

# Soft power attractiveness

*Professor Bill Smullen(\*)*

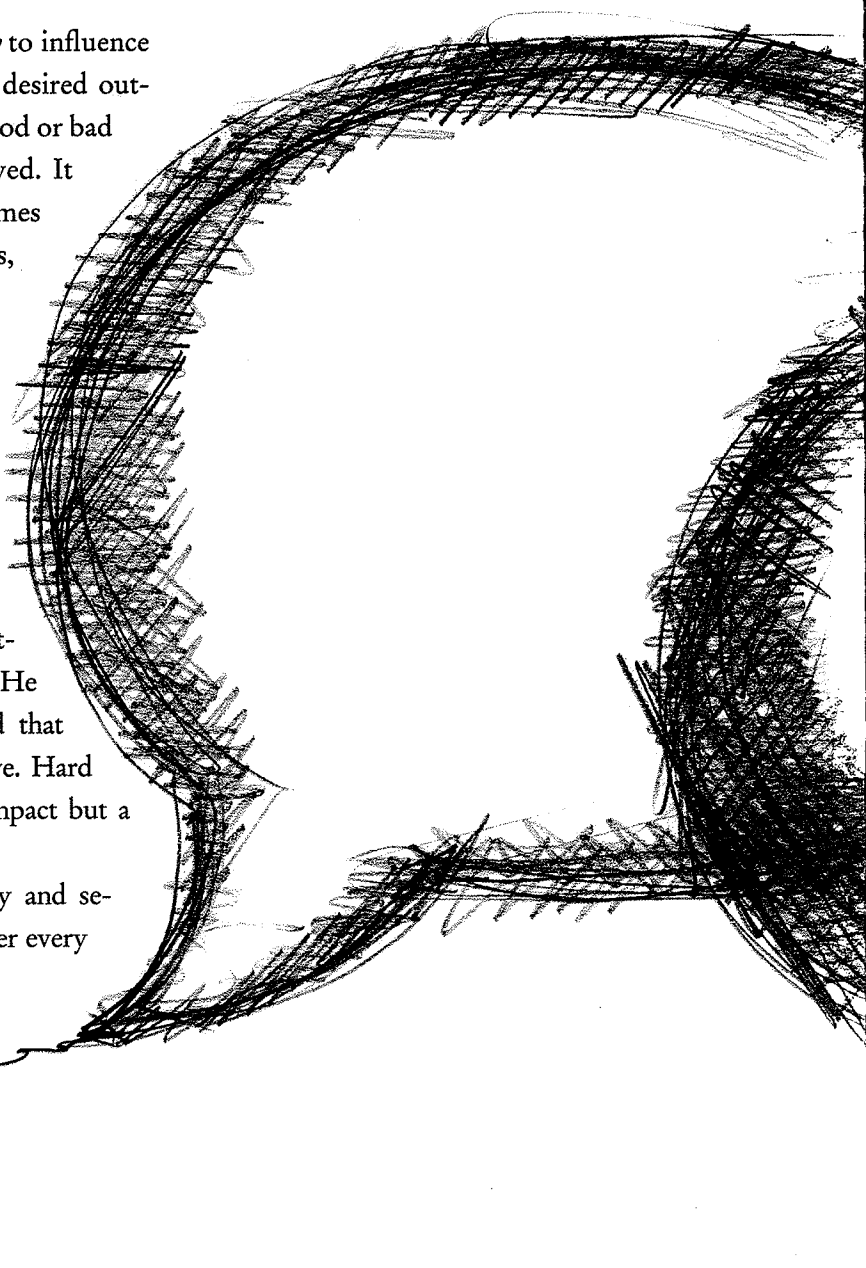
*To have power is to have the ability to influence the behavior of others to gain a desired outcome. That result can be either good or bad depending on the motives involved. It is especially important when it comes to relationships between countries, governments or peoples of the world. The choices of power can be principled or not. They can take the form of hard power or soft power.*



**Professor Bill Smullen**  
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Hard power is the use of force; the most common means is military might. Machiavelli said it was better to be feared than loved. He might be surprised today to find that traditional victory in war is elusive. Hard power may have an immediate impact but a less than enduring effect.

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day courtesy of the information revolution, has far greater appeal. It calls for what Joseph Nye, former Dean of the Kennedy School at Harvard, titled his book, "Soft Power." It is the ability to get what you want through the attraction of who you are and the value of what you stand for rather than coercion or payment.

It's getting others to admire your ideals and do what you want or profess because they believe in it as opposed to you imposing those ideals on them because you simply say those ideals are right. Nations and their leaders need to strive for that soft power attractiveness to their ideals and their policies.

The means to do that is through public diplomacy which is to understand differences, to engage in dialogue and to attempt to influence audiences so that they have a greater appreciation and understanding of your position, your values and your policies. As the world grows more complex, so too grows the need for greater diplomatic dialogue amongst the nations of the world.

A combination of shared views with respect to strategic thinking, insightful planning and effective implementation of useful ideas can benefit people around the world. The best way to achieve that is a soft power approach that serves the majority not the minority. Soft power policies can promote a framework that benefits the global system and betters the prospects for trade, commerce, diplomatic contact, pluralism and liberty amongst nations and peoples.

To succeed it will need the active support and participation of as many of the 192 countries of the world who seek international cooperation. Nations who choose to be soft power agents for good can responsibly contribute to making the world a better place. It's the right thing to do. ●

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