lucky listeners who follow, rate, and review the show. Now, of course, you don't have to give the show five stars, although that would be awesome and I do hope you love what you've heard so far. But I'd also love your honest opinion and feedback as well as your questions so I can create a show that's a valuable resource for you.

So visit [significagroup.com/podcastlaunch](https://significagroup.com/podcastlaunch) to learn more about the contest and how to enter and I'll be announcing the winners on the show in an upcoming episode.



Thanks for listening to this episode of Mastering The Power Skills. If you like what was offered in today's show and want more insights and resources from Kathy, check us out at [www.significagroup.com](http://www.significagroup.com).