I tried to point out in the preceding chapter on “Moving Up” that scientists tend to move along a continuum which can be graphed in six major stages. There are places on this continuum where some scientists achieve, use, and sometimes abuse power of various kinds; therefore it seems proper to give some detailed attention to that very interesting phenomenon. We have already considered the transition from scientist to manager, important to many (but not all) scientists. Once the transition is made, accretion of power is a logical concomitant. The science manager assumes a number of legitimate roles, including making decisions about facilities, equipment, and staffing—all the activities that can help ensure a productive, pleasant research environment. He or she is also responsible for the relevance of staff activities, which includes decisions
about priorities in research—decisions in which funding is a major consideration.

"Power" as used in this chapter is defined, loosely and probably too simplistically, as the "authority to set goals, objectives, and priorities for yourself and for others, and to determine how and when those goals and objectives are reached." Power is acquired by accident of location or time, by merit and demonstrated competence, by knowing people who make decisions about positions, or by any combination of the foregoing.

There are several truisms about power that could be used to introduce the subject:

- Acquiring power can be at times almost accidental, but retaining power over the long term depends on ability and competence.
- In ascending an organizational hierarchy in science, expertise becomes of decreasing importance, being supplanted progressively by managerial-administrative competence and ability to deal effectively with people.
- Holders and users of power in scientific groups must always depend on competent productive scientists, since without good science even the best of other organizational attributes—good fiscal policies and management, effective public relations, good personnel practices—will not suffice. Thus the ultimate power is still in the hands of the scientists, although, as with citizens in a democracy, they at times seem dominated and manipulated by those whom they have designated to lead.
- Most power strategies are designed to manipulate, coerce, guide, or control the satisfactory but unexceptional scientist. The truly outstanding and productive person, though he or she may be caught occasionally