



WATCH & LEARN: ECONOMY & PUBLIC AFFAIRS BUSINESS & POLITICS: LEADERSHIP STYLES WORST PEOPLE RISE TO POWER?(5:48 MIN) VIDEO Script & Vocabulary (page 1 of 2/v32287)

ADVANCED LEVEL (C1) AND ABOVE

- ◊ Read the script and note new vocabulary
- ◊ Write three sentences using new vocabulary
- ◊ Prepare for the discussion questions

Starting Off

Power should be a burden on people because leaders have to make decisions that will ultimately have negative consequences for many people. One problem: some humans don't care about those consequences and they seek power.

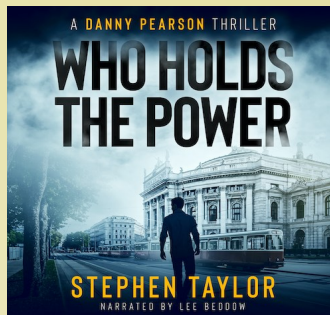
- 1 Read the **Video Script** below. The words in **bold** are defined in the **Vocabulary** section. Look up any new words in a dictionary.
- 2 Go to the **Your Turn** section at the end of this document. Practice using new words and expressions from the video script to prepare for your next class.
- 3 Look at the **Discussion Questions** and prepare your responses for the next class.

Discussion Questions:

- ◊ How do you feel about the quality of world leadership today?
- ◊ Do you think perhaps dangerous people are drawn to power more often than well-rounded, compassionate people?
- ◊ What might we be able to do in order to improve the quality of our leaders?

Video Script:

Brian Klaas, Political Scientist & Author of *Corruptible: Who Gets Power and How it Changes Us*: I think that power should be a **burden** to ordinary people. I think it should actually be **costly** in the sense of psychology. In other words, if you think that power is easy and fun, you're the wrong person for the job because everybody at the highest levels of power is, no matter what they do, ruining some lives and making some other lives much better-it's a distributional choice.



If you're the president of a country or if you're the CEO in charge of a major corporation, your decisions affect people's lives for better or worse. And some of those effects are catastrophic. You should have to live with that; it should **weigh on you**. If it doesn't weigh on you, you haven't done your job right, you have not developed a system in which the psychological distance you face is actually at the right level.

Understand that the consequences of your decision are affecting real people. So, psychopaths can't be **fixed** in this **regard**. No matter how much a psychopath gets to know somebody, they just don't care about them. So if you have a psychopath in charge, psychological distance doesn't solve the problem. For everyone else, it's a key ingredient in making sure that you perform better if you end up in a position of leadership.

Should we psychiatrically assess leaders in power? The 'dark triad' traits are really interesting because you can **disaggregate** them into their three parts: which are Machiavellianism, narcissism, and psychopathy - being a psychopath. These traits *can* occur in elevated levels in **isolation**. So you could just be somebody who's more Machiavellian than the rest of the population. You could just be more narcissistic. And there's some really interesting findings when you actually control for them in isolation.

Machiavellianism: So Machiavellian people tend to be better at getting power. They tend to be better at getting power because they're strategic thinkers. They're people who have a **game plan**. They start to think, "How can I get to my goal?" And if they're disciplined, you can control your impulses. You can think into the future, you can strategize. So Machiavellianism alone is probably actually helpful for getting power.

Video Script continued on next page...

Vocabulary:

- **burden** - duty, responsibility that is oppressive and worrisome
- **costly** - made or done at heavy expense or sacrifice
- **weigh on you** - make (someone or something) sad, depressed, or worried
- **fix** - repair something that's broken, improve
- **regard** - an aspect to be taken into consideration
- **disaggregate** - separate into component parts
- **isolate** - set apart from others
- **game plan** - a strategy for achieving an objective

Vocabulary continued on next page...

Bad leaders believe that they have to project control at all times.

Simon Sinek





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Video Script continued...

Narcissism: Narcissists are different again. Narcissists, if they occur in isolation, can actually help you make more money. And the reason for that is because narcissists are **hyper-attuned** to what other people think of them. Advancement in hierarchies often can depend on how much other people like you. Narcissists are good at making people like them. The evidence seems to suggest that narcissism in isolation can be helpful for improving your paycheck even though it might not be the best thing for making good decisions 'cause you have a **warped** view of what's the most important- and for narcissists, the most important thing is himself.

Psychopathy: Psychopathy, on its own, without the Machiavellian, narcissistic component is reasonably rare, they tend to **correlate**. But when you do have people who are just psychopaths, they're more impulsive, and they're more willing to take risks than other people. As a result of that, you tend to have lots of unsuccessful psychopaths. The successful ones who make it, who survive, they're not good at **wielding** power, but they are often pretty good at obtaining it because they are power hungry. So a psychopath, in isolation, is not someone you want in charge of a company.

It is not as bad to have somebody who's just Machiavellian or as bad to have someone who's just narcissistic. But for the most part, if you're high on the psychopathy score, you're usually pretty high on the narcissism and Machiavellian score as well. While these things can be studied independently, the areas of power that we're most interested in tend to be **clustered** around those with the dark triad.

Depending on the study you look at, psychopaths are between four times and a hundred times more represented in positions of power than everybody else. We've clearly got this all wrong. We have clearly designed systems that are not doing an effective job at **screening** these people **out** or **weeding** them **out** once they get into power. As a result of that, we have people in power who have no business being there at a much greater rate than the general population.

Psychological screening for powerful jobs: So I firmly believe in democracy, which means I think elections are essential and a **vibrant** part of choosing leaders. I think there are a few things we can do to make them function better, both in the **scrutiny** process, and after someone has come to power.

So the first thing is I think we should have some psychological screening at the top jobs. I think that there should be an expectation that people who are about to control nuclear weapons that can literally **wipe out** our species should at a minimum, be subject to a psychological test.

I wish there was a certain question that was asked to people who wanted to wield immense amount of power. And that question is this: "What would it take for you to think that you are no longer necessary in power?" In other words, what is the goal that you want to achieve with your power that if you were to achieve it, you would think it's time to **step down**?

It's not that we should just think about psychological tests, we should also do sort of less scientific psychological evaluations that are probed via questions that try to get at the core of why someone is seeking power; exposing those who are power hungry, or in it for the wrong reasons.

So the idea here is that you have to think carefully about screening people who are seeking power. You have to have psychological tests for the highest levels of power. And you also have to ask questions of people that would expose whether they're in it **for the sake of power** or they're in it for themselves. And far too often people are in it for themselves, and psychological tests would expose the fact that they are people who are not the ones that you want **at the helm** of a company or a country, or with the sole control of nuclear weapons.

Vocabulary continued...

- **hyper-attuned** - very receptive or aware
- **warped** - abnormal or strange; distorted
- **correlate** - have a mutual relationship or connection, in which one thing affects or depends on another
- **wield** - have and be able to use (power or influence)
- **cluster** - a number of similar things that occur together
- **screen out** - deny admittance, acceptance, clearance, or approval to someone
- **weed out** - to remove (someone or something that is not suitable for a particular purpose) from a group that is being examined
- **vibrant** - pulsating with life, vigor, or activity
- **scrutiny** - a searching study, inquiry, or inspection
- **wipe out** - destroy completely
- **step down** - withdraw from one's position or occupation
- **for the sake of (power)** - for no other reason other than the status and privilege that comes from having it
- **at the helm** - in charge of an organization