

To make maximum listening room in a subordinates mind or to ensure an honest exchange if you wish to get something clear or find something out, you need to let your subordinate know that he/she has power, too:

"Susan, we'll talk about some issues that may have controversy attached to them. It would be most constructive if we got those out as we talk, so let's agree that you not only *may*, but I *urge* you to interrupt with questions and take an opposing stand, if you feel that way."

Be sure that you *mean* it. Don't patronize or make statements of form, not substance! This must be genuine, or else the first time Susan speaks up and you get vague or fight back or don't listen, she'll know not to do *that* again!

### *Subordinate or Peer*

How much power *you* can hope to exercise in this encounter depends not only on the subject matter and circumstances of the meeting but mainly on your opposite number. Some people *need* to feel in total control, for many different reasons, of course. Think: What are your opposite number's major motivations and style of working?

As long as you feed his/her primary need, you, too, can share in the power by questioning within that framework, suggesting but not threatening or becoming too stubborn or resistant. Examples:

- To an Achiever Boss (who responds to tasks): "I understand *that's* how to do that project. One more addition, maybe, that would get it done even faster—how about X . . ." or, "The task must *definitely* be done. But I have a problem with Y. Help me try to deal with it so we can get right to completing the project."

In either case, you've given him/her the power by agreeing to do the task *and* put your suggestion or objection in his/her terms—how to get the task done best. This then allows you to negotiate from *your* needs and get some power of your own.

- To an Affiliator Boss (who feels powerful through a sense of being needed): "That project is a really *great* idea! I'm flattered that you asked me. I'll need your help in sorting out the opening steps, but I'm sure we can do it."

Again, by playing into the Affiliator's greatest need, to feel connected, you can also rearrange the project to suit your needs as well.