

In Charge, and Sounding the Part

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The New York Times:

Science has not proved the trope that power changes everything. But it does suggest, at least, that it changes the vocal cords.

As people gain authority, their voice quality changes, becoming steadier in pitch, more varied in volume and less strained. Power sounds distinctive, creating hierarchies measurable through waves of sound.

That is the finding of research published last year in the journal *Psychological Science*, adding weight to the idea that a speaker's power comes not just from words but also acoustics. Crucially, it's not about being loud; just turning up the volume can actually be a sign of relative weakness.

“The easiest way to exert authority is by speaking more loudly. But that can just come across as yelling, which can turn people off,” said Adam Galinsky, a professor at the Columbia Business School, who wrote the paper along with researchers from San Diego State University. “It’s not the volume, but the ability to control it.”

Read the whole story: [*The New York Times*](#)