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The Powers to Lead

Joseph Nye

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What qualities make a leader succeed in business or politics? In an era when the information revolution has dramatically changed the playing field, when old organizational hierarchies have given way to fluid networks of contacts, and when mistrust of leaders is on the rise, our ideas about leadership are clearly due for redefinition.

With *The Powers to Lead*, Joseph S. Nye offers a sweeping look at the nature of leadership in today's world, in an illuminating blend of history, business case studies, psychological research, and more. As he observes, many now believe that the more authoritarian and coercive forms of leadership-the hard power approaches of earlier military-industrial eras-have been largely supplanted in postindustrial societies by soft power approaches that seek to attract, inspire, and persuade rather than dictate. Nye argues, however, that the most effective leaders are actually those who combine hard and soft power skills in proportions that vary with different situations. He calls this smart power. Drawing examples from the careers of leaders as disparate as Gandhi, Churchill, Lee Iacocca, and George W. Bush, Nye uses the concept of smart power to shed light on such topics as leadership types and skills, the needs and demands of followers, and the nature of good and bad leadership in terms of both ethics and effectiveness. In one particularly instructive chapter, he looks in depth at contextual intelligence-the ability to understand changing environments, capitalize on trends, and use the flow of events to implement strategies.

Thoroughly grounded in the real world, rich in both analysis and anecdote, *The Powers to Lead* is sure to become a modern classic, a concise and lucid work applicable to every field, from small businesses and nonprofit organizations to nations on the world stage. This paperback edition includes a new preface by the author.

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