

2. Styles of Dominance: Pick Yours

Styles of Dominance

I got several variations of this question on my YouTube videos:

@ThePowerMoves, You said that dominant men do X, why do you say now they do Y?

Well, that's because there are *many* ways of being dominant.

You have the intellectuals specializing in intellectual dominance, the meatheads in physical dominance and the high-earning professionals specializing in work-related competence, just to name a few.

Overlap Among Styles

That being said, it's rare to see someone dominant in one aspect and then being extremely powerless in another.

The only exceptions are possibly the purely physical and purely intellectual archetypes.

But even there, it's often more a stereotype than reality.

The very top intellectuals don't back down when someone gets threatening because they have learned to control their mind -and their fears-.

And the physically strong who become all-around powerful rarely if ever are dumbasses.

Done with the intro, let's get down with the archetypes of dominance.

#1. Physical Dominance: The Meatheads

Meatheads exert dominance with the (unstated) threat of physical violence.

Women can (rarely) be in this category, but it's mostly bigger or violent men.

However, don't think that it's only gym rats, street fighters and criminals.

It's not uncommon to find execs and CEOs to also present a layer of physical intimidation.

Trump often uses intimidation, both physically (his infamous handshakes) and verbally:

<https://youtu.be/ToqAfl1-9Bo>

PROS: Physical threats have a visceral impact.

We are all wired to fear physical threats and take them seriously. It works at an emotional, primordial level and if you successfully intimidate your opponents, chances are they won't bother you. As Machiavelli said: it's better to be feared than to be liked.

CONS: Relying solely on intimidation rarely gets you far.

Pure meatheads populate the lower rungs of society. Even rising to the top of criminal organizations requires a brain.

Constant intimidation will result in lots of escalations, and that means lots of troubles and little gains.

And the Peter Principle applies: you win easily only as long as you intimidate weaker opponents. The moment someone feels strong enough to challenge you, you backed yourself into a war.

Beating physical dominance

We will have a specific lesson on this.

But the short of it: in the workplace and most social setting intimidation doesn't punch. Show resolve, and that you are not scared.

#2. Drill Sergeants

Little authority yelling at the top of their lungs

Same style as the meatheads.

But they have formal authority and are actually very safe.

You get drill sergeants in the army of course, but sometimes also in business and, sadly, in some families.

TV shows also bank on the allure of unbound, limitless dominance and authority:

<https://youtu.be/1hmVWkN1O1s>

PROS: Your orders are law

People will execute without batting an eye and most will tiptoe around you afraid of triggering your ire.

CONS: Many will resent you, and you like a tryhard caricature

You look like a little rooster trying too hard to be an authority while actually having *little* authority.

Your power is strictly limited to your domain and it's only enforceable through formal authority and rank. Few people really respect drill sergeants.

Fathers with this style at home are extremely abusive and ruin their children psychologically.

Finally, some drill sergeants end up looking like they are trying to overcompensate and use aggressive commands to make up for self-doubt and to mask an internal lack of self-esteem.

[You can see one more example here](#), with my notes on exactly when you can feel that he is struggling to *appear* “strong”.

Beating drill sergeants

Never go for direct confrontations if you want to stay in their organizations.

All these guys have is their formal authority. If you challenge it, they MUST escalate and/or let you go.

As Trump explains in “[The Art of The Deal](#)”, excel in the drills (or in your willingness to push hard). Then show no fear but respect for their authority and they will come to respect you as well.

Also avoid making it a race where you want to “show them” how strong you are or, worse, how “better than them you are”.

That will make them want to keep picking on you until you quit (“[Can't Hurt Me](#)”).

If you're more of a rebel personality and can't stand being yelled at, I recommend you do not join organizations with drill sergeants.

#3. Holier Than Though: The Smart Alec

Smart alocs leverage knowledge to portray authority.

Smart alocs carry themselves with a “better than you” attitude.

They act aloof and use big words, slow speech rate, personal distance and quotes to show off how smart they are.

They hide behind a facade of knowledge, but don't be swayed: they are playing the dominance game just like every other power-thirsty individual.

Their strategy for social power is elitism and superiority. They're sitting on their throne of wisdom, looking down on everyone and sub-communicating "you're not as good as I am".

If you're his fan, don't take it personally, but Seth Godin is an example of smart alec style:

<https://youtu.be/LSVyi3lOCh4>

The Aggressive Side of Smart Alec Dominance

The Smart Alec can take an ugly side when fighting for status.

Their technique is to get under their opponents' skin and then frame them as not good enough to debate with them or, if they start getting agitated, as brutes who can't hold a conversation.

Basically: the angrier you get with a Smart Alec, the more you confirm their frame and the deeper you dig your hole.

It's a highly, highly, gaslighting experience.

<https://youtu.be/q8foKXiuaOg>

Edit: If you are interested in this style, I later discovered [Ben Shapiro](#) and he's built his whole empire on a Smart Alec style.

PROS: Our society reveres intelligence, and Smart Alecs pass for intelligent

While most people scoff at bullying, they fail to understand that Smart Alecs are verbal bullies, which allows them to keep operating with semi-impunity.

Since we respect intellectuals, Smart Alecs also have easier access to the elites of power.

CONS: It's a limiting style

If you raise your voice, get angry, chase money or act dominant in any other way, you look out of character. Smart Alecs are also unrelatable. People will not want to make friends with you and some will (secretly) despise you.

Beating smart alecs

it's paramount that you don't take anything personally: they're good at getting under your skin.

Smart Alecs often have big egos, and the highway to unseat them is to insinuate they're empty balloons of hot air and big words.

A great way to do so?

Attack their intellectual achievements.

You won't understand the words, but look at this video for 20 seconds and notice how tense the smart alec becomes:

<https://youtu.be/D2bnLJSV3uI>

When Corona -a typical "master of the universe"- raises his index finger, he said *"I will buy you and put you in my garden to write books, maybe you'll manage to sell one"*.

PERFECT move against a smart alec: it insinuates that he's not good at what he supposedly should be good at: being an intellectual.

At that point, Corona should have stepped back and calmly accuse his opponent of being spiteful (something everyone would have agreed on).

Unluckily instead the Smart Alec manages to get under his skin by calling him "illiterate", a typical smart alec move.

But what do you do if the Smart Alec is well accomplished?

There is always something you can find.

To Seth Godin for example, you could say that his books are all fluff and zero content. Or that to write his only good book he had to partner with Steven Pressfield (that would be [Linchpin](#)).

To Alan Greenspan, another top smart alec, you could say he single-handedly created the [financial crisis](#) (not fully true, but feel free to play dirty with those who play dirty themselves).



Notice the haughty “I know better than you” expression

#4. Masters Of The Universe

Mix physical aggression and confidence with lots of resources.

Masters of The Universe -MTU- temper their physical aggression with suits and the trappings of more civilized social power.

They think of themselves as both smart and strong, and they have the confidence of those who believe that nothing and nobody can stop them.

One great MTU example is Jamie Dimon, CEO of JPMorgan.

Dimon said he would beat Trump because he is "as smart and as tough as he is". But I'm pretty sure Dimon thinks he is actually both smarter and tougher.

Dimon, as MTUs often do, also engages in bullying behavior -we'll see that later-.

[Barry Pepper's character in The 25h Hour](#) is another example of MTU from Wall Street, where many MTUs reside.

Ed Mylett is yet another example:

<https://youtu.be/vQfuFO45eA8>

Notice how he talks about "ripping heads off", "emasculating people" and barging his way through success.

Sure, he says it was a mistake, but he says so *after* he's done it.

PROS: Most reliable path to success

These are the guys that most reliably reach top dog positions in their businesses and lines of work. After all, mixing civilized aggression, confidence and an unrelenting focus on making money is one of the most reliable ways for dominant individuals to get rich.

CONS: Fragile egos

Since they believe they are limitless, losses can be psychologically devastating on MTUs. They often read little, which means they often don't develop much mentally. Their self-esteem, built around always winning, is very fragile.

When they lose... They can lose it.

MTUs relationships are also poor since they often score high in narcissism.

Should You Be a Master of The Universe:

A touch of the MTUs' hubris won't hurt, but ultimately the confidence of MTUs is built on materialism and very fragile foundations.

You want your personal power to be independent on external sources and circumstances (“Ultimate Power”, the bonus ebook goes into this).

#5. Attention Hoggers: The Jesters

Attention hoggers dominate by having the spotlight always on them.

Attention hoggers are:

High energy

Loud

Mischief

Their weapon of choice to dominate others is social embarrassment. Indeed they have two superpowers:

1. Can play outside the rules (which helps them control the flow)
2. Have the freedom of embarrassing (both themselves and the people around)

Example: Russel Brand

https://youtu.be/T_igJXczO9w

PROS: If you enjoy that attitude, it can be a fun life

CONS: Not very powerful

The jester is one of the least powerful roles when it comes to dominance and power. Most jesters indeed take a kid-like role against power which people don't take seriously.

And it's often also not very sexy (Brand is the exception, not the rule).

Beating Jesters

Most people deal with them in three ways: 1. following their lead 2. confronting them and escalating (example below of Macron) 3. looking lost, marginalized and uncomfortable (example above).

In the example above you can see that the only man in the audience is neither following Brand's lead nor confronting him.

To deal with these guys I recommend you:

1. Don't laugh unless you want to laugh
2. Take yourself less seriously (a great thing to do with life in general, BTW)
3. Don't kiss up to them

Escalating is OK only if the audience is NOT on their side. If people are laughing, you can't escalate or you look butthurt (we have a case study later).

Example: Jester Teenager Against Power (Macron)

<https://youtu.be/102vFxWI-Ls>

Macron has been widely criticized for getting so serious and angry towards a kid with a childish joke.

Confronting was actually OK here, but he should have done it in a more relaxed, less angry tone. He looked too butt-hurt, and that "call me Mr. President" made him sound pompous and full of himself.

#6. Flash & Confidence: The Upcoming Young Gun

Mixes physical threat with attention-grabbing flash.

I call it “young gun” because it’s a style suited for those who are not yet at the top.

It’s the style of the new kid on the block.

These guys talk loud and big, dress snazzy, aim to the top and always make a big show.

McGregor is one such example:

<https://youtu.be/571Mi6Lfi4U>

McGregor though kept the YG style even as he reached the pinnacle, and that is also one of the main reasons why he got so popular.

PROS: Great style to attract lots of attention (and followers

It’s great if you need to get your name out. Be crass, make a ruckus and people will pay attention.

And if a top dog in your niche takes you up on your big talk, you can piggy-ride on their notoriety for a quick ride to the top (Greene, [The 50th Law of Power](#)).

CONS: It’s childish and one single loss can wipe you out

After a while, YG antics get tiring and once you lose you can easily get a reputation for a big mouth.

YGs also frontload their power and show all their cards. You know what they’re about and there’s little hidden.

That’s a big drawback compared to other styles that can leverage the intimidation factor of mystery (who knows what sort of aces are up their sleeves?).

It’s also a very polarizing style, netting you big fans but also lots of enemies drooling at your downfall.

Finally, be careful of the mental crash that follows a loss. After the YG spent so many times pounding their chest and bragging how will they manage a loss?

Many YGs have been crushed after a loss.

Have you seen or heard any from McGregor after his loss to Khabib? Me neither..

Beating upcoming young guns

if you're at the top, don't make the all too common mistake of addressing YGs.

When you take their threats seriously you lower yourself at their level and raise them to yours.

Don't let their games get to you, but if you can't help it, use the anger as fuel to work harder and longer. Then whoop their asses when the time comes. And after you win, place the last nail in the coffin by fueling the "empty big mouths" accusations.

If you are below a YG in the pecking order, don't try to out-do them at their flashy games unless it comes naturally to you: why should you play in a terrain that's not yours?

However, if you enjoy flash and flamboyance, copying and out-doing their shenanigans can be a powerful way to mess with their heads (example below).

Examples: Valentino Rossi & McGregor

Valentino Rossi, a long-dominant figure in motorbike racing, kept a Young Gun attitude even after reaching the top.

His career has actually been *built* on *total* domination of his adversaries, including the mental domination and physical domination. He used ridicule, off-track antics and, sometimes, outright aggression both on tracks and off tracks.

See here Rossi first physically threatening with an hyper-aggressive overtake and later mentally toying with one of his main opponents:

<https://youtu.be/kliDCPCN4BQ>

I learned hugely from Valentino Rossi's career on the dynamics of power and dominance.

His power moves, his rise to dominance, how he built the biggest fanbase that motorbike has ever seen (people are attracted to flashy confidence).

And, later, I learned hugely from his mistakes and his fall from grace as well, including the weaknesses of the YG dominance style.

As Valentino got older, the adversaries who wanted to unsettle him tried his own flashy games against him (Jorge Lorenzo).

That's the technique of "mirror your adversaries" in [The 48 Laws of Power](#) and, often, it worked ([this is an example of Lorenzo provoking Rossi and copying his off-track antics](#)).

[Here Marc Marquez](#) overtakes Rossi going outside the tarmac, which spoofed the historical overtake that Rossi had done in the video you saw above.

Rossi seemed to react well, but two lions can't stay at peace for too long.

These two had some of the most bitter downfall in the history of sports, culminating with Valentino Rossi kicking Marquez in the most dramatic scene the sport has ever seen:

<https://youtu.be/kliDCPCN4BQ>

Marquez had managed to get under Rossi's skin -and I say that as a huge Rossi fan-.

However, it's not so much to Marquez' credit. It's indeed often very easy to get under YG's skins when they starting losing their grip on dominance.

The stories of Rossi and McGregor are very similar, as they are both similar to many other rises and falls of YG.

The Exception: When The YG Stays on Top

Muhammad Ali was also an eternal YG.

But he escaped the crash and burn common to most YG dominance archetypes.

Why?

Because in most people's mind he was never unsettled by a later upcomer.

People only remembered and associated his bragging with the victories, and not with his losses and his mental issues.

#7. Flashy Trendsetters: The Dandies

Notoriety is the dandies' power. They feed on people's attention and their reward is their attention.

Dandies reward with their presence and punish with their disinterest. They are artists, hipsters, VIPs, dandies, fashion stars, and trend-setters, like Miranda Priestly:

<https://youtu.be/-qdHE9-8spU>

Or you can listen to the song "[You're So Vain](#)", dedicated to a typical dandy.

PROS: Lots of people clamor for your attention

CONS: Fickle

It's only powerful as long as you're on the uptrend. Since your power

is based on your notoriety, as soon as you become yesterday's news, you're toast.

Beating dandies

Ignore them and live your life the way you want it.

But if you must go to war, never try to get their attention. You win the war by getting more attention than they have and/or making them old news (see [Kardashian with Paris Hilton](#)).

#8. Social Skills Power: The Charmers

Their power is social seduction

This is the prototype of the suave man. It's versatile and adapts to different environments, it's sexually attractive and makes lots of friends without many enemies.

George Clooney and Bill Clinton are the most stereotypical examples of charming. And for a good reason: they're good.

<https://youtu.be/6JIF-xmsYKU>

Notice there is a certain overlap between charmers and seducers. Charmers are indeed social seducers.

PROS: Social chameleons per excellence

They are super resilient. Since their power is not built on winning or on being better, they rarely lose. They are ladies magnet, people think they're cool and everyone wants to be around them. They can make fun of themselves and openly admit their shortcomings. Finally, the very good ones manage to be high quality, high-status men in almost any environment.

CONS: very little cons.

#9. Domain Authority

Trust me, I know how it's done: the power of skills

The domain authority is the knowledge and skills you develop when you get really good at something.

This is basically what Napoleon Hill calls “specialized knowledge” in “Think and Grow Rich”.

The Wolf in the movie Pulp Fiction is an obvious example of dominance underpinned by domain authority:

https://youtu.be/h_rnjp1PAk8

Here are the essential elements of domain authority:

1. Difficulty

The more difficult it is to reach mastery in a certain skill the more power the domain authority confers.

2. Criticality

The more critical a domain authority is, the more power it confers. In the video example above the domain authority provides a highly critical benefit: getting out of troubles.

And that's why he can “bark orders” to inveterate criminals.

3. Usefulness

The more sought after a skill is, the more it will confer power.

PROS: It paves the way to acquiring resources

I'd go as far as to say that you *need* to develop at least some domain authority in life. People without any specialized knowledge struggle to become high quality men.

CONS: Some domain authorities don't transfer well

Sometimes highly specialized domain authorities carry no power outside the domain itself.

Some domains, like coding and IT, don't help you improve social skills.

But this all on you: as long as you don't become a one trick pony where you *only* know about your own profession, there are no real cons to domain authority.

#10. The Charismatic

Follow me, I know the way

Charismatic leaders deeply believe in something.

They are on a mission, they are going somewhere. And they want you to join them.

Look at the eyes of Nikola Tesla: those are the spirited eyes of a highly charismatic man.



PROS: Easy to pick average people to follow you

Very powerful with people who don't have their own mission, or with the masses who want someone to follow and look up to.

CONS: Limited power and harder to sell to higher quality people

It can be a rather circumstantial power. If people don't care about your mission, "charismatic" becomes "oddball".

In the long run, people also get tired of big missions with little pay-offs.

#11. Sexual Power: The Seducers

Charmers on sexual steroids

Seducers use sexual lure and sexual energy to influence others. They are like the charmers, but on steroids. Sexual steroids.

Example from the movie Catch Me If You Can:

<https://youtu.be/DCOm4osfWn8>

PROS: Sex works

They can exert some of the strongest pull of them all.

And pull is good: “pulling” means that people *want* to do you favors and be influenced by you. And when the victim is hooked, seducers are the ultimate “masters of puppets”.

CONS: It only works with a subset of the population

It works little within the same sex. As a matter of fact, some individuals of the same sex will resent the seducers.

Some dominant styles improve with age, but this one often doesn't, and especially so for women. Time can leave the seducers like empty shells of their former powerful selves.

#12. Cold & Distant: The Cold Blooded

Their power is social pressure: they unsettle all other “normal” people.

They could smile at you now, kill you in half an hour and don't feel a thing.

Putin is the best such example, and a one in a generation man when it comes to social power.

Obama is a shrewd politician and a smart man, but he couldn't hold a candle to Putin.

Donald Trump made of domination his winning formula, and the first time I saw Trump with Putin was the first time I saw Trump kissing up to someone.

<https://youtu.be/co8s0egftsc>

PROS: Almost everyone will defer to you

It makes people kiss up to you and it's one of the most powerful styles to make people fear you.

CONS: It's no fun

And it's not easy to make friends. It must be your type of character, or you'll end up miserable under the burden of such a heavy mask. Somewhat best suited for psychopaths, emotionally unavailable men and individuals from cultures that scorn emotional expressions.

Beating cold blooded dominance

Their power is in the social vacuum they create. They don't smile, don't joke, and talk little.

And the tendency for us is to do something to feel the void. Smile, talk, crack a joke... But they won't smile back and it that will make you look like you're kissing up to them.

Successfully dealing with CB means you must become a CB: cold and distant.

Been There, Done That: The Dominant Archetype

They exude the calm and confidence of who's been at the top for a long time.

Finally, we get to the crowning of social power.

With little to prove and long experience behind them, these guys are the ultimate archetypes of dominance.

They mix the knowledge of their long experience with the coercive power of their goons and the power of the vast resources they accumulated.

They follow the law of social effort, getting people to move for them with the smallest gesture while they themselves move little and slowly.

<https://youtu.be/9GUz9OLYtzk>

PROS: Possibly the best mix of them all

People respect you and admire you. It's one of the few styles that can make people both like you, fear you and wish they were you at the same time.

CONS: You need to earn these stripes

It's difficult rising to power with this style. You should probably instead ease into this style after you've already reached a certain level of power.

What's The Best & What Should You Pick?

Different styles suit different personalities, situations and different stages of life.

Most of all though, I recommend you decide depending on your personality.

In terms of power, on average, the more masculine type who speaks and moves less will always appear more powerful, influential and authoritative than the ones making a big show (ie.: young guns and jesters).

For Men

Within our current society and to enjoy a good social life I would probably recommend you develop the social skills of the social

charmers -you're doing it with this course-.
And then add a bit of a charismatic edge or a touch of the Master of The Universe's confidence and dominance.

I recommend you to specialize in one or two realms in life so that you can develop domain authority in your line of work, which also ensures your financial success.

But as much as you specialize, you shouldn't specialize in one area of dominance to the point that it creates Achilles' heels on your whole persona.

That is the case for the Smart Alecs and for the Meatheads, both going too far in one direction without compensating.
The Smart Alecs disregards the social skills too much and, sometimes, the physical. And the Meatheads disregards the intellectual too much.

When that happens, you are powerless outside of your element.
Great to go as high as possible in a very specific domain, but not good for social power and an all-around successful life.

For Women

Domain authority is also important for women if they want to become financially independent or build a good career.

The "dandy" style can fit a woman well, too.

Otherwise, whenever we're talking about "dominance", we are more in the males' realm.

So for women, this was more of a theoretical lesson as compared to men.

But female readers can still take something from the charmers' style - albeit less direct and outspoken- and the seducers -albeit less "hunter style" and more coquettish.