

## Being a trainee representative

### Power

#### Transcript

We all know what power means, and can think of people who are powerful and people who aren't. Being powerful isn't always the same as holding a leadership position. Not all people in leadership positions are powerful and lots of powerful people don't have a leadership position. John French and Bertram Raven defined the different types of power people can have in the 1960s. The concept has been updated over the years.

The types of power can be split into positional and personal.

First there are types of positional power. The first is legitimate power: this comes from the position the person has. Medicine can be very hierarchical so I'm sure you can think of examples of these, like the consultant who is in charge of the team.

The other types are reward and coercive power. This is where someone has power because they can make something good happen to you, like a bonus or an opportunity, or something bad happen to you, like threatening you with disciplinary action. These depend on a level of surveillance to be effective.

There are also personal sources of power.

Referential power is where people do something because they respect and trust the person who has asked them to do it. I'm sure you can think of someone in your hospital who you respect and trust this way. Expert power is where someone has power because of their knowledge and skills. Finally, network power is power that comes from who you know and your connections with them.

The types of power people have will vary depending on the situation and people often have more than one type of power available to them.