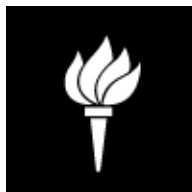


How Power both Makes and Breaks Leaders: The Importance of Goals and Perspective-Taking

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NEW YORK UNIVERSITY

A private university in the public service

The Powerful Seem to Take Assertive Action and Care Less About What Others Think of Them

Political Decisions



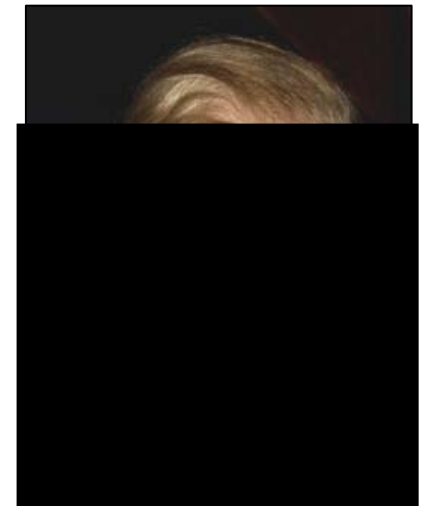
Business Decisions



Individual Decisions



Grooming Choices

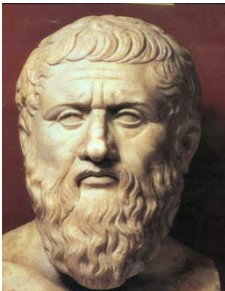


Two Types of Power Motivation

All people seeking power have a deep desire to make an impact on the world around them. But the type of influence people seek comes in two forms.

Plato and Power

Seek power to benefit others.
Power is wielded to maximize the collective good and to benefit of subordinates.



Machiavelli and Power

Seek power for personal gain.
Power is wielded for self-interest.



Power Motivation

Two Separate Types

Personalized power motivation

- **Desire for self-serving influence, associated with:**
 - Acquisition of prestigious possessions Winter, 1973
 - Elevated testosterone after dominating an opponent in competition Schultheiss et al., 1999
 - Escalation in military conflict Magee & Langner, 2008

Socialized power motivation

- **Desire for other-serving influence, associated with:**
 - Perceptions of oneself as responsible
 - Choosing a helping profession Winter & Stewart, 1978
 - Approving a drug that saves lives Magee & Langner, 2008

Broad Effects of Power

- ◆ By definition the powerful are less dependent on others. Therefore...
 1. Power **reveals** the person
 - With power, a person's true motivations emerge
 2. Power affects how much **attention** people pay to others.
 - To be in power means more eyes are focused on you, but the flipside is that you are less focused on others than you might need to be.
 3. Power **makes** the person.
 - Power alters basic psychological processes: Power makes people more assertive and confident.

What is Power?

- ◆ Asymmetric control over valued resources in social relations

Magee & Galinsky, 2008 (Fiske, 1993; Keltner et al. 2003; Thibaut & Kelley, 1959)

- Power varies from situation to situation and relationship to relationship depending on specific resources or outcomes
-
- ◆ This structural difference translates directly into psychological experience

Manipulating Power

- ◆ Roles
 - Manager-Subordinate
 - Control over division of resources
- ◆ Strength of outside alternatives (e.g., negotiations)
- ◆ Seating position: Head of table, Professor's chair
- ◆ Recalling experiences with power
- ◆ Measuring power using a personality scale

- ◆ All of these ways of creating and activating power produce the exact same effects and consequences

- ◆ These effects occur for undergraduates, MBA students, and executives, as well as with nationally-representative samples

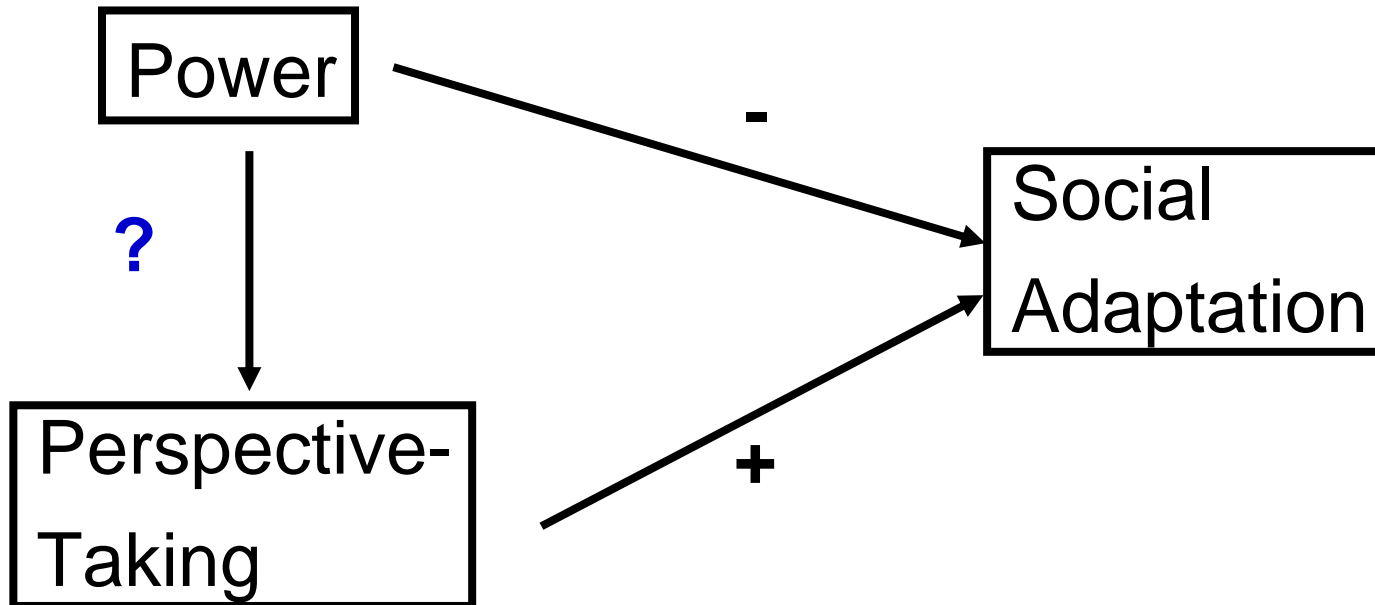


The First Effect of Power

The Powerful Pay Less Attention to Others

Power and Perspective-Taking have Opposing Effects on Social Adaptation

Perspective-takers are good social adapters, people with power are not



Does power reduce perspective-taking?



Taking Others' Visual Perspectives

With your dominant hand, as quickly as you can, draw a capital letter E on your forehead using the marker on the table

Direction of the E

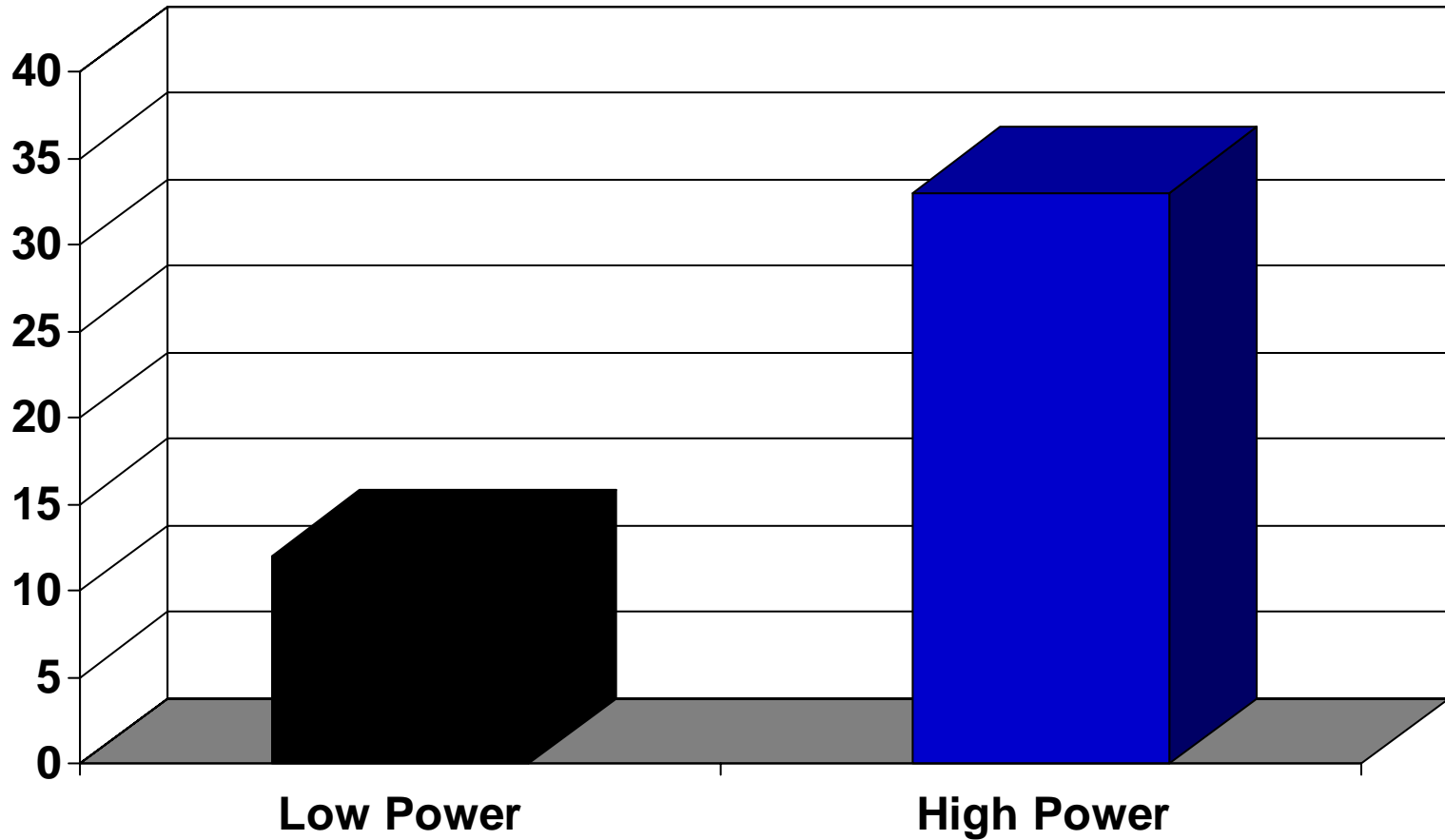
Other-focused E



Self-focused E



Self-Focused: \exists



Failures of Perspective-Taking and Fraud





The Second Effect of Power: Power Makes the Person

**Power Alters Basic Psychology of
the Power-Holder:
Increases Action-Orientation and
Confidence**



High-Power Manipulation

Please recall a particular incident in which you had power over another individual or individuals. By power, we mean a situation in which you controlled the ability of another person or persons to get something they wanted, or were in a position to evaluate those individuals. Please describe this situation in which you had power—what happened, how you felt, etc.



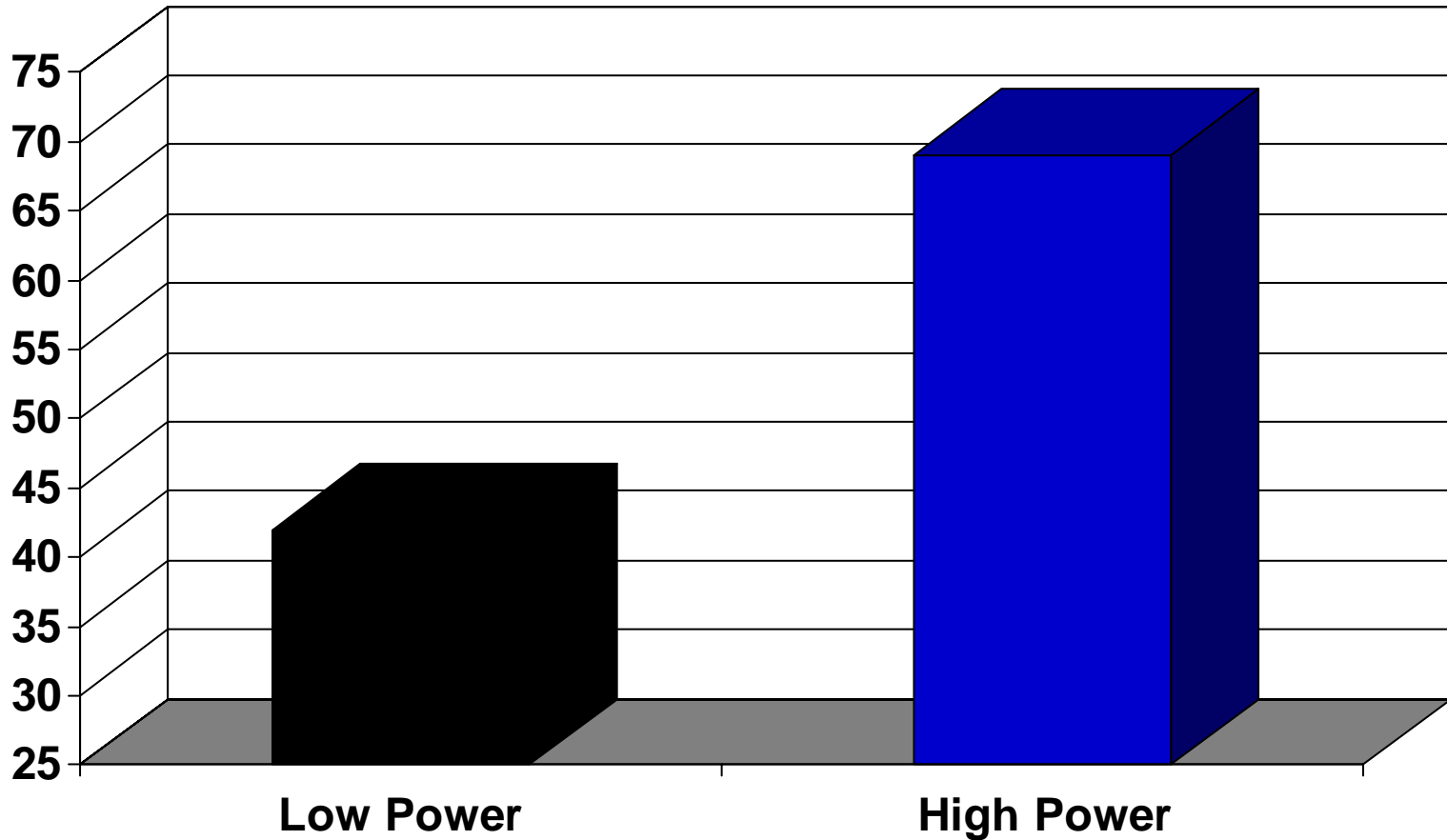
Low-Power Manipulation

Please recall a particular incident in which **someone else had power over you**. By power, we mean a situation in which **someone had control over your ability to get something you wanted, or was in a position to evaluate you**. Please describe this situation in which you did not have power—what happened, how you felt, etc.

The Annoying Fan



Action Against Fan



Hurricane Katrina

Power → Certainty

◆ Certainty

- assuredness or confidence

“I will tell you something. We are going to restore law and order. We will do what it takes to bring law and order to our region.”

*Kathleen Blanco
Governor, LA*



◆ Uncertainty

- doubt, hesitation, or having incomplete knowledge

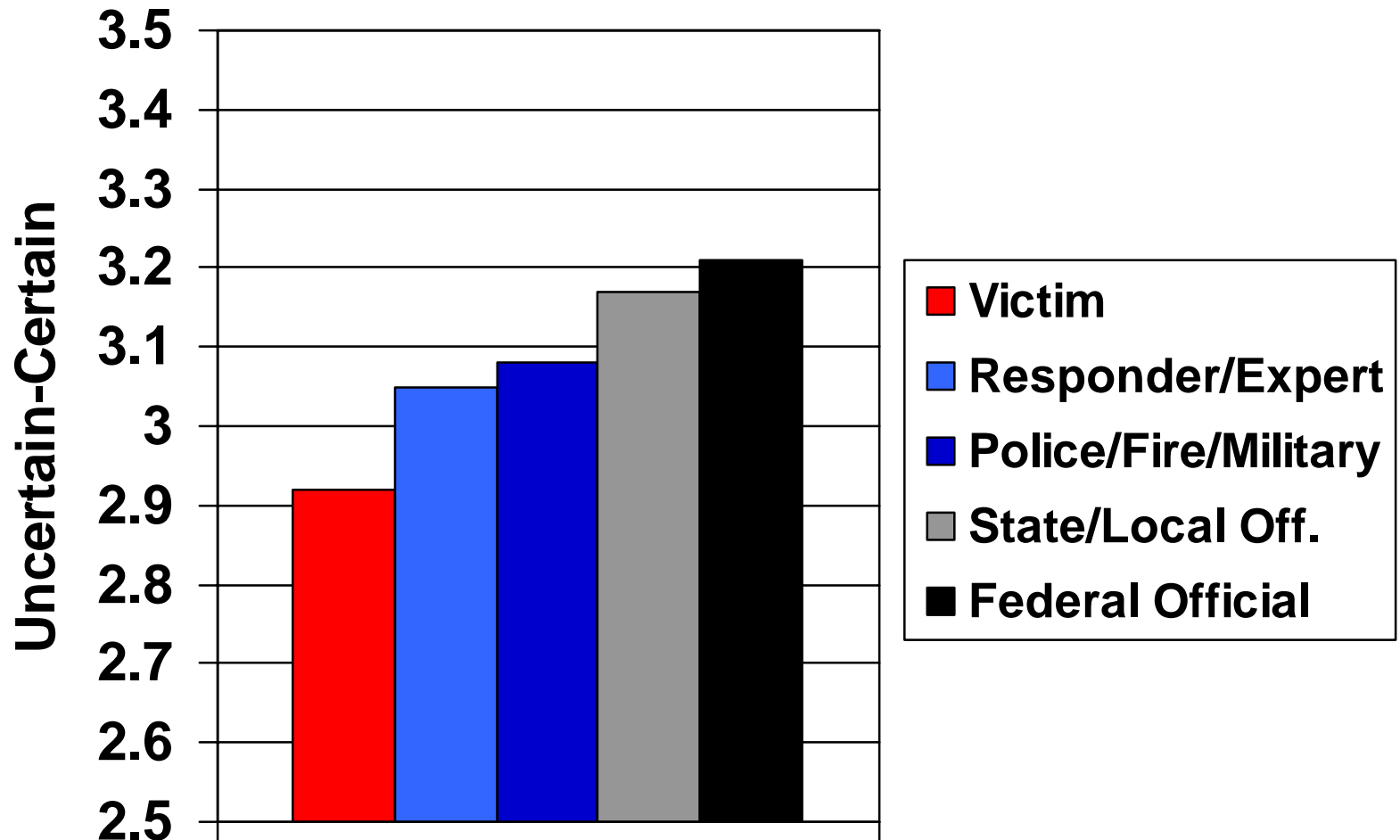
“My brother stayed on the beach. I don't know if he's dead or alive.”

John Boudreaux, victim



Hurricane Katrina

Power → Certainty





How to Harness Power to Achieve Leadership

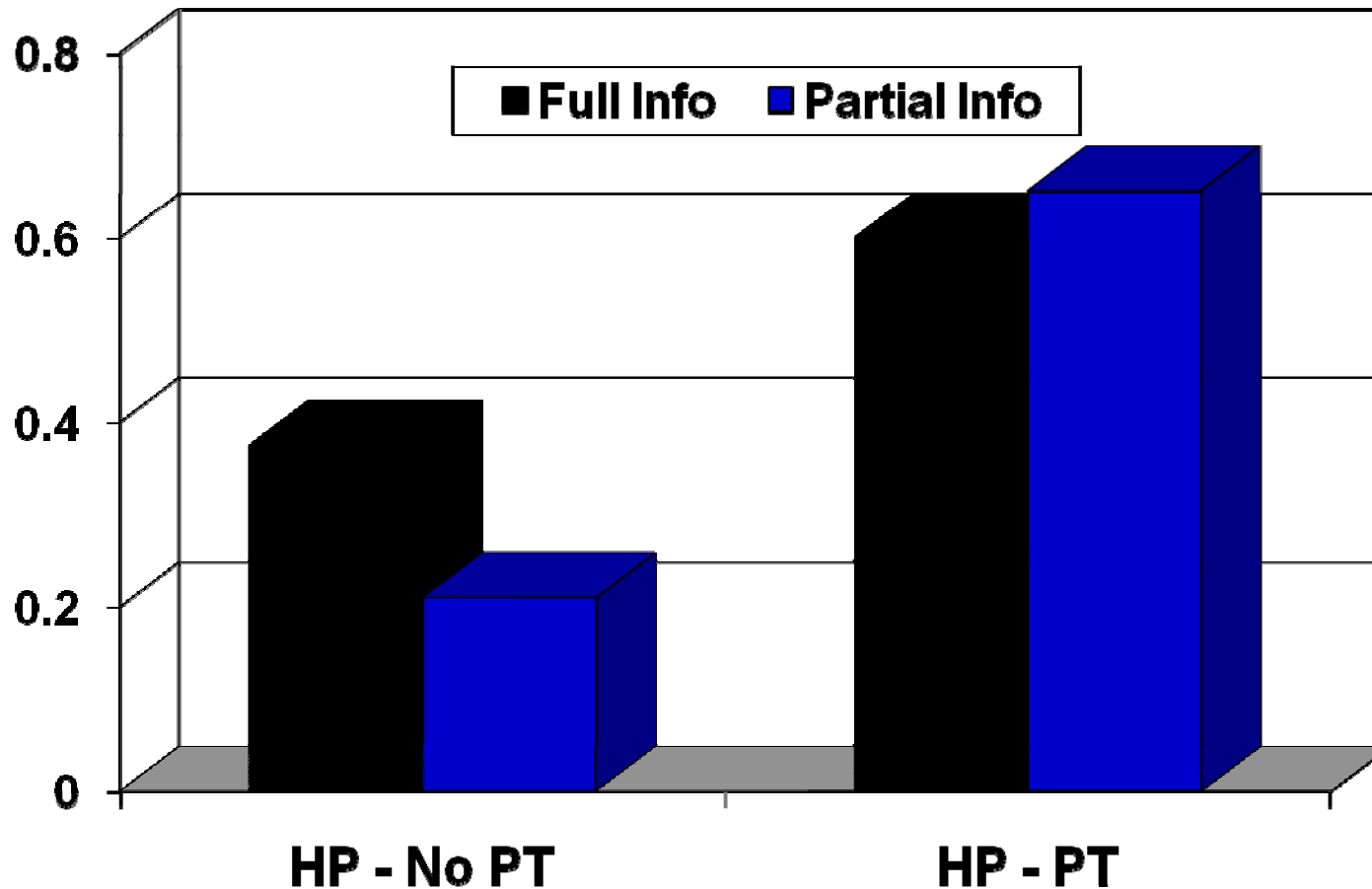
The Basis of Leadership: Power with Perspective-Taking

- ◆ Power with perspective-taking may lead to particularly constructive organizational outcomes
 - Leadership is like driving a car.
 - Power as the gas, perspective-taking as the steering wheel
- ◆ Effective leadership requires acceleration and prudent steering – power coupled with perspective-taking
 - Perspective-taking without agency is ineffective, and agency without perspective-taking is dangerous and irresponsible

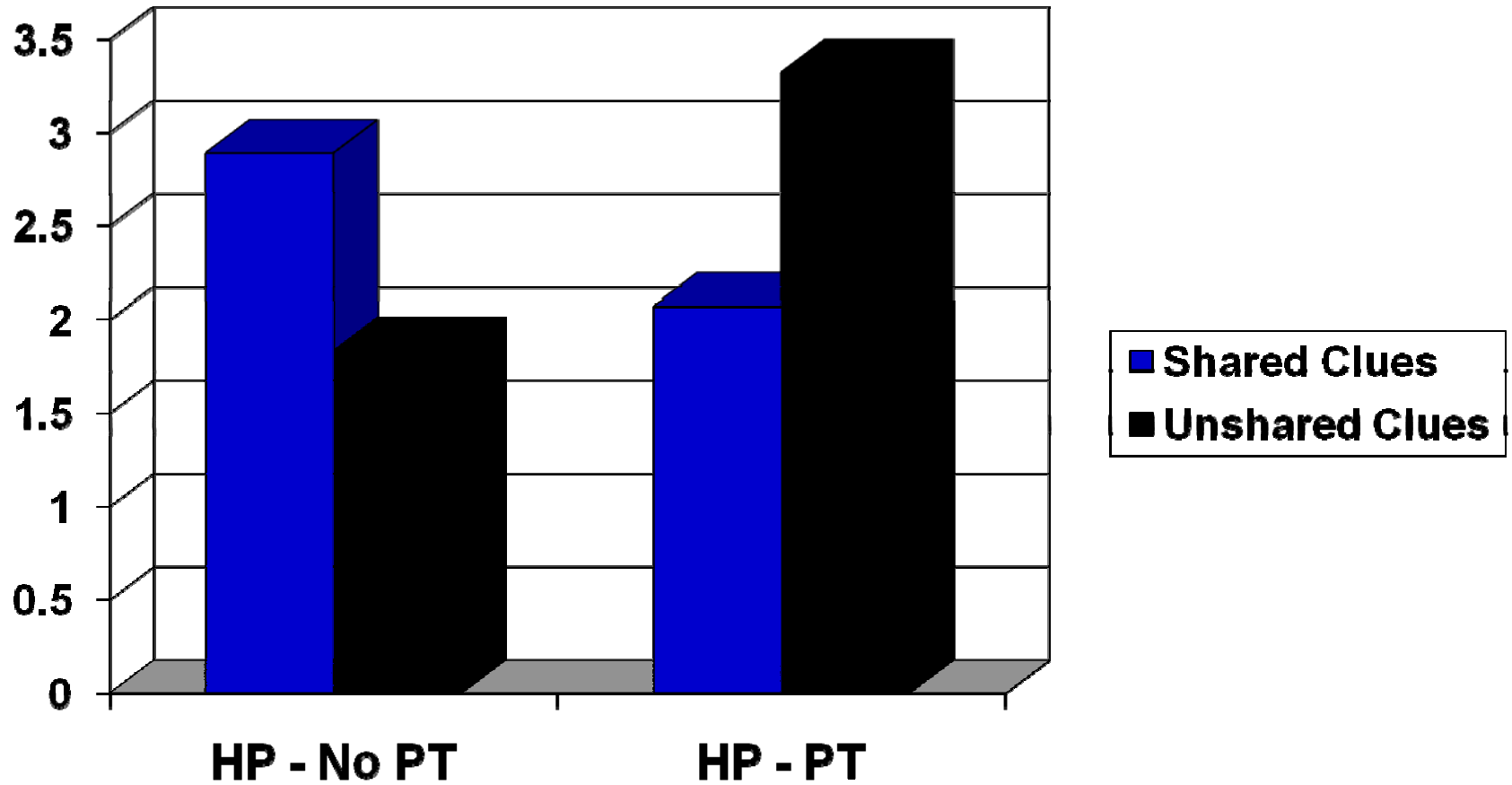
Effects of Power and Perspective-Taking on Dyadic Decision Making

- ◆ Task
 - A murder mystery with four suspects. The partial information packet suggested a false suspect but the full information revealed the true suspect
- ◆ Design
 - Power Manipulation
 - Assigned to either boss or employee role
 - Perspective Taking Manipulation
 - Asked to take the other person's perspective or think about what they themselves were going to do in the discussion
 - Information Distribution Manipulation
 - In each dyad one person had full information and the other only had partial
- ◆ Outcome Measures
 - Dyadic decision
 - Discussion of shared vs. unshared clues

Percentage of Dyads with the Correct Decision



Results Discussion of Shared/Unshared Clues



Effects of Power and Perspective-Taking on Expressions of Justice

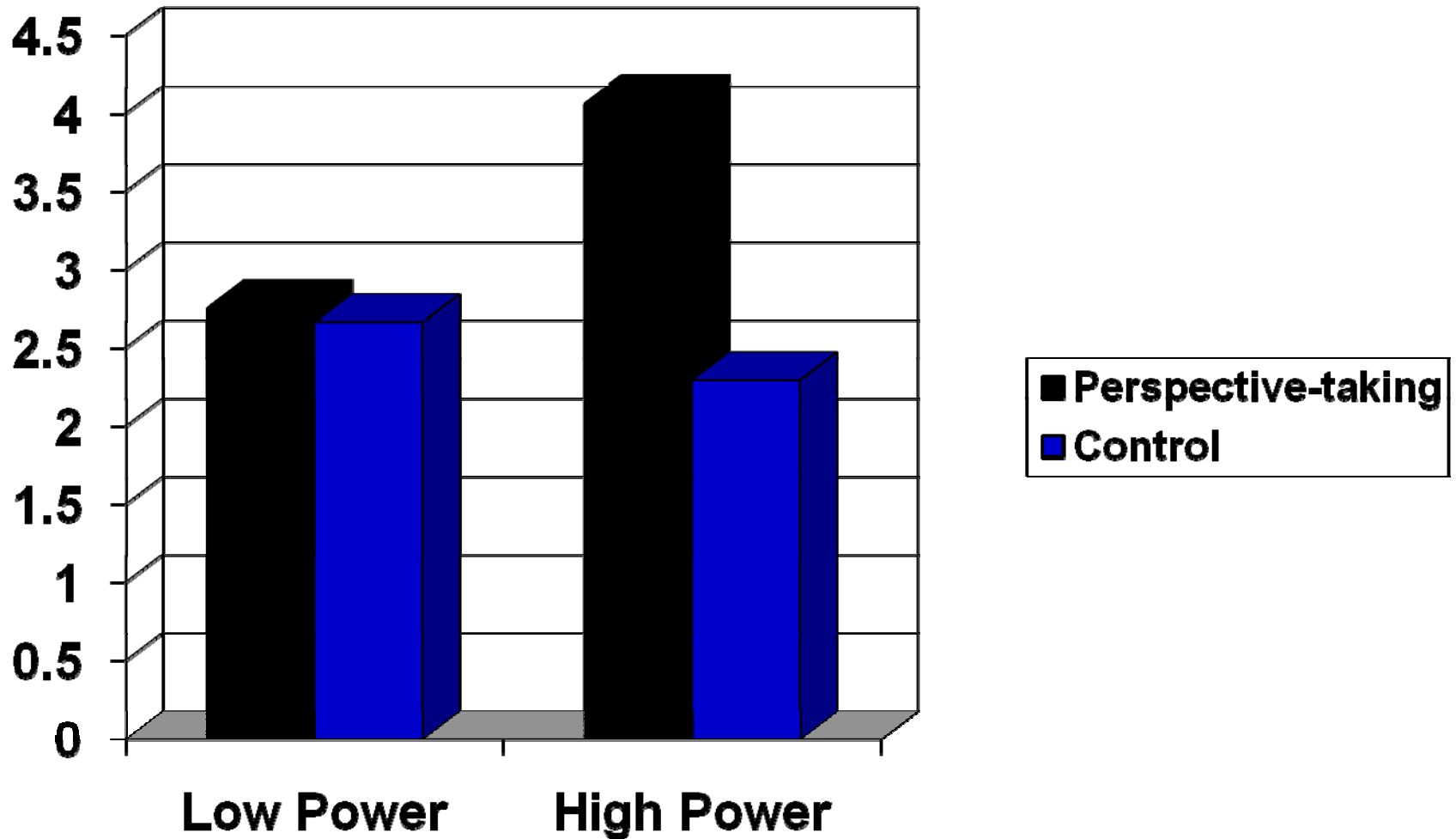
◆ Design

- Power: High vs. Low
- Perspective Taking: Present vs. Baseline
 - Primed by seeing words related to perspective-taking

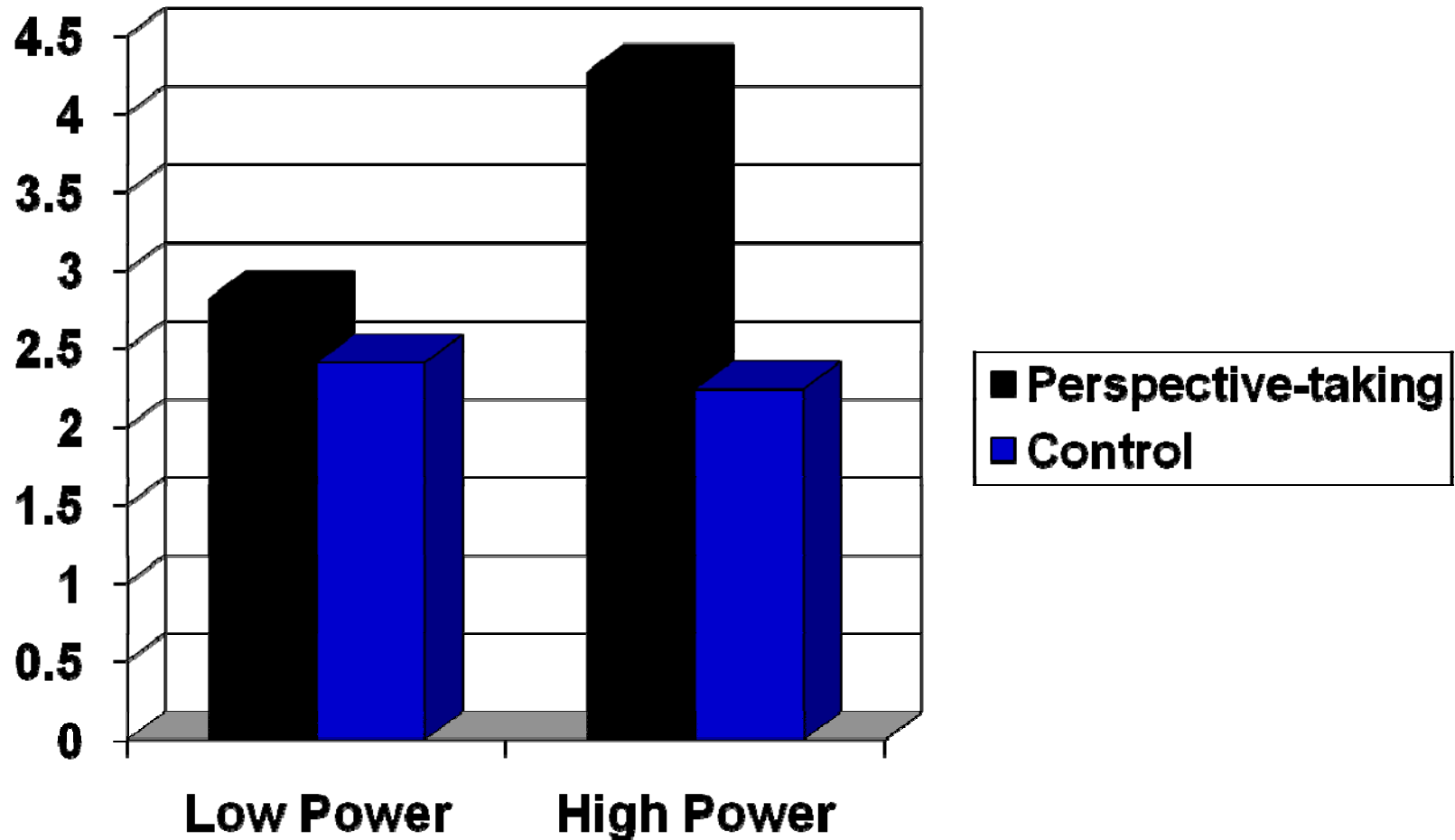
◆ Outcome Measures

- “Imagine that you need to lay off one of your employees. How would you notify this employee that he/she is being laid off?”
- Scored for a) informational and b) interpersonal justice

Informational Justice: Extent to which explanations about the decisions are provided in a candid manner



Interpersonal Justice: The degree to which an authority figure acts sensitively towards a subordinate



Leadership Implications

- ◆ **Leadership Selection:** If power reveals a person's true nature then need to select the right people for leadership positions
- ◆ **Leadership Creation:** Need to find ways to associate power with perspective-taking
 - Organizational structure and culture
 - Flatter hierarchies
 - Participative decision-making/deliberative processes
 - Leader accountability