

1. Social Skills Overview: Adding Warmth to Increase Power

This lesson is very important for general social success, so don't skip it.

People assess each other along two dimensions:

- **Power:** how powerful is he?
- **Warmth:** is he friend or foe?

The two axes forms 4 quadrants:

	Low Power	High Power
High Warmth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• King's servant• Clueless intern• Nice beta provider• The person nobody cares about	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Beloved king• High EQ founder & leader• Women's dream man• The person everyone wants to be around
Low Warmth	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Deposed despot• Frustrated civil servant• Jealous cuckold• The person everyone loves to hate	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hated dictator• "Stay-away type" CEO• Abusive husband• The person nobody wants to cross

- **Low Power – High Warmth:** the too nice guy

The pussy-whipped provider, the housewife who always says yet to his man no matter how she feels, but also the panhandler that you take a pity on.

Emotion: Pity

Behavior: Passive facilitation (and sometimes passive harm)

This quadrant says:

“I’m friendly and naive, easy to manipulate and take advantage of”.

– **Low Power – Low Warmth**: the underachieving frenemy

Angry overweight man, old grumpy woman yelling at the neighbor, jealous frenemies, and many more average frustrated people.

From a stereotype perspective, such as before we get to know the person, people put in this category homeless and welfare recipients, as they are seen as leaching off society without giving anything.

Emotion: Contempt

Behavior: Active harm

This quadrant says:

“I’m unhappy with my life and take my frustration on the people around”.

– **Low Warmth – High Power**: the unapproachable, cut-throat CEO

Famous and unapproachable, powerful and cruel, manipulative and self-serving.

Republicans are seen as low-warmth, and that’s why Republican leaders tend to need more security and protection.

Emotion: Envy

Behavior: Passive harm

This quadrant says:

“I’m powerful because I’m better than you, so stay away”.

– **High warmth – High Power:** the fulfilled, successful man

The founder who helps his team by mentoring them, the champion who starts a gym in his hood, and generally the people everyone wants to be around.

Beyond your political affiliation, liberal leaders tend to be seen as high warmth and high power. Obama tried to be here and partially succeeded, but the real master remains Bill Clinton.

Emotion: Admiration

Behavior: Active facilitation

This quadrant says:

“I’m powerful, and I’m happy if you also join me here at the top”.

Low-Warmth / Low-Power: For Testing People

There are not many instances in which low-warmth / low-power can come useful.

One of them is when you want to be left alone.
And another one, more relevant for power, is when you want to test people.

High-Warmth / Low-Power: For Female Seduction

High warmth mixed with low power also works to test people.

Are they going to use you, or try to take advantage of you?

It also works great for women to send signals of “exploitability”, which are attractive to men.

We will revisit this topic in the dating module.

Low-Warmth / High-Power: For Despots & Gangs

High warmth invites win-win relationships.

And generally, that’s great.

But you can’t always go win-win in life.

When there is no room for win-win, then you might need to go win-lose or, alternatively, discourage any type of relationship. Low warmth can help with that, especially if you can combine it with high power.

Despots & Dictators: The Advantages of Instilling Fear

Despots, for example, can acquire more absolute power by keeping the people around in fear.

Instead of trying to influence you, courtesans will be busier trying to *appease* you.

And instead of plotting against you, they will be more occupied trying to be on your good side.

This is why Machiavelli says that “being feared is better than being loved”.

There are three crucial aspects to make it work, though:

1. Build your reputation before the action even starts

People need to know *in advance* that any rebellion will be brutally put down.

That way, chances are higher that they will never even try.

When people know that as soon as they get in the street they'll get shot, it will be difficult for anyone to begin pouring into the streets.

2. You must act quickly and resolutely

Act quick and don't let it gather momentums, or it can become a long, drawn-out bloodbath.

If the dictator lets the momentum build, then the rage, anger, and the possibility of winning that war might gather enough speed and momentum to topple him (or to become a stalemated conflict, see Syria and Venezuela).

3. Keep the few crucial people happy (& the military)

A dictator depends on a few crucial backers, which includes army generals.

Fear alone is risky: dictators low in warmth are hated by the population, so they must be high in financial rewards towards those crucial backers.

So never forget: it's OK to keep them fearful, but also make sure they got a full belly.

That holds true for the military, of course.

In times of turmoil, a dictator's best friend is the military. If you haven't fed them well, they will not have any incentive in suppressing the revolt. You must make the military feel like what

they're getting now is better than what they will be getting if you're gone.

Needless to say, these are very poor leaders (so don't make your goal to be a POS dictator).

To Climb Hierarchies in Violent Environments (Gangs)

Violence and a reputation for violence are important currencies to gain status in gangs.

Being low in warmth can be advantageous for a quick climb.

That being said, once at the top, you still need more skills than just a violent attitude.

People at the very top of well-organized gangs, like the mafia, still gain from a reputation of fairness -albeit a twisted, illegal version of "fairness"-.

To Prevent Abuse in High-Competition & High-Danger Environments

Instilling fear in others can also be useful in high-danger environments.

It can include sports competitions, especially contact sports, or cut-throat business environments.

And of course, high-violence environments, like prisons (see an example from "[The 25th Hour](#)").

Says Baumeister:

A reputation for dangerous, unpredictable aggressiveness, causes others to leave one alone.

(...)

This is the irony of the fighter who never fights because he is known to be such a dangerous fighter that no one is willing to challenge him.

However, life in gangs truly doesn't pay well.
So you probably don't want to go down that road.

Low-Warmth / High Power Looks More Powerful

People who are low in warmth and high in power usually *look* more powerful.

For most non-powerful people, submission and high warmth are signals to avoid confrontations.

And since most people are not powerful, we associate too high levels of friendliness and submission with low-power.

And when we see someone who is being openly snotty, snobbish, and unapproachable, we tend to think they must be high status.

"They can afford" to be low-warmth, we think.

However, in this case, going for what *looks* more powerful is often a trap.

And people who try to look more powerful often end up paying up in real power.

Low-Warm/ High Power: Lots Of Enemies, Few True Allies

Alright, we have seen a few situations in which low-warmth can be an effective strategy.

That being said, for most life situations, you're going to pay a price with low-warmth.

Let's look at the original chart from Fiske's research:

		Competence	
		Low	High
Warmth	High	Paternalistic stereotype low status, not competitive (e.g., housewives, elderly people, disabled people)	Admiration high status, not competitive (e.g., ingroup, close allies)
	Low	Contemptuous stereotype low status, competitive (e.g., welfare recipients, poor people)	Envious stereotype high status, competitive (e.g., Asians, Jews, rich people, feminists)

See the issue?

The problem with individuals low in warmth is that we consider them as outgroup.

And, in people's brains, it's a close step to go from "outgroup" to "enemy".

And that's the problem of being low in warmth: **when you're low in warmth, you make many enemies, but few friends.**

And this is a theme we see over and over on this course and website: friends and allies are power.

Remember in the beginning, when we said that power that lasts uses as little coercive power as possible?

Well, that's the other problem with being lower in warmth: everything you ask people to do, they perceive it as an *imposition* on them. Because people don't want to be led by these "low warmth people".

Example: Jews, The Holocaust, & The Threatened Ego

Leading to WWII many Germans saw Jews as a hyper-potent outgroup (low warmth, high power,).

And Jews did little to assuage those fears and change the German's perceptions. They, by and large, stayed within their ingroups and never took any real steps to be seen more trustworthy, make friends, and increase their "warmth" scores.

So when the Nazis got to power and the repression against the Jews started, most Germans didn't see it as racism.

They saw it as payback time, as "evening the odds", as the battle of the people against the mean and oppressive Jews. They wanted to move them from "low-warmth/high-power" to "low-warmth/low-power", where most people instinctively feel that *all* low-warmth people should dwell.

This story is also relevant because of what it says about the relationships between ego and behavior.

When people feel unhappy with their circumstances, or feel that their ego is threatened, they increase their anger and hatred towards the low-warmth/high-power.

Which is why low-warmth/high-power is a breeding ground for frenemies.

In short: when you're in this quadrant, people might smile at your face because they have to, but when the chance arises, they will trip you.

High Warmth / High Power: The Most Consistently Successful

High-warmth / high-power works best for most life situations.

The advantages include:

- Decreases competition against you
- Increases supportive behavior
- Increases the chances of win-win

While we consider low-warmth individuals to be the outgroup, we consider those high in warm to be “one of us”.

That way, fewer people will want to trip you and beat you, and more people will want to join you and support you.

Feigning Warmth: Strategic Manipulation

Think about it:

Because high warmth is so powerful to make people want to join, support, and help you, you can expect people to try to fake high warmth.

And indeed, you can see it often in dating, beginning of new relationships, and business.

In business, the high-warmth is feigned with prosocial missions and ideals, appeals to togetherness, and by playing up the “fairness” of the deal and what the company is doing for you.

You can expect some elements of this manipulation in most relationships and in most business settings.

There might be more of it in our contemporary culture of “making an impact”, and sometimes it reaches comical levels. See an example here:



Success is not just making money. It's the ability to give.

-Adam Neumann

Pocketed 1,7 billions after giving so much to WeWork and its employees

If you want to be Machiavellian: this is exactly what you should do.

Act to maximize self-interest (low-warmth/high-power) while you talk prosocial (high-warmth/high-power).

If owners and CEOs manage to make the low employees feel like part of the “us” company, they’ll buy-in and work twice as hard.

Fiske has actually shown that when those at the top view those at the bottom as high-warmth/low-power and treat them as such, it can help stabilize the status-quo.

To better lead people on, mix high-warmth with some truth.

Say that money is paramount to make the business work, but that you truly crave doing something positive for the world and the people around you. Say that unluckily sometimes firing is necessary, but that

your ultimate goal is to help people “grow and expand” within your business.

Sponsor prosocial that require little effort, but only do it if it benefits your bottom line.

Needless to say, I’m describing here what some do and why works, but with the hope that you will choose not to do it.

How To Become High-Power

This whole course is designed to increase your power.

Based on what you have done so far:

1. Work to achieve more status, authority, financial power
2. Identify your current submissive behavior and consciously work to root them out
3. Start adding more high-power behavior

You will learn more as you keep on going, including foundational aspects such as voice exercises and posture, and in the last module, the mental aspects.

How To Become High-Warmth

There are two dimensions of warmth:

1. Social (looking friendly)
2. Moral (a reputation for being a fair and ethical person)

Some researches concluded that morality is more important than the social aspects.

That's good news, because social warmth can be time-wasting at times.

And being *too* friendly and smiley can make you look submissive.

But since the moral aspect is superior, take care of your reputation as an ethical player, and then feel free to focus more on efficiency.

Warmth Morality Signs:

- Honesty
- Fairness
- Paying market or above-market wages
- Talking about your values
- Strategically telling and circulating stories that improve your reputation

Going the extra mile surely won't hurt, but you don't need to be a Mother Theresa.

Warmth Social Signs:

First of all:

– Remove yourself from the threat

There seems to be a slight negative inverse correlation between high power and warmth, so you must take the first step in showing people that “you're not a threat”.

Meaning that if you're high power, people tend to put you into the low warmth box. That means that you must take the first step to avoid being seen as an “enemy of the people”.

– Add warmth signals

Here are three easy tips:

1. Flash your eyebrows upwards when you first meet someone
2. Smile
3. Think of people as friends and allies, and all the rest of your body will follow

Again, no need to overdo the big smile or a huge eyebrow flash, but try to modulate it depending on the person.

If they are being very cold and standoffish, it might be the case that they think that you are too low in warmth, so try to be warmer.

If they are below your status, you can overdo the friendly signals to “make up for the difference”.

It’s also always good to ramp up the warmth with lower-status people who can still cause you small troubles, for example, secretaries or civil servants.

Low Warmth Expression

To help you stay away from low-warmth, it’s also helpful to learn the social signs of low warmth that you need to avoid.

They are:

- Mouth with a downward shape (“I’m unhappy with life”)
- Expressions of disgust (“you people are beneath me”)
- Smugness (“I am so much better than you all”)
- Exaggerated, overly dominant poses (use them especially sparingly in 1:1 interactions)
- “I’m better than you” attitude (see the “smart alec” from the previous module)

These are a few examples of “low-warmth” expressions:



In Summary

To sum it up, in most free-forming relationships, which are the majority of our modern world's relationships, **warmth complements and increases your power.**

The mistake that too many men do is to completely erase warmth in an effort to be more "alpha" and dominant.

While that's a good strategy in *some* settings, and we'll see various exceptions as we move forward, your overall strategy is this: **aim to be both high warmth and high power.**

The rest of this course will help you do just that.

Note: The research literature calls "power", "competence". But it truly boils down to power. Probably the original researchers preferred "competence" to go for a more "politically palatable" name.