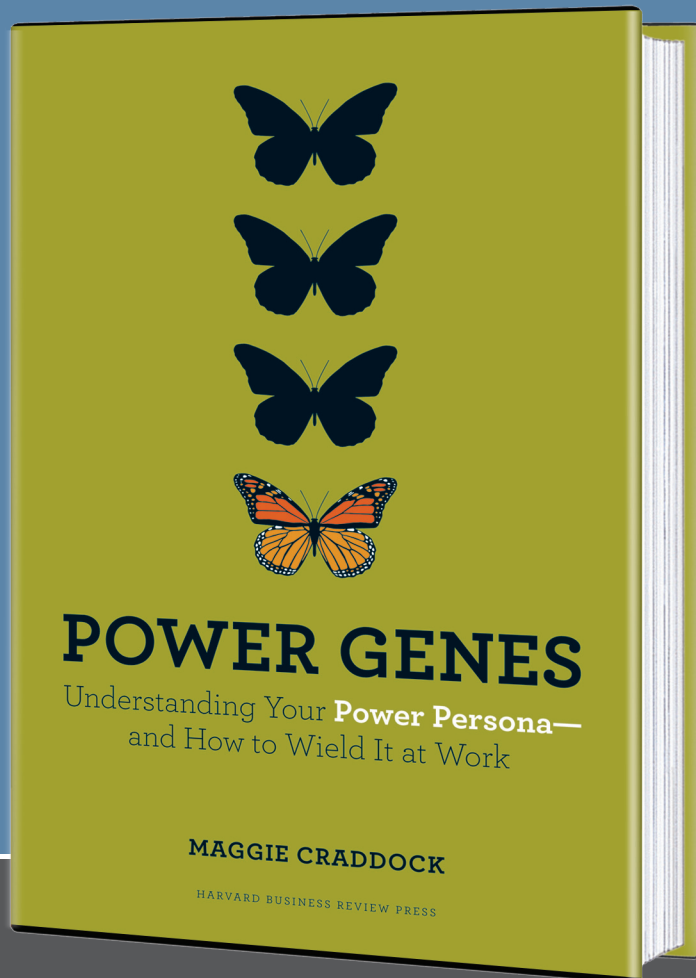




**Harvard  
Business  
Review  
Press**

# Identifying the link between family history and professional performance.



*Available in June*

Have you ever wondered if family structure can affect the way individuals interact with and deal with people and power at work? Did that office bully push people around on the playground when he was a kid? Was today's overachiever yesterday's anxious child?

In her new book ***Power Genes: Understanding Your Power Persona — and How to Wield It at Work*** (June 21, 2011), executive coach Maggie Craddock identifies the link between personal and family history — and professional performance. By viewing an individual's professional style through the lens of the family framework, individuals can develop empathy and insight into their own and others' behavior. The key to understanding these "Power Genes" comes from grasping how emotional history plays into spontaneous reactions.

Craddock identifies four key "power personas" — Pleaser, Charmer, Commander, Inspirer — using the Power Grid, a matrix that compares internal emotional reactions and external behavioral responses.

By using the Power Grid in conjunction with existing tools such as Myers-Briggs, individuals can learn to incorporate the results of these and other well-known standardized tests into an action plan for developing more agile and effective responses on the job, and bettering their workplace relationships. Providing a unique way of looking at the people we work "with" — ***Power Genes*** shows us how to kick old habits and use power more effectively at work. I hope you will consider this book for review or feature attention.

→ *See the back page for additional story ideas.*

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**QUIZ:**

# What's Your Power Persona?

**1 Growing up, did you feel that...**

- a. your caretakers didn't pay much attention to your needs as a child?
- b. you could outsmart the authority figures in your family system?
- c. one of your parents was the main disciplinarian?
- d. there was an evenhanded balance of power between your parents?

**2 As a child did you...**

- a. take on adult responsibilities to keep the family system functioning (e.g. working through summer vacation or parenting a sibling)?
- b. serve as a primary source of emotional support for one of your parents?
- c. strive to emulate the dominant authority figure in your family?
- d. get praised for questioning the status quo?

**3 On the job do you...**

- a. consistently do the "grunt work" others avoid?
- b. focus more on results than process?

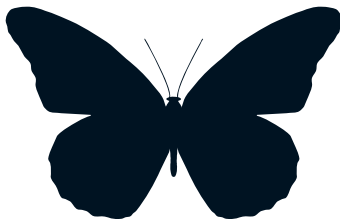
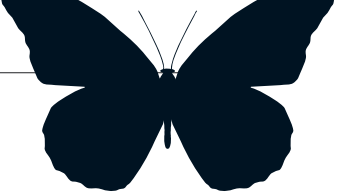
- c. constantly feel like you are moving faster than others around you?
- d. expect senior management to consider the greater good as well as the bottom line?

**4 In the workplace do you...**

- a. find it difficult to speak up if you feel you are being overlooked, underpaid or treated unfairly?
- b. avoid meetings you consider unnecessary?
- c. get feedback that others feel intimidated by your reactions or tone?
- d. tend to be the first person to question outdated assumptions or processes?

**5 When dealing with co-workers, do you find yourself...**

- a. noticing details that others miss?
- b. withdrawing from your peers under pressure?
- c. being asked your opinion in business situations where there are no official rules to guide the group?
- d. making sure to credit others for their ideas and contributions?



STYLE	STRENGTH	BLIND SPOTS	EXAMPLES
<b>Pleasers</b>	Highly intuitive Good listeners Superb diplomats Hardworking	Difficulty advocating for themselves Need for external validation Loyal to a fault Personalize professional criticism	Cynthia Cooper Thich Nhat Hanh Elie Wiesel Mother Teresa
<b>Charmers</b>	Produce incentive-driven results Master problem solvers Powerful change agents Keen sense of how to influence others	Focused on results — not process May overextend themselves Tendency to isolate See emotional vulnerability as weakness	Darryl Strawberry Angelina Jolie Ivan Boesky Frank Sinatra
<b>Commanders</b>	Strong will to win Respect for authority and hierarchy Resilient and decisive leaders Self-confident	Values system over individual Intolerant and insensitive Impatient Tunnel vision	Jack Welch Norman Schwarzkopf Margaret Thatcher George Washington
<b>Inspires</b>	Charismatic Lead by example Visionary Treat others as equals	Politically naive Trouble dealing with red tape Emphasize strategy over tactics Risk burnout	Jimmy Carter Richard Branson Margaret Mead Joseph Campbell

Most people operate across quadrants and can exhibit the strengths and/or blind spots associated with more than one power style, depending upon the situation.

**MOSTLY A, you're a "Pleaser"**

*Pleasing* as a style exemplifies people that wield power by attempting to connect with others at a personal level. Scarcity issues within the family system are at the heart of this style. Due to outside stressors, which can range from financial struggles to preoccupation with a sick relative, Pleasers often didn't get the attention they craved from their caretakers early in life. As a result, Pleasers often grow up hungry for validation and are hardwired to take care of others. They are also easily triggered by the withdrawal of approval.

The *Charmer* power style is exemplified by people with an intensity of focus that both intimidates and seduces others into compliance. Charmers often have little respect for formal authority because they were required to soothe an emotionally needy parent in life. Whether they came from a broken home or simply a home where one of the parents turned to the kids rather than their spouse for emotional support, Charmers often learned to triangulate and manipulate others to get their needs met.

**MOSTLY B, you're a "Charmer"****MOSTLY C, you're a "Commander"**

*Commanders* operate with a results orientation and tend to foster a sense of urgency in others. The family dynamic underlying the Commander power style tends to be a model of rigid adherence to rules and a strict hierarchy of authority. Often, a Commander has grown up in a family system devoted to sports, religion, the military, or any larger system that reinforces discipline and a strict code of conduct.

The *Inspirer* power style is characterized by individuals who tend to be innovative thinkers and operate with a consistent commitment to the greater good. Inspirers have an altruistic reflex that causes them to support people and causes they believe in without stopping to calculate what's in it for them first. The family systems that foster Inspirers often value self-expression over conformity, and the caregivers in such systems are often willing to make personal sacrifices to achieve professional excellence in areas such as artistic performance or scientific excellence.

**MOSTLY D, you're an "Inspirer"**

# POWER GENES



## ABOUT THE AUTHOR |



**Maggie Craddock** is an executive coach and author of *The Authentic Career: Following the Path of Self-Discovery to Professional Fulfillment*. Prior to coaching, she received two Lipper Awards for managing the top mutual fund in its class nationwide. She is an Ackerman-certified family therapist.

**“Regardless of where you fit on the Power Grid, understanding Maggie Craddock’s insight that who you are and where you come from impact how you are perceived by others is critical to becoming a more effective leader.”**

Brian P. Hull | Group Managing Director,  
UBS Wealth Management Americas

Understanding Your  
Power Persona —  
AND HOW TO WIELD IT AT WORK

## STORY IDEAS |

### **How does family structure affect our professional relationships?**

Personal success can be enhanced by uncovering how our personal relationship with power on the job mimics the power dynamics experienced in our family upbringing. Emotional and behavioral triggers established in family systems often determine whether we lash out in anger or seek a deeper level of understanding when our power is being threatened at work.

### **Is it time for a professional change?**

Maggie Craddock's Power Grid can be used to assess whether we can achieve our professional ambitions in our current work environment, or whether it's time for a transition to a new career path that better aligns with our strengths and instincts.

### **Improving workplace relationships by understanding our power personas.**

Some people become overly focused on gaining another's approval in the workplace. Others micromanage under stress. Using Craddock's power quadrant, we can determine our own power persona as well as understand the personas of our colleagues to better our relationships at work.

### **Dealing with conflict at work.**

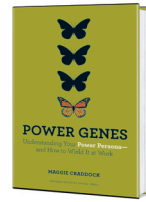
The most important conflicts in business are often the conflicts we have within ourselves. By coming to understand the roots of our style differences, or power genes, we can learn to operate more powerfully on the job.

### **Communicating our value at work.**

Identifying our own power persona, and those of the people around us, will help determine the necessary steps to communicate the value of the contributions we are making more clearly and persuasively.

### **Why companies need a balance of "power types" to succeed.**

Individuals' early experiences shape their reactions to situations, making each power persona important to the success and everyday balance of an organization.



## **POWER GENES**

Understanding Your  
**Power Persona** – and How  
to Wield It at Work

MAGGIE CRADDOCK

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