
Construal of Power: Review and Summary of Measures and Manipulations

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Please note: We strongly recommend that the measures / manipulations summarized here are cited with reference to the specific scientific paper indicated below, in which the measure / manipulation was originally published. If this is not possible for some reason, the present overview may be cited as:

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In the following, we provide a collection of measures and manipulations which we have used to assess vs. induce different construals of social power in our joint program of research. In this work, we rely on the definition of *social power* as comprising asymmetric control over resources that others value (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007). We have proposed that powerholders can *construe* (i.e., cognitively appraise) this resource control differently: We contrast the opportunity to “make things happen”, which means that powerholders recognize the different possibilities they have to pursue (their own or their group’s) goals with the responsibility for “taking care of things” (e.g., protecting those with lower power, securing goal achievement, finalizing important decisions) that only they, as the ones in control, can do. As such, people holding power can construe their power differently (in general or depending on the situation), without changing the respective *amount* of power that they perceive (i.e., without feeling more or less powerful in the case of one construal, compared to the other construal). An elaborate introduction of the concept and summary of the current state of the art about the implications and impact of these different construals, can be found in Scholl et al. (2022).

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Manipulation via autobiographical recall I

This manipulation builds upon the episodic recall priming task developed by Galinsky et al. (2003) and relies on an actual personal experience that participants remember and write about.

The manipulation reads as follows:

In the following, we are interested in experiences which individuals have gained, for instance, at work as part of their leadership or supervisor role. For this purpose, now, we ask you to please recall a specific situation you experienced and answer some questions about this experience. Please press 'continue' to begin with the study.

High power as opportunity condition:

Please recall a particular incident in which you had power over another individual or individuals. By power, we mean a situation in which you had the opportunity to control the ability of another person or persons to get something they wanted, or were in a position in which you could evaluate those individuals.

Please describe this situation in which you had power:

Please specify any opportunities your power gave you, for example, the ability to make certain decisions, the possibility to accomplish certain tasks, or the opportunity to achieve particular goals.

What happened in this situation? How did you feel? Which opportunities did you experience?

High power as responsibility condition:

Please recall a particular incident in which you had power over another individual or individuals. By power, we mean a situation in which you had the responsibility to control the ability of another person or persons to get something they wanted, or were in a position in which you were responsible for evaluating those individuals.

Please describe this situation in which you had power:

Please specify any responsibilities your power came with, for example, the duty you experienced to make certain decisions, the requirement you felt to accomplish certain tasks, or the inner obligation to achieve particular goals.

What happened in this situation? How did you feel? Which responsibilities did you experience?

Power manipulation check:

I was in charge in this situation.

I had influence in this situation.

Participants then write down a few notes about their experiences; typically, they can proceed on screen after a minimum time period (e.g., 1-2 minutes). Afterwards, the DV of interest can be assessed. We have used this manipulation in online studies.

In similar studies, we also content-analyzed the text passages that participants wrote down here (e.g., to capture the nature of the experiences recalled and to make sure that they followed instructions; we here used independent raters rating how much participants expressed responsibilities / opportunities, respectively; 1-very low to 7-very high; see Scholl et al., 2018a).

We typically assess construal manipulation checks afterwards (though these can also be rated from the essays, see comment above and Scholl et al., 2018a) and a power check to make sure that the construal manipulation does not induce differences in the experienced amount of power (for scales see next manipulation).

Source:

Preliminary Experiment

Scholl, A., De Wit, F. R. C., Ellemers, N., Sassenberg, K., Fetterman, A. K., & Scheepers, D. (2018a). The burden of power: Construing power as responsibility (rather than as opportunity) alters threat-challenge responses. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 44, 1024-1038. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167218757452>

Manipulation via autobiographic recall II - Including a speech

This manipulation builds upon the episodic recall priming task, developed by Galinsky et al. (2003).

We will now start the study. Your next task is to give a speech about a memory that is at least a minute long, which will be recorded by the webcam. You will receive more information about what your 'speech' should be about in the following. Before you start, you will get time to prepare for your speech.

In everyday life, everyone has to do with power. Sometimes you have power over others, but sometimes others just have power over you. How much power you possess varies by situation. Think of family situations, sport situations, work situations or training situations.

High power as opportunity condition:

Now, please think about a situation in which you had a certain power over others. We want you to select a situation in which this power indicated an opportunity to pursue your goals. That is, a situation in which you were independent from others and therefore had more opportunities to achieve your goals.

High power as responsibility condition:

Now, please think about a situation in which you had a certain power over others. We want you to select a situation in which this power indicated a responsibility for the fate of the person over which you had power. That is, a situation in which you had influence on another person's well-being, and you thus felt a certain responsibility.

Low power condition:

Now, please think about a situation in which someone had a certain power over you. With power, we mean that someone had control over something that you wanted, and this someone could determine how you should proceed.

Note: This is the original manipulation used in Scholl et al., 2018a, Experiment 2; as we realized in retrospect that this exact wording to induce responsibility vs. opportunity relates more to independence in the opportunity condition and more to interdependence in the responsibility condition, we would rather recommend using the exact wording from the manipulation introduced above.

So, think for example of a family situation, sport situation, workplace, or training situation. When you have such a clear situation in mind, then click on 'Continue'

Now that you have received the instructions and have such a memory in mind, we ask you to relive this in your memory. Try to recall how you felt in this situation, what happened and how you handled it in the best possible way. Before we start recording with the webcam you will have up to 3 minutes to first think about what you want to say exactly. Describe the situation as fully as possible. Some tips about what you can tell:

High power as opportunity condition:

What was the situation? Over whom did you have power? How did you feel about having this opportunity? How did you act upon this opportunity? Have you reached your goal by performing your actions?

High power as responsibility condition:

What was the situation? Over whom did you have power? How did you feel about having this responsibility? How did you act upon this responsibility? Have you reached your goal by performing your actions?

Low power condition:

What was the situation? Who had power over you? How did you like it that others had power? How did this feel? How did you act in this situation? Have you reached your goal by performing your actions?

When you click on 'continue', your preparation time will start. There is a clock on your screen so you can see how much time you have left. In total you have up to three minutes to prepare. After one minute, it is possible to go ahead and begin the speech.

[Specific instructions on screen while giving the speech]

High power as opportunity condition:

Describe a situation in which you had a certain amount of power over one or several people, and this power gave you a sense of opportunity because you were independent and could pursue your goals. What was the situation? Who did you have power over? How did you feel about having this opportunity? How did you act upon this opportunity? Have you reached your goal by performing your actions?

High power as responsibility condition:

Describe a situation in which you had a certain amount of power over one or several people, and this power gave you a sense of responsibility because you could decide on their fate, and had your choices affect their welfare. What was the situation? Whom did you have power over? How did you feel about having this responsibility? How did you act upon this responsibility? Have you reached your goal by performing your actions?

Low power condition:

Describe a situation in which someone had control over you in getting what you wanted, and this someone could determine how you should proceed. What was the situation? Who had power over you? How did you like it that others had such power? How did this feel? How did you act in this situation? Have you reached your goal by performing your actions?

How do the following questions apply to the situation your speech was about?

Power manipulation check:

I was in charge in this situation.

I had influence in this situation.

Perceived Opportunity:

I had opportunities to achieve important goals.

I was aware that I did not depend on others.

I could see what my opportunities were.

I could do things the way I wanted.

Perceived Responsibility:

I was responsible for achieving important goals.

I was aware that others depended on me.

I could see what my responsibilities were.

I could make sure that things go well.

We used this manipulation in a lab study, the main DV (physiological stress level) was assessed with cardiovascular measures while participants gave their speech. It is possible that the main DV could also be assessed afterwards, as this manipulation is likely relative immersive and could carry-over to a subsequent task.

We typically assess construal manipulation checks afterwards (though these can also be coded/rated from the information pps give in their speech; see comments for manipulation above) and a power check to make sure that the construal manipulation does not induce differences in the experienced amount of power.

Source:

Experiment 2

Scholl, A., De Wit, F. R. C., Ellemers, N., Sassenberg, K., Fetterman, A. K., & Scheepers, D. (2018a). The burden of power: Construing power as responsibility (rather than as opportunity) alters threat-challenge responses. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 44, 1024-1038.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167218757452>

Manipulation via Sports Scenario

Questionnaire about Sporting Events

Major sporting events such as the Olympic Games no longer serve merely as a platform for top sporting performances, but have also taken on a social dimension. Issues such as the political neutrality of athletes or fair competition with regard to doping are the subject of controversial public debate.

In the following questionnaire, we are interested in your personal opinion. Please imagine you have the chance to lead the organizing committee of a major sporting event and are allowed to make key decisions for the successful running of the event.

Opportunity condition: Are the following measures helpful for the success of the event?

Responsibility condition: Can the following measures be ethically justified?

Participants then answer consecutively for each measure only this one question (depending on condition):

Opportunity condition: Is this measure helpful for the success of the event?

Scale: 1 – not at all helpful, 6 – very helpful

Responsibility condition: Can this measure be ethically justified?

Scale 1 – not at all justifiable, 6 – very justifiable

1. Doping:

Each participant must undergo a mandatory doping test. If the result is positive or inconclusive, the athlete will not be admitted to the event.

2. Politics:

To avoid interference with the broadcast of the opening ceremonies by politically motivated demonstrators, no live pictures from the venue are to be broadcast, instead they are to be time-delayed in order to be able to interrupt if necessary.

3. Performance:

In order to enable an exact comparison of athletic performance, large sums of money are to be invested in the latest measuring technique.

4. Budget:

In order to save the budget, savings in the accommodation of the athletes should be accepted.

5. Security:

Massive security checks at the venue are intended to minimize the risk of terrorist attacks. The controls partly hinder the preparation of the athletes.

6. Sponsors:

A lucrative advertising contract is to be concluded with a company that would like to advertise its products on large video screens. In doing so, a possible distraction of the athletes would be accepted.

7. TV advertising:

In order to increase advertising revenues, the number of advertising slots is to be increased. As a result, events will be interrupted in television broadcasts more frequently than before.

8. Broadcasting rights:

The broadcasting rights for the event are to be sold. Possible buyers demand that popular disciplines can be broadcast live at prime time. This may result in poor start times for athletes (time difference).

9. Special bonuses:

Special bonuses are to be awarded to athletes who demonstrate exceptional performance. For example, a sports car provided by the sponsor for a world record. In this context, there is a risk that athletes will exceed their performance limits, which are harmless to health.

10. Home right:

In order to further excite the audience of the host country, the athletes of the host country shall always be allowed to compete first, even though this may give them an advantage.

11. Admission of athletes:

In order to keep the number of preliminary rounds low and not to strain top athletes unnecessarily before the final rounds, smaller states are to be grouped into larger units, which may then jointly send only one athlete.

12. Ticket quotas:

Stricter conditions are to be enforced in the procedure for the allocation of ticket quotas, as large portions of tickets are sold on the black market in emerging countries, for example.

Afterwards, the DV of interest can be assessed.

We have used this manipulation in online, lab, and paper pencil studies.

Source:

Sassenberg, K., Ellemers, N., & Scheepers, D. (2012). The attraction of social power: The influence of construing power as opportunity versus responsibility. *Journal of Experimental Social Psychology, 48*, 550–555. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jesp.2011.11.008>

Manipulation via role assignment I

In the following, please imagine yourself being in a business context. Here, you will adopt a specific role and complete a set of business decisions. These decisions provide the chance to make some investments for clients and to seize opportunities to move your company forward (opportunity condition) // These decisions provide the responsibility to make some investments for clients and the need to take care of your company's success (responsibility condition).

Role assignment & task description:

Low power - opportunity condition:

You are working as an assistant at a well-known investment firm.

Your firm manages the wealth and investments for many individual clients.

One of the firm's equity funds will be dissolved soon. As a result, your firm has rather unexpectedly come across a large amount of money that is available and can be reinvested in new capital assets.

Reinvesting this money provides a huge opportunity for your firm.

There are many options to choose from and ideas to play around with.

If you reinvest the money in a successful manner, this would not only increase your clients' personal funds substantially; it would also be beneficial for your company's income and, finally, for your personal bonus.

The manager of your firm makes final decisions which new projects to invest this money in. **As an assistant, you gather information and provide suggestions to your manager which projects to potentially invest in.** The manager checks your and the other assistants' information, makes final decisions, and evaluates your performance in the end. Accordingly, the manager is in charge of decisions as well as their own and your outcomes.

Low power – responsibility condition:

You are working as an assistant at a well-known investment firm.

Your firm manages the retirement savings funds for many individual clients.

One of the firm's equity funds will be dissolved soon. As a result, your firm has rather unexpectedly come across a large amount of money that is available and can be reinvested in new capital assets.

Reinvesting this money provides a huge responsibility for your firm.

There are many options to check and things to consider.

If you reinvest the money in a successful manner, this would not only secure your clients' retirement savings plans; it would also meet your company's corporate responsibility and, finally, mean following your social conscience.

The manager of your firm makes final decisions which new projects to invest this money in. **As an assistant, you gather information and provide suggestions to your manager which projects to potentially invest in.** The manager checks your and the other assistants' information, makes final decisions, and evaluates your performance in the end. Accordingly, the manager is in charge of decisions as well as their own and your outcomes.

High power – opportunity condition:

You are working as a manager at a well-known investment firm.

Your firm manages the wealth and investments for many individual clients.

One of the firm's equity funds will be dissolved soon. As a result, your firm has rather unexpectedly come across a large amount of money that is available and can be reinvested in new capital assets.

Reinvesting this money provides a huge opportunity for your firm.

There are many options to choose from and ideas to play around with.

If you reinvest the money in a successful manner, this would not only increase your clients' personal funds substantially; it would also be beneficial for your company's income and, finally, for your personal bonus.

As the manager of this firm, you make final decisions which new projects to invest this money in. Your assistants gather information and provide suggestions to you which projects to potentially choose from. As the manager, you check your assistants' information, make final decisions, and evaluate the assistants' performance. Accordingly, you are in charge of decisions as well as your own and your assistants' outcomes.

High power – responsibility condition:

You are working as a manager at a well-known investment firm.

Your firm manages the retirement savings funds for many individual clients.

One of the firm's equity funds will be dissolved soon. As a result, your firm has rather unexpectedly come across a large amount of money that is available and can be reinvested in new capital assets.

Reinvesting this money provides a huge responsibility for your firm.

There are many options to check and things to consider.

If you reinvest the money in a successful manner, this would not only secure your clients' retirement savings plans; it would also meet your company's corporate responsibility and, finally, mean following your social conscience.

As the manager of this firm, you make final decisions which new projects to invest this money in. Your assistants gather information and provide suggestions to you which projects to potentially choose from. As the manager, you check your assistants' information, make final decisions, and evaluate the assistants' performance. Accordingly, you are in charge of decisions as well as your own and your assistants' outcomes.

The manipulation could stop here and the main DV of interest could be assessed, due to the scenario character ideally with a reference to this context in which power and construal were induced. The following instructions give an example of a task that we have used to assess pps responses to a task (here, experienced threat and challenge).

“Practice trial” to get acquainted with the task:

Low power – opportunity // responsibility conditions:

In the following, you will perform two rounds of investment decisions.

For each round, you and your manager choose between 6 optional projects your firm could invest the money in to *make use of this huge opportunity // meet this huge responsibility.*

For each project, you will see information on the

- *general development* of a company,
- *market capitalization* (aggregate value of a company),
- *P/E ratio* (price relative to earnings per share),
- *dividend yield* (divident relative to price per share),
- *volatility* (variation of trading price over time), and
- *volume* (amount of securities traded).

You as assistant will check these projects and provide a recommendation of the 3 most promising projects to your manager. Your manager checks your recommendation, accepts or rejects it, and makes the final decision.

High power – opportunity // responsibility conditions:

In the following, you will perform two rounds of investment decisions.

For each round, you and your assistants choose between 6 optional projects your firm could invest the money in to *make use of this huge opportunity // meet this huge responsibility.*

For each project, you will see information on the

- *general development* of a company,
- *market capitalization* (aggregate value of a company),
- *P/E ratio* (price relative to earnings per share),
- *dividend yield* (divident relative to price per share),
- *volatility* (variation of trading price over time), and
- *volume* (amount of securities traded).







Your assistants will check these projects and provide a recommendation of the 3 most promising projects to you. As the manager, you check their recommendation, accept or reject it, and make the final decision.

All conditions:

To become acquainted with the task, you first perform an **individual practice trial**: Below, you see examples of six potential projects to invest in.

Now, please:(1) pick 3 projects that seem most promising to you (2) and indicate how much money (in %) out of 100% you would like to spend on each of your 3 chosen projects *typing in a number from 0-100* in the text-box next to each of your chosen projects.

(note: Total = total money spent should add up to 100)

<p> ***AT-***-Group +0.32%</p> <p>Market capitalization 97.3 billion</p> <p>Price-earnings ratio (P/E) 17.70</p> <p>Dividend yield 1.00</p> <p>Volatility (250 days) 22.79%</p> <p>Volume (4 weeks) 79.049.289</p>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
<p> ***Ite*** & Co. +2.22%</p> <p>Market capitalization 78.5 billion</p> <p>Price-earnings ratio (P/E) 19.57</p> <p>Dividend yield 1.68</p> <p>Volatility (250 days) 18.84%</p> <p>Volume (4 weeks) 357.630.464</p>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
<p> ***tec*** Holding +0.91%</p> <p>Market capitalization 115.9 billion</p> <p>Price-earnings ratio (P/E) 11.97</p> <p>Dividend yield 3.94</p> <p>Volatility (250 days) 17.68%</p> <p>Volume (4 weeks) 218.604.580</p>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
<p> ***r-Ho*** +0.25%</p> <p>Market capitalization 158.7 billion</p> <p>Price-earnings ratio (P/E) 14.30</p> <p>Dividend yield 2.98</p> <p>Volatility (250 days) 19.60%</p> <p>Volume (4 weeks) 189.650.237</p>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
<p> ***ria-*** Group -0.89%</p> <p>Market capitalization 120.8 billion</p> <p>Price-earnings ratio (P/E) 19.98</p> <p>Dividend yield 2.97</p> <p>Volatility (250 days) 16.20%</p> <p>Volume (4 weeks) 125.646.080</p>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
<p> ***fab*** Inc. +1.49%</p> <p>Market capitalization 63.8 billion</p> <p>Price-earnings ratio (P/E) 12.56</p> <p>Dividend yield 2.90</p> <p>Volatility (250 days) 23.59%</p> <p>Volume (4 weeks) 98.651.023</p>	<input type="text" value="0"/>
<p>Total</p>	<input type="text" value="0"/>

Low power – opportunity // responsibility conditions:

Thank you, this was the practice trial. You will now perform a first round of investments with your manager. Afterwards, you receive feedback on how your investments develop and perform a second round of investments. At the end, the manager evaluates your performance. Please continue.

High power – opportunity // responsibility conditions:

Thank you, this was the practice trial. You will now perform a first round of investments with your assistants. Afterwards, you receive feedback on how your investments develop and perform a second round of investments. At the end, you evaluate your assistants' performance. Please continue.

We have used this manipulation in an online study. This manipulation is to date the only one to manipulate power and construal orthogonally – which is important from an experimental perspective, and also not trivial to implement, because conceptually, it is relatively tricky to manipulate low power (i.e., low resource control) as a high opportunity (or high responsibility). Accordingly, in this manipulation, we induce construal via the framing of the task.

Source:

Experiment 1A

Scholl, A., De Wit, F. R. C., Ellemers, N., Sassenberg, K., Fetterman, A. K., & Scheepers, D. (2018a). The burden of power: Construing power as responsibility (rather than as opportunity) alters threat-challenge responses. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 44, 1024-1038. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167218757452>

Manipulation via role assignment II

This role assignment manipulation combines different manipulations and is adapted from Guinote (2007); Inesi et al. (2011); and Weick & Guinote (2010).

In this study, you will complete a number of office tasks. You will collaborate with another participant forming a dyad in which one of you is the manager and the other is the assistant. In these roles, you will create a new construction project for your company, and you will work on ideas from an innovation contest.

First, please complete a couple of questions that will serve to assign you to the most suitable role. [„leadership questionnaire“]

Thank you. Your answers are being processed.

In the following, you will complete one task individually and one task as a dyad. For the dyadic task, you will collaborate as manager and assistant. Assistants are good at following instructions and making suggestions. Managers are good at instructing others and evaluating suggestions.

High power as opportunity condition:

In the following, you will be the manager. Your task will be to instruct and evaluate the assistant. The assistant, vice versa, will not evaluate your work. Accordingly, you have the opportunity to determine your own and the assistant's compensation.

High power as responsibility condition:

In the following, you will be the manager. Your task will be to instruct and evaluate the assistant. The assistant, vice versa, will not evaluate your work. Accordingly, you have the responsibility to determine your own and the assistant's compensation.

Low power condition:

In the following, you will be the assistant. Your task will be to follow the manager's instructions and contribute suggestions. Afterwards, the manager will evaluate your work. You will, vice versa, not be in the position to evaluate the manager.

Now, please work on a number of daily office tasks.

1. Task: Innovations

Innovations play a crucial role in many work domains. Yet, the perception and evaluation of innovations can vary between observers. Your task now is to evaluate the ideas generated by a participant in an innovation contest. S/he generated innovative names for new products. The winner with the best ideas will later receive a prize.

We are now interested in how others perceive these ideas. You will see different products each with a product name attached to it, which has been generated by the participant in the innovation contest. Please indicate your evaluation of the product name s/he generated.

High power as responsibility / opportunity condition:

Your evaluation of the participant's ideas will influence the participants' result. Your evaluation will be entered into an equation including external raters' evaluations and will contribute to 50% of the final evaluation.

Low power condition:

Your evaluation of the participant's ideas will not contribute to the final evaluation and thus will not influence the participants' result. Yet, this survey may provide information on how innovative ideas are perceived.

[evaluation of the five products with names attached]

Thank you. Please proceed to the second task as a manager / assistant.

2. Task: New projects

In the following, you will work in a dyad with your assistant / manager on a construction project for your company.

High power as opportunity condition:

Being the manager, you will have the opportunity to instruct the assistant and delegate tasks to them. You are in charge of their work and you are able to evaluate their work afterwards. As manager, you thus have the opportunity to determine your own and the assistant's compensation.

High power as responsibility condition:

Being the manager, you will have the responsibility to instruct the assistant and delegate tasks to them. You are in charge of their work and you take care of evaluating their work afterwards. As manager, you thus have the responsibility to determine your own and the assistant's compensation.

Low power condition:

Being the assistant, you will be in the position to follow the manager's instructions and take over tasks from him. The manager is in charge of your work and will evaluate your work afterwards. As assistant, you thus are in the position to contribute suggestions which will be evaluated by the manager.

Power manipulation check

Please indicate your agreement with the following statements:

- On the upcoming task, I will be in charge.
- How much influence will you have, compared to your partner?
- On the task, I will have a subordinate role. [recoded]

You will now be connected to your assistant / your manager to complete the task.

Please wait.

You assistant / Your manager is currently involved in another part of the study. In the meantime, please continue with the second study. You will complete the dyadic task afterwards.

Afterwards, the DV of interest can be assessed.

Source:

Experiment 1b

Scholl, A., De Wit, F. R. C., Ellemers, N., Sassenberg, K., Fetterman, A. K., & Scheepers, D. (2018a). The burden of power: Construing power as responsibility (rather than as opportunity) alters threat-challenge responses. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 44, 1024-1038. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167218757452>

Manipulation via role assignment III

This role assignment manipulation is adapted from Guinote (2007).

High power as opportunity:

You, as team captain, have the opportunity to determine the final decisions, which means that you have the chance and the freedom to determine the final answer. When you and the advisor have different opinions about the solution, the team captain has the opportunity to make the final decision. Besides, the captain may decide how to distribute the possible bonus of 25 euro between the two of you. The position of team captain gives you the possibility to define your own outcomes but also the outcomes of your teammate.

High power as responsibility:

You, as team captain, are responsible for the final decisions of the team. So the task of the team captain is to determine the final answer. When you and the advisor have different opinions about the solution, you have the job to take care of the final decision. Besides, the captain will be responsible for how to distribute the possible bonus of 25 euro between the two of you. Because of the responsibility of the job of team captain, your decisions have important consequences for you but also for your teammate'.

High power standard:

You, as team captain, will determine the final decisions, which means that you will decide on the final answer.

Power manipulation check:

- In my role as team captain, I had power.
- In my role as team captain, I had control over the outcomes of myself and my teammate.

Felt responsibility / opportunity:

- My position as team captain felt like a responsibility.
- My position as team captain felt like an opportunity.
- As a result of my position as team captain, it was easier to achieve certain goals.
- As a result of my position as team captain, the choices that I made had, and the control that I had, affected the advisor.

7-point Likert-Scales: 1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree

Source:

Experiment 3

Scholl, A., De Wit, F. R. C., Ellemers, N., Sassenberg, K., Fetterman, A. K., & Scheepers, D. (2018a). The burden of power: Construing power as responsibility (rather than as opportunity) alters threat-challenge responses. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 44, 1024-1038. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167218757452>

Situational construal of power scale

Our first items were originally generated for Scheepers, Ellemers, & Sassenberg (2013) and revised in the process of subsequent studies.

We typically measure the situational construal of power after having given pps a high-power (or low-power) role and asking them how they perceive their tasks in that role (e.g., making important decisions; collaborating with an assistant/manager) or how they expect to feel performing these tasks in their upcoming role.

When making these decisions... / With regard to the upcoming collaboration... / ...
(perceived opportunity items)

I can see what the possibilities are

I make use of possibilities to be successful
I have more possibilities to reach my goals
I can take the control
I can follow my own ideas
(perceived responsibility items)
I feel partly responsible for others' situation
I think about how my decisions impact others
I need to take care of others' needs
I am concerned about others' wellbeing
I consider how much I can expect from others

Source:

Study 1

Scholl, A., Sassenberg, K., Scheepers, D., Ellemers, N., & de Wit, F. (2017). A matter of focus: Power-holders feel more responsible after adopting a cognitive other-focus, rather than a self-focus. *British Journal of Social Psychology, 56*, 89–102. doi: 10.1111/bjso.12177

General construal of power measure among leaders

Please think about the power that your position provides.
To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

I tend to see my power in terms of the *opportunities* [*responsibilities*] to influence others (e.g., telling others what to do)
I tend to see my power in terms of the *possibilities* [*obligations*] to make decisions
I tend to see my power in terms of the *opportunities* [*responsibilities*] to achieve certain goals

bipolar 7-point scales; italicized words indicate the endpoints of the scales

Source:

Study 1

De Wit, F. R. C., Scheepers, D., Ellemers, N., Sassenberg, K., & Scholl, A. (2017). Whether power holders construe their power as responsibility or opportunity influences their tendency to take advice from others. *Journal of Organizational Behavior, 38*, 923-949. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.2171>

General construal of power scale

Items here are identical to the “Situational construal of power scale” reported above, only instructions are adapted to reflect pps general construal of power.

At times, individuals are in charge and have power over another person or persons. That is, they can determine another person's compensation, evaluate another person, or make decisions that impact their own and others' situation. This can be, for instance, in school, at work, or in private life. Now, please think about situations like these in which you are in charge of other persons.

Please write a few notes on examples for situations in which you have power in your everyday life.

In situations like these, how do the following items apply to you?

In situations like these,...

(perceived opportunity items)

- I can see what the possibilities are
- I make use of possibilities to be successful
- I have more possibilities to reach my goals
- I can take the control
- I can follow my own ideas

(perceived responsibility items)

- I feel partly responsible for others' situation
- I think about how my decisions impact others
- I need to take care of others' needs
- I am concerned about others' wellbeing
- I consider how much I can expect from others

Scale: 1 – strongly disagree, to 7 – strongly agree

Source: The following scale, adapted to the general construal:

Study 1

Scholl, A., Sassenberg, K., Scheepers, D., Ellemers, N., & de Wit, F. (2017). A matter of focus: Power-holders feel more responsible after adopting a cognitive other-focus, rather than a self-focus. *British Journal of Social Psychology*, 56, 89–102. doi: 10.1111/bjso.12177

General Construal of Power Scale – Followers' Ratings for Their Leader

- My leader enjoys when his/her subordinates follow his/her guidance.
- My leader cares about being in full control about what he/she does.
- My leader feels that he/she can follow his/her own ideas.
- My leader feels that he/she is in control.
- The things my leader does are directed by his/her free will.
- My leader thinks about how his/her actions impact others.
- My leader feels a great deal of responsibility for the people he/she works with.
- My leader feels the duty to make sure that nobody is stressed at work.

- My leader feels that he/she needs to take care of other people's needs.
- My leader feels responsible for other people's situation

Scale: 1 – strongly disagree, to 7 – strongly agree

Source:

Studies 2&3

Wroblewski, D., Scholl, A., Ditrich, L., & Sassenberg, K. (2023). Leaders' Construal of Power as Opportunity Predicts More Follower Engagement. *Working paper. Leibniz-Institut fuer Wissensmedien.*

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