

Understanding Status:

A White Paper for Conscious Presence

Context

Status is one of the oldest forms of human currency. Long before organisations, policies, or formal hierarchies, status shaped how we survived. It's a way of describing how power is expressed in human interactions - not as a static title or role, but as something alive, constantly negotiated in every conversation, meeting, or moment of silence.



Over time, each of us develops a kind of intuitive shorthand for how to behave. We do what works - what keeps us safe, gets us seen, earns us favour, or avoids conflict. That shorthand becomes a bias: a preference for holding or relinquishing power in predictable ways. We call this a *status bias*.

Status bias isn't a character flaw. It's a survival strategy. It's what helped you succeed in the contexts you've known - at home, in school, in early jobs, or in times of struggle. But what helped once may not always help now. The way you hold yourself - your *presence* - shapes how others perceive your competence, trust your judgement, and engage with your ideas.

And presence isn't just personal. It's professional. Whether you're trying to influence a board, lead a team, win support for a project, or ask for help, your status signals are always working - whether you're aware of them or not.

As your life and career evolve, the status behaviours you've relied on may start to hinder the very things you're trying to achieve. That's when awareness becomes critical.

Aim

The aim of this work is straightforward: self-awareness and self-direction.

When you understand your own status bias - how you instinctively show up - you can make conscious decisions about whether to lean into it or shift it. You gain the freedom to choose your stance, your tone, your timing. You learn how to use status as a tool, not just a default.

This isn't about changing your personality. It's about expanding your range.

To be effective in today's complex environments, you need to be able to modulate your presence - amplify it, soften it, redirect it - as the situation requires. That's only possible if you can see your own habits clearly. And that's what the Status Bias Diagnostic is designed to reveal.



Reason

Why pursue this insight? Because in every interaction, how you hold yourself affects how people *hear* you. And how people hear you affects what gets done, what gets missed, and how well you move through the world.



Insight into status bias helps you:

- Build stronger, more honest relationships
- Improve the clarity and impact of your communication
- Collaborate more effectively, especially in high-stakes or high-stress environments
- Spot when your instincts might be getting in the way of your goals

Many people work hard on content - what they say - without attending to presence - *how* it is said -, and what their presence signals to others. That gap is often where miscommunication, conflict, or missed opportunities live.

By understanding and adjusting your status signals, you close that gap.

Decisive Action

So what can you do?

Start by observing. Notice the impact of your habitual communication choices. Pay attention to when people lean in or lean away. Take feedback not just as praise or critique, but as information about the effect of your presence.

The Status Bias Diagnostic is a way to fast-track that observation. It identifies the intuitive patterns that shape your default presence. It doesn't label or box you in. Instead, it holds up a mirror - gently, clearly - so you can see yourself more accurately and act more intentionally.

If you know your pattern, you can choose when to stick with it - and when to shift.



Support

We don't expect you to decode the whole picture alone.

If you've taken the survey and would like help making sense of the result, for a limited time, we offer a free 30-minute debrief session. You can speak directly with David or Annie – both experienced coaches who've worked with thousands of people on communication, leadership, and relational power.

This is a conversation. For us, it'll help us to see what this experience is generating for people, and if there sufficient value provided for the user. This will help us to develop it. For you, it'll just be a space to unpack what your diagnostic means for your context, and what small, meaningful adjustments might amplify your power and abilities. Right now.

If you've already completed the survey, thank you. If you haven't, we invite you to try it. You might be surprised by what it reveals - and by what becomes possible when you start playing with your presence on purpose.

Website: - www.coup.co/your-status-bias