

“I am the Best”:

Effects of Influence Tactics and Power Bases on Powerholders' Self- and Target-Evaluations

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August 23rd 2008: Submitted for publication to Group Processes & Intergroup Relations

April 27th 2009: Submission of the first revision

May 21st 2009: Accepted for publication

Dr. Ulrich Klocke

Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin

Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences II

Institute of Psychology

Organizational and Social Psychology

Rudower Chaussee 18

10099 Berlin

Germany

Phone: +49-30-2093-9335

Fax: +49-30-2093-9332

Email: klocke@rz.hu-berlin.de

<https://www.psychology.hu-berlin.de/staff/57490>

Author Note

The data reported were also presented in the author's doctoral dissertation. Address correspondence (e.g., requests for the detailed experimental material) to Ulrich Klocke, Humboldt-Universität zu Berlin, Institut für Psychologie, 10099 Berlin, Germany, klocke@rz.hu-berlin.de. Thanks are due to Wolfgang Scholl, Katja Rüter, Tobias Schröder, and Carsten Schermuly, who helped to improve this article by providing valuable feedback.

Biographical note

Ulrich Klocke is a researcher at Humboldt University of Berlin, Germany. He is mainly interested in intragroup processes, especially how they are influenced by diversity, dissent, interpersonal liking, and social identity of group members. In addition, he is interested in power, influence, and leadership as well as environmental attitudes and behavior.

Abstract

Influencing others by harsh tactics is more likely to violate justice norms than influencing by soft tactics. Therefore, powerholders are supposed to enhance the self and devalue the targets more to justify harsh influence tactics. These social re-evaluations should also be more likely after influencing with tactics that are incongruent to the powerholders' power base (e.g., harsh tactics based on expert power or soft tactics based on position power). In two experiments with 61 interacting groups, one person in each group was presented as having expert vs. position power and instructed to influence by harsh vs. by soft tactics. As expected, powerholders who influenced by harsh vs. soft tactics enhanced self evaluation (experiment 1) and reduced target evaluation (experiment 2), and powerholders who influenced by incongruent tactics enhanced self evaluation (both experiments).

Keywords

Power, leadership style, social influences, cognitive dissonance, impression formation

“I am the Best”:

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Gaining power over other people is often accompanied by altered perceptions of the self and others. Imagine, for example, that Hannah and Sophie have worked for several years in two different pharma companies. Now they are appointed as managers of project teams entrusted with preparing a decision about the implementation of a new drug. There is a lot of evidence for how Hannah's and Sophie's increased social power might affect how they perceive the other team members and themselves (see below). However, there is not as much evidence on how the specific way in which Hannah and Sophie use their power might affect how they view the other members.

So, *power* as a capacity to influence can be distinguished from *influence* as the actual use of power by specific behavior that changes others' behavior or cognition (e.g., Farmer & Aguinis, 2005; French & Raven, 1959; Keltner, Gruenfeld, & Anderson, 2003; Raven, Schwarzwald, & Koslowsky, 1998; Schwarzwald, Koslowsky, & Agassi, 2001). In organization analysis, a similar distinction was made between the macro-level view on structural positions that provide *potential* power and the micro-level view on behavioral tactics to *use* this power (Brass & Burkhardt, 1993). These behavioral tactics are often categorized into harsh and soft tactics depending on the powerholders' restriction or promotion of the targets' autonomy (Kamada & Fuchigami, 2007; Tepper, Brown, & Hunt, 1993; van Knippenberg & Steensma, 2003; van Knippenberg, van Eijbergen, & Wilke, 1999). *Harsh influence tactics* include pressure, assertiveness, coalition, legitimating, and blocking. *Soft influence tactics* include rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, ingratiation, or consultation. For example, when Hannah leads the team meetings, she overwhelms the other members with information biased in favor of a quick implementation. She ignores or interrupts skeptical remarks by the others, and finally presents a project report to the top management that comprises her own initial opinion enriched with some additional supportive

arguments. Sophie, on the other hand, starts the meeting by gathering all issues that group members consider important and ensures that enough time is available for all of them. She encourages everyone on the team to express his or her views and arguments and explains her own position factually. Finally, she tries to find a solution integrating everyone's perspectives and presents it to the top management. Hannah has used harsh influence tactics, as she has restricted the other members' autonomy. Sophie has used soft influence tactics, as she has promoted the other members' autonomy. In this article, it is expected that Hannah evaluates the other members less favorably and herself more favorably in the end than Sophie because these social re-evaluations can justify her use of harsh tactics.

Whereas influence can be classified with regard to the behavioral tactics used, power can be classified with regard to the source on which it is based. This article analyzes two different *power bases*: superior knowledge or skills (*expert power*) and formal rules which legitimize influence (*position power*). Sometimes, the terms *base* and *tactic* or *technique* are used interchangeable (e.g., Schwarzwald, Koslowsky, & Ochana-Levin, 2004). However, this article follows the position of Raven et al. (1998) that "power sources or bases differ from influence techniques as the former refer to the potential and the latter to the actual use of the power" (p. 307). For example, Hannah's and Sophie's power might be based on their expertise or on their position as a project manager. It is possible that they were asked to lead the team meetings because they are the most competent on the team (expert power) but without legitimizing them to make decisions on their own or tell the other members what to do. On the other hand, they might have no more knowledge about the new drug than the other members but be legitimized by their companies to decide how the team should proceed, who should do what, and what should be presented to the top management (position power). In this article, it is expected that Hannah evaluates the other members less favorably and herself more favorably than Sophie does, especially when her power is based on expertise instead of

position because harsh tactics are incongruent with expert power and thus provoke even more need for justifications.

Power Differences

A great deal of research suggests that powerful people tend towards more enhancement of the self or the ingroup and devaluation or stereotyping of other people or outgroups than powerless people (Brauer & Bourhis, 2006; Georgesén & Harris, 1998; Goodwin, Gubin, Fiske, & Yzerbit, 2000; Richeson & Ambady, 2003; Rodriguez-Bailon, Moya, & Yzerbyt, 2000). However, most studies on social information processing by powerful vs. powerless people either do not analyze the way in which powerholders actually use their power, i.e., how they influence the targets (Georgesén & Harris, 2000; Goodwin et al., 2000, study 1 and 2; Overbeck & Park, 2001), or fail to give powerful participants the possibility to use their power (Chen, Ybarra, & Kiefer, 2004; Goodwin et al., 2000, study 3 and 4; Richeson & Ambady, 2003; Rodriguez-Bailon et al., 2000). However, the actual or imagined way of power use might have an important impact on the evaluation of self and targets.

Harsh and Soft Influence Tactics

Social re-evaluations following power use can be considered as a strategy to justify the selected influence tactic. Restricting the targets' autonomy by using harsh influence tactics is more likely to be perceived as unjust than promoting the targets' autonomy by using soft tactics. Most people internalized justice principles like equity, equality, or need (Ross & Miller, 2002). Disregarding these justice principles voluntarily should lead to cognitive dissonance (Festinger, 1957) accompanied by a feeling of uneasiness. Someone who has used harsh influence tactics has usually disregarded one or more principles of justice and is therefore more likely to experience guilt than someone who has used soft influence tactics. In order to reduce the aversive experience of cognitive dissonance, cognitions can be generated

that justify the chosen means of influence. These justifying cognitions can take on a variety of different forms and often pertain to the evaluations of the self or the targets:

1. *Self-enhancement*: After realizing that she has often interrupted the other team members, Hannah might justify herself by emphasizing her outstanding organizational skills: “Even when I was at school, everybody wanted me to be the class speaker.”
2. *Devaluation of the targets*: Hannah might also justify herself by devaluing their targets’ ability or motivation to reach an acceptable agreement: “They are unable to understand organizational requirements, and they are too much preoccupied with their department’s interests.”

This argumentation is similar to that of Goodwin et al. (2000) for *stereotyping by design* (the powerholder’s attention to stereotype-consistent information about the target): “When powerful people negatively stereotype their subordinates, it justifies their own positions of control” (p. 230). One new assumption is that the degree of the powerholders’ target devaluation depends on the way in which they use their power or how they imagine or plan to use it. Hannah, who has used harsh tactics, is more likely to react with cognitive dissonance and thus to create justifications than Sophie, who has used soft tactics.

There is some correlational evidence to support this assumption: Kipnis and colleagues (Kipnis, 1974, 1976; Kipnis, Schmidt, Price, & Stitt, 1981) showed that harsh influence tactics are related to more self-enhancement and devaluation of the target than soft influence tactics. However, Kipnis et al. (1981) found no significant *experimental effect* of their independent variable leadership style on employee evaluation but a negative *correlation* between their mediator variable influence tactics and employee evaluation. Thus, it is also possible that other factors, e.g., a subjective leadership theory X vs. Y (McGregor, 1960), had an effect on both influence tactic and employee evaluation and thus was responsible for the relationship.

Some studies on the effect of power differences on stereotyping indirectly suggest that the (imagined) influence tactic might be an important moderating variable. Power effects disappear if social responsibility values are primed in advance (Goodwin et al., 2000) or if power is perceived as legitimate (Rodriguez-Bailon et al., 2000). Responsibility values should enhance the likelihood that powerholders use or imagine using soft instead of harsh influence tactics. Using soft instead of harsh tactics is one way of increasing the legitimacy of power. Other studies have analyzed the effects of observing another person suffering, e.g., by receiving electric shocks in a “learning experiment,” on the evaluation of this person. Even in these situations in which people are mere observers and not actors, they tend to devalue the victim (Lerner & Simmons, 1966), especially when they feel responsible (Cialdini, Kenrick, & Hoerig, 1976; Glass, 1964; Grant & Ross, 1974; Walster, Berscheid, & Walster, 1973, for a review), or take the perspective of the responsible person (Chaikin & Darley, 1973). Actively restricting a target’s autonomy by using harsh influence tactics as a powerholder is likely accompanied by feeling responsible for negative consequences of the target and should therefore provoke justifications. Thus, these studies also support the first hypothesis:

Hypothesis 1: Having influenced with harsh tactics, powerholders are more likely to enhance self evaluation and reduce target evaluation than if they had influenced with soft tactics.

However, to permit a detailed investigation of power in use, it is also necessary to analyze the source on which power is based: Why is the powerholder capable of influencing the target?

Influence Tactics and Power Bases

In order to facilitate a more detailed analysis of power as the capacity to influence, taxonomies of different sources or bases of social power have been developed. Probably the most widely known taxonomy is that of French and Raven (1959), extended by Raven, Schwarzwald, and Koslowsky (1998), who distinguish among eleven power bases. Factor

analyses on these eleven bases often yield a two-factor solution with the first factor indicating the harshness and the second factor indicating the softness of the power bases (Elias & Loomis, 2004; Erchul, Raven, & Ray, 2001; Raven et al., 1998; Schwarzwald, Koslowsky, & Allouf, 2005). Five power bases load predominantly on the harshness factor: impersonal coercive, personal coercive, impersonal reward, legitimate reciprocity, and legitimate equity. Four power bases load predominantly on the softness factor: informational, expert, referent, and legitimate dependence. Two power bases load on both factors with comparable size: Position and personal reward. There is no deterministic relationship between certain power bases and certain influence tactics (Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1990), i.e., powerholders do not always use their power and they can use each base by different tactics. However, it is more likely that powerholders apply influence tactics that are congruent with their power base (Blickle & Hepperle, 1999; Brass & Burkhardt, 1993; Hinkin & Schriesheim, 1990; Kapoor & Ansari, 1988; Lines, 2007): Harsh tactics, e.g., pressure, are more likely for people with harsh bases, e.g., coercive power. Soft tactics, e.g., rational persuasion, are more likely for people with soft bases, e.g., expert power. This relation between influence tactics and power bases should affect the expectation by targets, observers, and powerholders themselves of what tactics actually will be and should be used. Powerholders are expected to use influence tactics that are congruent with their power base and to refrain from influence tactics that are incongruent.

This article focuses on two power bases: *expert power* as the capacity to influence the targets because they attribute knowledge or skills to the powerholder, and *position power* as the capacity to influence on the basis of (organizational) rules which are accepted by the targets and legitimize the powerholder to determine their behavior. These bases were selected because of their practical relevance in organizations. Expertise is an important power base in multifunctional project teams. Position power is the main power base in which superiors or company owners differ from their subordinates. Both bases can be used either to restrict or

promote the targets' autonomy, as we have seen in the initial examples of Hannah and Sophie: i.e., they can be used to apply harsh or soft tactics. However, expert power predominantly loads on the softness factor whereas position power loads on both factors equally. Thus, team members with expert power are expected to choose soft tactics more frequently than team members with position power, e.g., to convince the other members that their suggestions are beneficial (rational persuasion) or to ask the others for their suggestions and discuss them in the group (consultation). Team members with position power are expected to choose harsh tactics more frequently than team members with expert power, e.g., to stick to their views (assertiveness) or attain organizational goals even against the resistance of the others (blocking). Powerholders who have used influence tactics that are incongruent with these expectations can be supposed to experience cognitive dissonance just as powerholders who have used harsh influence tactics (see above) because they perceive a discrepancy between their own behavior and the expectations of their targets, observers, or themselves. Dissonance due to incongruent influence tactics might be reduced by social re-evaluations as well. Affirming other personal qualities of the self can compensate for behavior which is incongruent with self expectations (Sherman, Cohen, & Zanna, 2006; Steele, 1988). Devaluing the targets might be a cognitive strategy to trivialize behavior that is incongruent with target expectations. This leads to the assumption of an interaction effect between influence tactics and power base on the evaluations of the self and the targets:

Hypothesis 2: Having influenced with incongruent tactics (harsh tactics with expert power or soft tactics with position power), powerholders are more likely to enhance self evaluation and reduce target evaluation than if they had influenced with congruent tactics.

Overview of the Present Studies

Existing research on powerholders' social evaluations has predominantly focused on the effects of power differences between powerholders and the target people. This article

shifts the focus away from the mere power difference to the way the power is used (influence tactics) and the source on which the power is based (power base). It answers the question whether harsh influence tactics (i.e., using power to restrict the targets' autonomy) lead to more self enhancement and devaluation of the targets than soft influence tactics (i.e., using power to promote the targets' autonomy). In addition, it answers the question whether influence tactics that are incongruent with the powerholders' power base lead to more self-enhancement and devaluation of the targets than a congruent influence tactics. So, as demanded by Yukl (2002), this article analyzes not only the main effect of influence tactics but also the interaction effect of influence tactics and power base.

These effects were studied at Humboldt University of Berlin (Germany) by two experiments with face-to-face interacting groups of three or four members. Influence tactics (harsh vs. soft) were manipulated by instructions to one member (the powerholder) and an announcement of behavioral feedback. Power base (expert vs. position) was manipulated by instructions and role assignments to all group members. In the second experiment the experimental manipulations were strengthened, e.g., by also announcing a compensation depending on successful behavior implementation. After the groups managed a fictitious shirt factory for one hour, powerholders were asked about the thoughts and beliefs they had during the group task to assess self and target evaluations.

Experiment 1

Method

Participants and Design

Experiment 1 analyzed 109 participants divided into 30 mixed-gender groups of three or four members. One group was excluded from the analysis because one of its members was disruptive throughout questionnaire completion. Eighty-four percent of the participants were university students from various disciplines (6% from psychology), with the remaining 16% already having completed their studies. Fifty percent were female and 50% male. The mean

age was 26.8 years ($SD = 4.5$). The experiment was advertised as an Assessment Center exercise with the possibility of receiving feedback on performance and behavior (e.g., assertiveness and cooperativeness). In addition, 300 euros were promised for the best group. The experiment employed a two (power base: expert vs. position) by two (influence tactics: harsh vs. soft) between-groups design.

Procedure

Four people were invited to participate in each experimental session. If one participant failed to arrive, the experiment was carried out with a group of three. Groups were randomly assigned to the experimental conditions. At the beginning of the session, participants could get acquainted with each other. After this, two scales of the WILDE Intelligence Test (Jäger & Althoff, 1983) were administered. Participants were then asked to sit around a table in the middle of the room for the first round of the group task. Afterwards, participants were separated, pretests of the dependent measures (social evaluations and other variables not reported here) were administered via questionnaires, and participants were given the first break. Subsequently, independent variables were manipulated via role instruction, and participants were asked to perform the second round of the group task. Following this, the post-tests of the dependent measures were assessed, interrupted by the second break. Finally, the purpose of the research was explained to the participants, and they received feedback on their performance and behavior if desired. In total, the experiment lasted for approximately four hours.

Group task. The group task was to manage a computer-simulated shirt factory, the *Schneiderwerkstatt* (Süß & Faulhaber, 1990). Groups were requested to maximize the capital of the company with a set of twelve possible interventions (input variables), including the purchase of sewing machines, hiring or firing workers, changing advertising expenditures, etc. After each simulated month, they saw the results of their actions on different output variables: capital, demand, clothes in stock, motivation of workers, etc. Before the groups

began to manage the shirt factory on their own, the experimenter explained the task, and the groups performed two simulated months with standardized interventions for practice purposes. The groups performed two different rounds of the shirt factory on their own. The first round with three simulated months was performed in fifteen minutes before the experimental manipulations. The second round with twelve simulated months and new starting values was performed in one hour after the experimental manipulations.

Selection of the powerholders. To enhance the probability of social influence, one person in each group was selected as the powerholder on the basis of cognitive ability and dominance as the most important individual power resource. The selection procedure was the same in each experimental condition. Therefore, personal variables were not confounded with the independent variables. Since powerholders were selected on criteria which also characterize organizational leaders (Judge, Colbert, & Ilies, 2004; Lord, de Vader, & Alliger, 1986), this procedure should enhance ecological validity. *Cognitive ability* was assessed on the basis of the score on a task knowledge pretest (13 items from a knowledge test about the shirt factory, Kersting, 1991; Kersting & Süß, 1995) and two scales of the WILDE Intelligence Test (Jäger & Althoff, 1983) aimed to measure reasoning with numerical material. *Dominance* was assessed by measuring the proportion of time each participant spoke during the first round of the shirt factory and by asking the participants to estimate each other's assertiveness on a five-point scale. Within the constructs dominance and cognitive ability, the indicators were added. Because standard deviations were not known in advance for every variable, they were estimated, and variables were transformed in order to have comparable standard deviations. To calculate a power score for each member, dominance and cognitive ability were multiplied. This multiplicative aggregation was used instead of an additive aggregation to prevent that participants were chosen as powerholders that were either very dominant but incompetent or very competent but submissive. Because both variables were multiplied, participants needed high scores on both variables in order to be selected.

Within each group, the most powerful person was chosen and was given special instructions (see below).

Manipulation of the power base. The experimenter asked the participants to sit at separate tables and gave them enough time to read their role instructions for the second round of the shirt factory. Instructions were the same for all members with regard to the manipulation of power base.

In the expert condition, the shirt factory was introduced as being owned by all three or four members of the group, meaning that everyone had the same rights. The person selected as the powerholder was introduced as the one with the best abilities to manage the shirt factory. The selection was explained as being based on the highest score in the performance tests (task knowledge and intelligence subscales) and the quality of the contributions in the first group session. Each owner of the company was expected to implement the group decisions using the computer keyboard for three or four months ($3 \times 4 = 12$ months in total).

In the position condition, powerholders were introduced as the owners of the company and the targets as their employees. They were allowed to delegate tasks and make decisions on their own if desired. They had the computer keyboard for all 12 simulated months in order to be able to implement their decisions.

Manipulation of the influence tactics. All the instructions concerning influence tactics were given only to the powerholders, not to the targets. In the harsh condition, powerholders were requested to impose their preference of what to discuss and how to handle the system even against the targets' wishes. They were told to interrupt others, to stop fruitless discussions, and to take vigorous action if they considered it necessary. In the soft condition, powerholders were requested to consider the targets' interests and suggestions. They were told to let the group discuss their ideas, ask for suggestions and try to understand them, ensure each member's full participation, and integrate suggestions in a solution accepted by every member. In the harsh condition, the requested behavior was attributed to time restrictions

(which were also mentioned in the soft condition but not as an attribution). In the soft condition, the requested behavior was explained as providing the possibility to gain from the suggestions of the others. These behavior examples and explanations were necessary to ensure enough capacity and motivation for a realistic implementation of the two types of influence tactics. Furthermore, the powerholders were told that feedback on the correct implementation of the requested behavior would be provided at the end of the experiment.

Dependent Measures

Participants were requested to estimate their degree of approval to a set of propositions (see below) on five-point scales: 1 = *not at all*, 2 = *hardly*, 3 = *medium*, 4 = *mainly*, 5 = *completely*. Factor analyses and reliability analyses were carried out with individual-level data. All other analyses were carried out on the group level to cope with the problem of non-independence within groups (Kenny, Kashy, & Bolger, 1998; Kenny, Mannetti, Pierro, Livi, & Kashy, 2002).

Manipulation check variables. After the second round of the shirt factory, targets received descriptions of harsh and soft influence tactics by providing the same behavioral examples as in the role instructions for the powerholder. The targets were asked to what degree the powerholder used the two types of influence tactics during the group task.

Perceived harsh and soft influence tactics were assessed by four items each.

Cronbach's α was .84 for *perceived harsh influence tactics* and .80 for *perceived soft*

influence tactics. To assess the perceived power bases, targets were asked why the powerholder had influenced them with items adapted from the Interpersonal Power Inventory (Raven et al., 1998). *Perceived expert power* was measured with two items

(Cronbach's $\alpha = .73$) and *perceived position power* with three items (Cronbach's $\alpha = .73$).

Social evaluations. The powerholders were asked to write down their thoughts and feelings during the group task in order to recall them in as much detail as possible. This open question was followed by a presentation of 21 items with possible thoughts and beliefs they

might have experienced and a request to estimate their degree of agreement with them. The 11 items which included evaluations of self or targets were factor analyzed (principal component analysis) with oblimin rotation. Factor analysis was based on the data of experiments 1 and 2 (see below) to have comparable scales. Based on the Scree plot, a two-factor solution was selected, explaining 47.6% of total variance. A factor loading of .55 was accepted as the minimal score, and a minimal difference of .15 to the next lower loading was stipulated. The items of the first factor measured a high evaluation of powerholders' own competence together with a low evaluation of the targets' competence (see Table 1). Thus, the scale was labeled *superiority*. The items of the second factor measured a high evaluation of targets' competence. Thus, the scale was labeled *appreciation*. To have a pre-measure as a covariate, social evaluations were also measured after the first round of the shirt factory but with fewer items (as suggested by Maxwell, 1994).

Table 1 about here

Results

In order to reduce error variance, the following pre-assessed variables were considered as potential covariates: powerholder's cognitive ability, mean of targets' cognitive ability, powerholder's dominance, powerholder's friendliness perceived by the targets (one five-point item), powerholder's thoughts of superiority, mean age of group members, group size (three or four members), sex of the powerholder, and proportion of female targets. In each analysis, covariates were excluded when they did not explain the dependent variable with $p < .20$. When specified hypotheses or the success of the experimental manipulations were tested, the presented p-values refer to one-tailed tests of planned contrasts.

Preliminary Analyses

Distributions and outliers. After a reflect-and-inverse transformation of one skewed variable (Tabachnik & Fidell, 1989), all variables had skewnesses with values lower than 0.80, were normally distributed ($p > .10$ in all Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests), and had no

outliers outside $M \pm 3 SD$. There were no multivariate outliers in any of the following analyses (all Cook's distances were below .40).

Manipulation checks. To determine whether the experimental manipulations were perceived by the targets, analyses of covariance were performed with the four manipulation check variables as dependent variables and power base as well as influence tactics as independent variables. The experimental manipulations had no significant effects on the targets' perception of harsh or soft influence tactics (in all cases $p \geq .14$ and $\eta^2 \leq .11$). However, there was a tendency for the targets to perceive more soft influence tactics in the soft condition ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 0.45$) than in the harsh condition ($M = 3.42$, $SD = 0.66$), $F(1, 25) = 1.07$, $\eta^2 = .04$, $p = .155$. With regard to the manipulation check of power base, as intended, the targets perceived the powerholders to have more expert power in the expert condition ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.51$) than in the position condition ($M = 3.02$, $SD = 0.67$), $F(1, 25) = 1.74$, $\eta^2 = .07$, $p < .10$, and to have more position power in the position condition ($M = 2.46$, $SD = 0.72$) than in the expert condition ($M = 2.04$, $SD = 0.65$), $F(1, 24) = 3.69$, $\eta^2 = .13$, $p < .05$. No other effects on the perception of power bases emerged (all other p 's $\geq .12$ and η^2 's $\leq .10$).

In sum, whereas the manipulation of power base was successful, the success of the tactic manipulation is unclear: The instruction of the powerholders to influence by harsh vs. soft tactics was hardly perceived by the targets. This means either that there was no difference in the powerholders' behavior or that the difference was too subtle to be perceived by the targets.

Confounding variables. The four experimental conditions were comparable with regard to the group's proportion of female targets, group size, mutual acquaintance (participants usually did not know each other), and subject of study ($p > .280$ in all cases). Powerholders' sex was accidentally confounded with the experimental condition ($\phi = .48$, $p <$

.10). However, this was minimized by including it as a covariate when it influenced the dependent variable with $p < .20$. No participant was able to guess the purpose of the research.

Hypothesis Testing

It is proposed in hypothesis 1 that powerholders are more prone to justify harsh influence tactics than soft ones by enhancing the self and devaluing the targets (main effect of influence tactics). Hypothesis 2 states that they enhance the self and devalue the targets more after influencing with tactics that are incongruent with their power base (interaction effect of influence tactics and power base). The results provide mixed evidence for such social re-evaluations after harsh influence tactics and clear evidence for social re-evaluations after incongruent influence tactics. To test the hypotheses, two analyses of covariance were performed with superiority and appreciation as dependent variables and influence tactics and power base as independent variables (see Figure 1). In line with hypothesis 1, a main effect of influence tactics on *superiority* emerged. Harsh powerholders reported more thoughts and beliefs during the group task that were characterized by their superiority ($M = 2.40$, $SD = 0.58$) than soft powerholders ($M = 2.28$, $SD = 0.68$). In line with hypothesis 2, this main effect was qualified by an interaction effect with power base. The effect only emerged for powerholders with expert power (harsh: $M = 2.69$, $SD = 0.50$; soft: $M = 2.23$, $SD = 0.86$), $F(1, 20) = 8.58$, $\eta^2 = .30$, $p < .01$. For powerholders with position power, there was a tendency for more superiority after soft influence tactics ($M = 2.34$, $SD = 0.46$) than after harsh tactics ($M = 2.15$, $SD = 0.54$), $F(1, 20) = 1.34$, $\eta^2 = .06$, two-tailed $p = .262$. For the second dependent variable *appreciation*, a marginally significant interaction effect of influence tactics and power base could be found as well. As expected in hypothesis 2, for powerholders with expert power, there was a tendency to report fewer appreciating thoughts and beliefs when they had influenced by harsh tactics ($M = 3.24$, $SD = 0.46$) than when they had influenced by soft tactics ($M = 3.63$, $SD = 1.00$), $F(1, 24) = 1.57$, $\eta^2 = .06$, $p = .111$. For powerholders with position power, there was no difference, $F(1, 24) = 0.83$, $\eta^2 = .03$.

Figure 1 about here*Discussion*

Experiment 1 provided evidence that powerholders justify their influence tactics predominantly when it is not congruent with the power base they are relying on. Specifically, they react with more superior and less appreciating thoughts towards the targets when they have used expert power to restrict their targets' autonomy instead of promote their autonomy. When they have used position power, no significant effects of influence tactics emerged. Experts are expected to influence by soft tactics like rational persuasion or consultation. People with position power, e.g., company owners or supervisors, are expected to influence by harsh tactics like pressure or blocking at least sometimes. Thus, powerholders with expert power experience more cognitive dissonance after harsh influence tactics than powerholders with position power. Creating a belief of their own outstanding competence (superiority) and the incompetence of the targets (less appreciation) is a successful cognitive strategy to reduce this dissonance.

Whereas the experimental manipulation of the two power bases was clearly perceived by the targets, the manipulation of the two types of influence tactics was hardly perceived by them. However, the significant effects on the powerholders' cognitive reactions suggest that the powerholders perceived their own behavior towards the targets differently in both conditions. These behavioral differences were not big enough to be perceived by the targets. It is possible that harsh influence tactics only reduce target evaluation when the powerholders realize that their targets have perceived them. When powerholders do not see their targets suffering by the restriction of their autonomy, there is no need for justification by devaluing them. Therefore, a follow-up experiment was designed in which the experimental manipulations were strengthened. This second experiment was aimed at replicating the effects of incongruent influence tactics on powerholders' evaluations of the self and the targets. In addition, it examined whether restricting the targets' autonomy by harsh influence tactics

reduces appreciation of the targets' performance when this restriction is perceived by the targets.

Experiment 2

Method

Participants and Design

Experiment 2 analyzed 109 participants divided into 31 mixed-gender groups of three or four members. One group was excluded from the analysis because the member selected as a powerholder (see below) did not come to the experiment. Eighty percent of the participants were university students from various disciplines (16% from psychology), with the remaining 18% having already completed their studies. Fifty-eight percent were female and 42% male. The mean age was 27.0 years (SD = 5.2). The experiment was advertised as an Assessment Center exercise with the possibility of receiving feedback. Depending on their performance, participants received different numbers of tickets in a draw for 300 euros. As in experiment 1, the experiment employed a two (power base: expert vs. position) by two (influence tactics: harsh vs. soft) between-groups design.

Procedure

The procedure differed from experiment 1 only as follows: Before participants were invited to the experiment, they received a pre-questionnaire by e-mail or mail aimed at selecting one member per group as the powerholder.

Selection of the powerholders. As in experiment 1, the procedure of selecting the powerholders was the same in each experimental condition so that person variables were not confounded with the independent variables and the design was clearly experimental. To enhance the likelihood that the powerholders used their power as instructed, participants with the highest individual power scores in the pre-questionnaires were selected from a larger pool. The individual power scores were calculated as the product of four variables: (a) final school grade (Abitur - university entrance exam) and last school grade received in mathematics, (b)

leadership experience and attitude, (c) propensity for influencing with harsh tactics, and (d) propensity for influencing with soft tactics.

The school grades were transformed in a way that ensured a comparable relation of standard deviation to mean value of the four variables (which is important for multiplying variables). *Leadership experience* was measured by 12 items (e.g., by asking participants if they had taken a leadership role at the university, in a club, at their job, etc.). *Leadership attitude* was measured by four items (adapted from Kolb, 1999), e.g., “In a group, I prefer to let other members decide” (reversed). *Propensity for influence* was measured by presenting four fictitious social conflict situations and asking about the likelihood of different behavior, e.g., “I disrupt the others” (*harsh influence tactics*: 10 items) or “I explain my position and ask the others what they think about it” (*soft influence tactics*: 12 items). Only males were selected in order to reduce error variance and because males were more likely to emerge as leaders, especially in task-oriented short-term groups (Eagly & Karau, 1991, 2002).

Manipulation of the power base. To strengthen the experimental manipulations, some additional interventions were taken compared to experiment 1: In the expert condition, powerholders were given a text with important information on how to manage the shirt factory. Before the first break, they had fifteen minutes to read the text and make notes. It is likely that this text influenced not only powerholders' expert power but also their actual expertise. However, a correlation of expertise and expert power is realistic, and it is not problematic for internal validity because no hypotheses on the *main effects* of power base are tested here.

Whereas in experiment 1 only the best group earned 300 euros, in experiment 2 raffle tickets were distributed depending on group performance. In the expert power condition, the distribution was the same for each participant. In the position power condition, the compensation for the powerholder (owner) depended on group performance in a linear fashion, while the targets (employees) received a constant salary plus a bonus if the capital of

the shirt factory was above average at the end of the simulation. The different reward systems in both power base conditions were supposed to enhance the credibility of the simulated situation and thus the ecological validity of the experiment.

Manipulation of the influence tactics. In experiment 2, the manipulation of influence tactics was strengthened by informing powerholders about additional raffle tickets distributed depending on how convincingly the instructions were represented. These tickets were distributed for every group member, but powerholders were not allowed to talk about it before the end of the experiment.

Dependent Measures

Powerholders' social evaluations were measured as in experiment 1. In order to enhance test power for checking the manipulations, the scales to measure the perceived power bases were extended by one item each (Cronbach's α of *perceived position power*: .87 and of *perceived expert power*: .58). To have an appropriate pre-measure for the perceived power bases, both were also assessed after the first round of the shirt factory. The pre-measures of the perceived influence tactics, perceived dominance, and friendliness were extended by two adjectives each (Cronbach's α of *dominance*: .69 and of *friendliness*: .81). For *perceived harsh influence tactics*, Cronbach's α was .85, and for *perceived soft influence tactics*, it was .70.

Results

The same variables as in experiment 1 and the two pre-measures of the perceived power bases were considered as potential covariates but excluded when they did not explain the dependent variable with $p < .20$. The measurement of the covariates on cognitive ability was improved by including final school grade and last school grade received in mathematics. The measurement of powerholder's dominance was improved by including their leadership experience and attitude. As in experiment 1, tests were usually one-tailed.

Preliminary Analyses

Distributions and outliers. After a logarithm transformation of one skewed variable (Tabachnik & Fidell, 1989), all variables had skewnesses with values lower than 0.81, were normally distributed ($p > .20$ in all Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests), and had no outliers outside $M \pm 3 SD$. There were no multivariate outliers in any of the following analyses (all Cook's distances were below .46).

Manipulation checks. As intended, the targets perceived more harsh influence tactics in the harsh condition ($M = 2.66, SD = 0.63$) than in the soft condition ($M = 2.08, SD = 0.62$), $F(1, 22) = 3.36, \eta^2 = .13, p < .05$, and there was a tendency to perceive more soft influence tactics in the soft condition ($M = 3.75, SD = 0.43$) than in the harsh condition ($M = 3.69, SD = 0.63$), $F(1, 24) = 1.66, \eta^2 = .06, p = .105$. In addition, more soft influence tactics were perceived in the expert condition ($M = 3.88, SD = 0.39$) than in the position condition ($M = 3.54, SD = 0.60$), $F(1, 24) = 5.79, \eta^2 = .19, p < .05$. No other significant effects on perceived influence tactics emerged ($p \geq .163, \eta^2 \leq .08$). With regard to the manipulation check of power base, as intended, the targets perceived the powerholders to have much more expert power in the expert condition ($M = 3.57, SD = 0.45$) than in the position condition ($M = 2.56, SD = 0.68$), $F(1, 25) = 19.78, \eta^2 = .44, p < .001$, and they perceived them to have more position power in the position condition ($M = 3.06, SD = 0.88$) than in the expert condition ($M = 2.12, SD = 0.47$), $F(1, 24) = 9.12, \eta^2 = .28, p < .01$. No other significant effects on perceived power bases emerged ($p \geq .121, \eta^2 \leq .10$).

In sum, in experiment 2, both manipulations were strengthened. The manipulation of influence tactics had the intended effects on the perception of harsh influence tactics and in tendency on soft influence tactics. The manipulation of power base had the intended effects on the perception of both expert and position power.

Confounding variables. The four experimental conditions were comparable with regard to the groups' proportion of female targets, group size, mutual acquaintance, and

subject of study both for powerholder and targets ($p > .450$ in all cases). No participant was able to guess the purpose of the research before completion of the post-tests.

Hypothesis Testing

The first aim of this experiment was to replicate the evidence for hypothesis 2 that an incongruent use of power enhances powerholders' thoughts of superiority and reduces their appreciation of the targets. The second aim was to find more evidence for hypothesis 1 that powerholders can justify influence restricting the targets' autonomy not only by superior thoughts but also by reducing their appreciation of the targets. The results of experiment 2 fulfilled both aims. To test the hypotheses, two analyses of covariance were performed with superiority and appreciation as dependent variables and influence tactics and power base as independent variables (see Figure 2). On superiority, neither the main effect of influence tactics nor the main effect of power base was significant. However, in agreement with hypothesis 2, the interaction effect found in experiment 1 could be replicated: Powerholders with expert power had more thoughts of superiority when they had influenced by harsh tactics ($M = 2.20, SD = 0.73$) than when they had influenced by soft tactics ($M = 2.18, SD = 0.86$), $F(1, 25) = 2.70, \eta^2 = .10, p < .10$. Powerholders with position power had more thoughts of superiority when they had influence by soft tactics ($M = 2.40, SD = 0.97$) than when they had influenced by harsh tactics ($M = 1.66, SD = 0.56$), $F(1, 25) = 5.12, \eta^2 = .17$, two-tailed $p < .05$. On appreciation, both main effects (influence tactics and power base) were significant: As expected in hypothesis 1, powerholders appreciated the targets' competence more when they had influenced by soft ($M = 4.00, SD = 0.58$) than by harsh tactics ($M = 3.64, SD = 0.72$). In addition, powerholders with expert power appreciated the targets' competence less ($M = 3.65, SD = 0.67$) than powerholders with position power ($M = 4.07, SD = 0.59$). This main effect of power base might be due to the powerholders' perception of their own competence induced by the expert texts they had received in the beginning. No interaction effect emerged.

Figure 2 about here*Discussion*

As intended, the interaction effect of influence tactics and power base on powerholders' thoughts of superiority in experiment 1 could be replicated in experiment 2. This interaction effect supports hypothesis 2, that powerholders who use their power in a way that is not congruent with the expectations regarding their power base are more likely to enhance their self evaluation than powerholders who act compatibly with these expectations. In addition, a main effect of influence tactics on thoughts of target appreciation emerged in experiment 2 that had been missing in experiment 1. This main effect supports hypothesis 1 that powerholders who influence by harsh tactics are more likely to reduce target evaluation than powerholders who influence by soft tactics. Restricting the targets' autonomy violates norms of justice and therefore causes cognitive dissonance in the powerholders, at least when the restriction is perceived by their targets. This dissonance can be reduced by a devaluation of the targets' competence or motivation which justifies making decisions without considering their suggestions. So there is further evidence for both hypotheses.

General Discussion

This article presents two experiments with small groups who managed a fictitious shirt factory in face-to-face interactions. In each group, one member received power over the other members, based either on higher expertise with regard to the task to be solved (expert power), or on the position as a "company owner," which legitimized influencing the targets (position power). In addition, half of the powerholders were instructed to restrict the targets' autonomy by influencing with harsh tactics, whereas the other half were instructed to promote the targets' autonomy by influencing with soft tactics.

Both experiments support the assumption that powerholders' evaluations of themselves and their targets are influenced by the way in which they have used their power. In line with hypothesis 1, having influenced by harsh tactics, powerholders are more likely to

enhance self evaluation (higher superiority in experiment 1) and reduce target evaluation (less appreciation in experiment 2) than having influenced by soft tactics. In line with hypothesis 2, having influenced by tactics incongruent with their power base, powerholders are more likely to enhance self evaluation (more superiority in experiment 1 and 2) and reduce target evaluation (less appreciation in experiment 1) than if they had influenced by congruent tactics.

Whereas position power is more congruent with harsh influence tactics, expert power is more congruent with soft influence tactics. A person with position power is expected to influence more frequently by harsh tactics than a person with expert power. The social role of a company owner or a superior includes pushing through one's own interests or the interests of the organization and overcoming resistance. In contrast, a person with expert power is not viewed as legitimized to restrict the autonomy of others. This can also explain why in the expert power condition of experiment 2, more soft influence tactics were perceived by the targets than in the position power condition. So both hypotheses were supported, in that a harsh *and* incongruent use of power can trigger social re-evaluations. However, both proposed effects were not found on both dependent variables in both experiments. But which social re-evaluation is selected in which situation and why?

Regarding the first hypothesis, harsh influence tactics increased thoughts of one's own superiority in experiment 1, whereas they reduced thoughts of target appreciation in experiment 2. One variation between experiment 1 and 2 is that in experiment 2 the manipulation of influence tactics was strengthened so that the targets perceived the difference between both conditions. This probably means that powerholders focused more strongly on the restriction or promotion of the targets' autonomy and their effect on the targets' reactions. Because of this stronger focus on the targets while the powerholders exercised power, it might be more obvious to also focus on the targets in the powerholders' justifying cognitions than to focus on the own person. If the targets are suffering because they perceive their autonomy to

be restricted, dissonance can more effectively be reduced by devaluing them than by enhancing self-worth (Lerner, 1980).

Regarding the second hypothesis, the interaction effects on superiority were stronger than on appreciation in both experiments. This can be explained by the powerholders' attentional focus as well. When powerholders realize that their influencing behavior is incongruent with their social role, they focus more on their own person than on the targets. It is their own behavior which does not fit expectations rather than the situation of the targets. This threat to self adequacy can more effectively be compensated for by generating thoughts of one's own superior task competence (Sherman et al., 2006; Steele, 1988) than by reducing thoughts of target appreciation. In addition, the interaction effects were stronger in experiment 1 than in experiment 2. In experiment 1, no compensation was promised to the powerholders for restricting vs. promoting the targets' autonomy. It is possible that this lower incentive for instructed behavior enhanced cognitive dissonance and therefore the need to generate further justifications (Festinger & Carlsmith, 1959). In addition, the explanation of the different results on the first hypothesis is also relevant here: The lower instructional emphasis in experiment 1 on how to treat the targets reduced the powerholders' focus on the targets and enhanced their focus on themselves and the adequacy of their behavior. This stronger focus on self adequacy enhanced the effects of incongruent power use in experiment 1. Further research might test these explanations by analyzing whether a priming of self vs. target influences the type of social re-evaluation: self enhancement vs. target devaluation.

Both hypotheses can be explained by cognitive dissonance theory (Festinger, 1957). Powerholders who realize that they have violated principles of justice or influenced others incongruently with expectations are more likely to experience cognitive dissonance. In order to reduce this aversive experience, they actively seek information or generate beliefs that restore their threatened self worth or trivialize their behavior. This information might involve negative stereotypical attributes of the targets (stereotyping by design, Goodwin et al., 2000):

In the present experiments, the predominantly male powerholders might have shown greater attentiveness to behavior of their predominantly female targets fitting classical gender stereotypes regarding women's inferior reasoning and mathematical competences. However, Kipnis et al. (1981) offer another possible explanation: They assume that the powerholders' use of harsh influence tactics is followed by an external attribution of the targets' performance to the powerholders' own influence tactics instead of the free choice of the targets (see also Overbeck, Tiedens, & Brion, 2006). This performance attribution to one's own influence is supposed to result in a devaluation of the targets. One problem with this argumentation is that it leads to a reverse prediction when target performance is below average. A devaluation of the self and not of the targets should result because powerholders' see themselves as responsible for targets' bad performance after using strong means of influence. This is incompatible with the assumption that performance attribution generally mediates the effect of harsh influence tactics on self and target evaluation. Although Kipnis et al. (1981) were able to support their mediation model, their questions for assessing compliance attribution included a pre-assumption of *good* performance. Other studies called into question the effect of influence tactics on attribution of target behavior (Imai, 1994; McFillen, 1978). In addition, it is implausible that an external attribution of targets' performance mediates the effect of influencing by incongruent tactics on self enhancement. Thus, both effects identified in the present experiments can be explained better by the motivation to reduce an aversive state of cognitive dissonance.

However, future research should analyze the mediating process of these social re-evaluations after using power more directly. Cognitive dissonance as aversive arousal might be assessed via physiological measures. As a second possible mediator, attribution of target performance could be assessed via questions that do not pre-assume good performance. In addition, future research might analyze the interaction effect of influence tactics and power bases for other harsh and soft power bases as well. A replication of the interaction effects

identified in the present experiments can strengthen the interpretation that harsh bases generally are more congruent with harsh tactics whereas soft bases generally are more congruent with soft tactics and therefore result in less self enhancement or target devaluation. Finally, the present effects might be analyzed in field studies as well to test the applicability of the theoretical assumptions to real life situations, e.g., when supervisors influence their subordinates. It is possible that power bases and influence tactics have different effects on powerholders' social evaluations in such field settings (Keshet, Kark, Pomerantz-Zorin, Koslowsky, & Schwarzwald, 2006). However, compared to other experiments in the laboratory, the ecological validity of the present study is high: Participants were requested to solve a complex group task with established validity (Jäger, Süß, & Brühl, 1988; Kersting, 1999; Kleinmann & Strauss, 1998) using face-to-face interaction. Group members were highly motivated ($M = 4.4$, $SD = 0.7$, scales from 1 "not at all" to 5 "completely") because the study was advertised as an Assessment Center exercise with the possibility of receiving feedback on individual and team behavior as well as compensation depending on group performance.

Conclusion

The results of the two experiments suggest that the way power is used to influence other people is important when it comes to explaining its effects on powerholders' evaluations of the self and their targets. When powerholders have used harsh influence tactics that restrict their targets' autonomy, they generate more thoughts of their own superiority or fewer thoughts of target appreciation than when they have used soft influence tactics that promote their targets' autonomy. Remember the initial example: Hannah might realize her own dominating behavior in the team meetings and justify herself by devaluing her targets' ability to reach an acceptable agreement. The present experiments suggest that correlations found in existing studies are based on causal effects. In addition, they provide evidence that the source on which the power is based (expertise vs. position) moderates the effect of influence tactics.

When the influence tactics conflict with expectations related to the power base, powerholders react with more thoughts of superiority than when influence tactics are congruent with the power base. For example, when Sophie was legitimized by her company to decide how the team should proceed and what should be presented to the top management (position power), she might believe that her encouragement of an open discussion contradicts her new role as a project manager and reduce this aversive discrepancy by affirming other personal qualities like her superior task competence.

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Tables

Table 1

Assessment of social evaluations

Scale	Items	Cronbach's α :		Pre-post correlation: Exp. 1 / Exp. 2
		Exp. 1 pre / Exp. 1 post /	Exp. 2 pre / Exp. 2 post	
Superiority	"I am the most competent in this task." "Without me, everything would fail." ^a "His/her suggestion does not make sense." ^a "He/she has no idea." ^a "I could better lead the shirt factory alone."	.56 / .74 / .80 / .83	.10 / .69	
Appreciation	"He/she comprehends the task." "A good suggestion." "They are very cooperative."	-- / .65 / -- / .70	-- / --	

Note: For appreciation, no items were assessed in the pre-questionnaire. For pre-post-correlations, the influence of experimental conditions was partialled out.

^a Item was also assessed in the pre-questionnaire.

Figure Captions

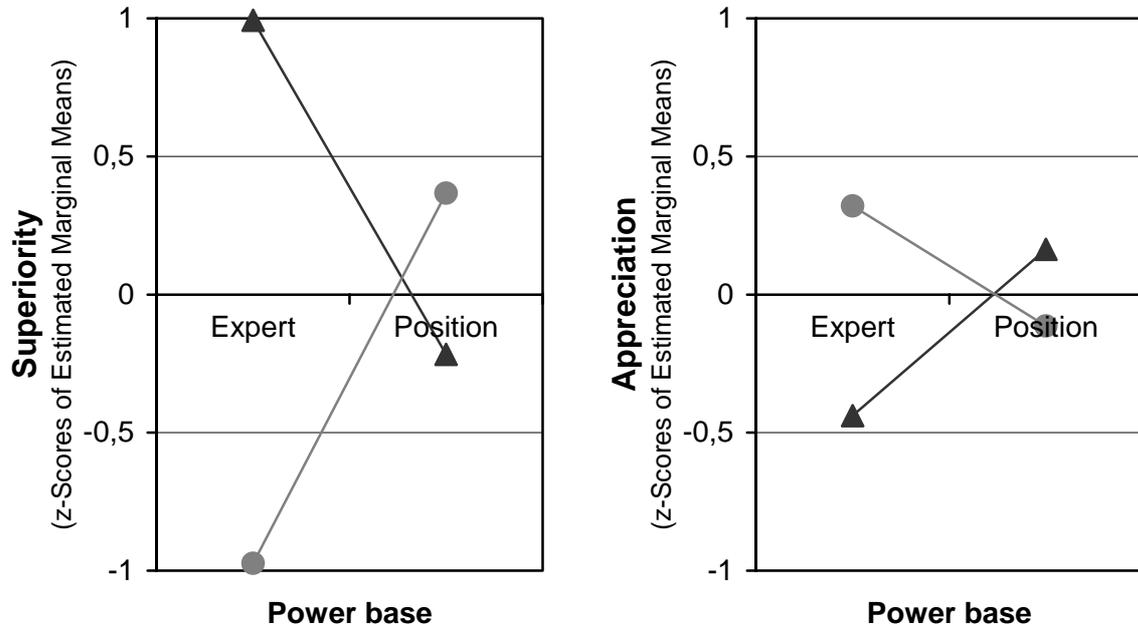
Figure 1. Powerholders' social evaluations as a function of influence tactics and power base (experiment 1).

Note. # $p < .10$, * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, hypotheses were tested with planned contrasts and one-tailed p

Figure 2. Powerholders' social evaluations as a function of influence tactics and power base (experiment 2).

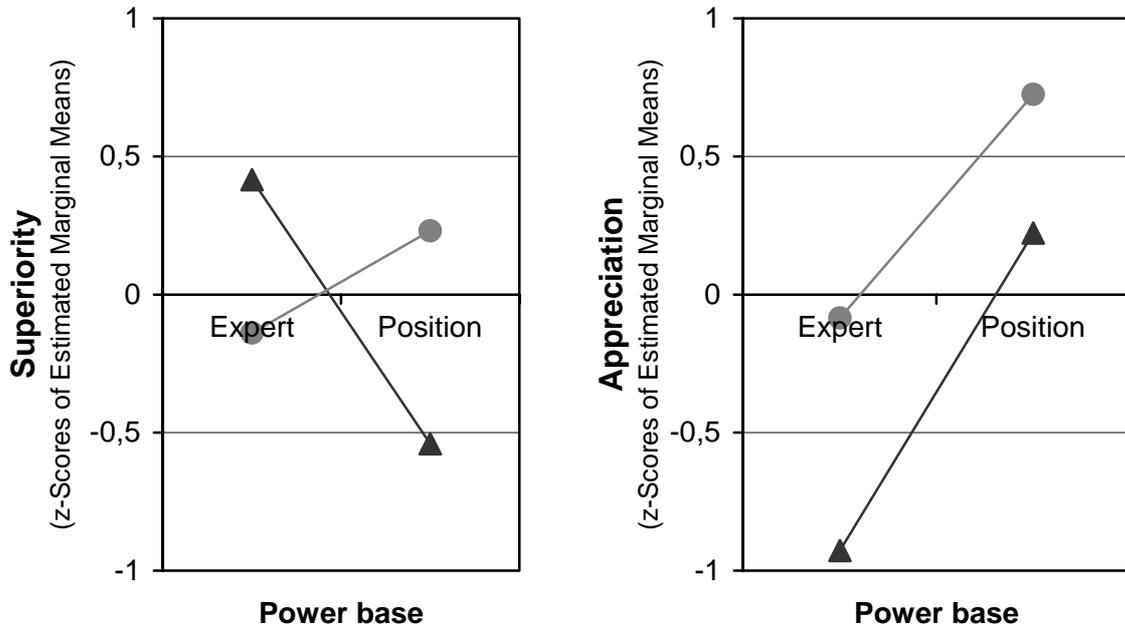
Note. * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, hypotheses were tested with planned contrasts and one-tailed p

Figures



Source of Variance	Superiority			Appreciation		
	df	F	η^2	df	F	η^2
Influence Tactics: Harsh \blacktriangle vs. Soft \bullet	1, 20	3.31	* .14	1, 24	0.06	.00
Power Base: Expert vs. Position	1, 20	0.03	.00	1, 24	0.37	.01
Power Base x Influence Tactics	1, 20	7.80	** .28	1, 24	2.33	# .09

Figure 1.



Source of Variance	Superiority			Appreciation		
	df	F	η^2	df	F	η^2
Influence Tactics: Harsh \blacktriangle vs. Soft \bullet	1, 25	0.20	.01	1, 22	4.66	* .18
Power Base: Expert vs. Position	1, 25	1.56	.06	1, 22	9.52	** .30
Power Base x Influence Tactics	1, 25	7.74	** .24	1, 22	0.32	.01

Figure 2.