

Characteristics of a Successful Dominant

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I have spent a lot of time discussing with others in the lifestyle what makes a good dominant. What marks a true dominant from a player or wannabe. I have read every bit of material I could get my hands on. Through these discussions and research, I have been able to compile the following list of traits. I list the ones that were repeatedly told to me, many of them appeared in just about every conversation I have been involved in and most of the pieces of writing I have read. My heartfelt thanks to the wonderful insight of MistressIce, EZRiser, and Magistar in particular. Their words, insight, and honesty helped me to create this list as concisely as I could.

Acceptance:

Acceptance of self, what is within yourself, what your wants needs and desires are.. Acceptance of your limitations and those of your submissive. The ability to accept another human being for the person they are, including their shortcomings and especially to accept your own. Accepting what being a dominant is to the individual and not being ashamed or intimidated by the needs within, but happy in one's mind set.

Communication:

This is the ability to talk and discuss things. It is an integral part of any relationship, but an absolute necessity within a D/s one. A dominant should have the skills to communicate their needs, wants, desires, fears, thoughts, limits or whatever else comes along. The ability to talk also calls into play the honesty and truthfulness of the dominant. Once communication is open it should remain that way and will do so provided the dominant does not stop communicating honestly. To not communicate is to endanger yourself physically (by not telling the submissive your experience and other necessities) and emotionally.

Compassion:

The ability to see and at least attempt to understand the emotional aspects of your submissive's psyche. To understand and be aware of the multitude of things within reality that can affect a submissive physically, emotionally and mentally. To be able to apply that understanding to the many situations that arise within daily life that may prevent your submissive from serving to the best of their abilities. Using compassion wisely to allow you to aide your submissive, support him/her during times of stress shows that you are truly a well-rounded dominant. One who realizes that a dominant and a submissive are people too. Without compassion you are not a dominant only a sadist.

Courtesy:

This one is fairly self-explanatory, but many people have asked me for specifics on courtesy. It is the ability to show proper manners, please and thank yous. To address someone with a respectful

tone of voice. A dominant should show courtesy to his/her submissive and other submissives around them. Just because you are a dominant does not give you the right to be rude or cruel. This includes courtesy to your peers.

Grace:

Elegance in the manner a dominant presents themselves is an important and desirable personality trait that many submissives say they prefer. The way a dominant carries themselves, their style of play, no matter how graphic should still flow with style and grace. Their actions should not be overly hesitant, stilted or confused. If this is lacking as an inherent ability, the dominant should be willing to learn and grow in this area.

Dominance:

This is the most important trait in a dominant. It is the inherent natural ability to lead. To exert control in a respectful, intelligent and humble manner. The strength of character which allows you to exert the control necessary in a power exchange relationship. The ability to care for another person's entire well-being.

Honesty:

Personally, I feel this shouldn't need to be said, but there are far too many people who lack honesty, so it has to be said. Honesty is the ability to speak up, be open and truthful about what you say. Don't hide your emotions, fears, limits, fantasies, ideas and thoughts. Don't tell the submissive what you think he/she wants to hear. Honesty is the basis of trust; without it there is no trust. And without the trust, there is no true relationship. A successful dominant is an honest one, one who does not lie or attempt to deceive. One who is truthful when he/she speaks. Most important is to be honest about your level of experience, to lie is to endanger the very life of a submissive.

Humility:

This is basically the ability to see yourself as fallible. To see yourself as a person, not just a dominant. To see that sometimes in reality your needs must be set aside for the better of the relationship. (possibly to settle a disagreement, set limits or things of that nature) A successful dominant knows they will make mistakes, that they are not perfect. Sure, they have pride in their abilities, but they also know that everyone grows constantly and they are secure enough within themselves not to need to be the center of attention at all times. This allows the dominant to be open to learning new things and not have a know-it-all attitude. This brings into play bullying. Bullying is using your status as a dominant to push around submissives without any thought for their well-being at all. Bullying is a completely selfish action. A dominant who consistently bullies will turn submissives away from them and lose the respect of their peers. It shows a lack of humility and can also mask a poor sense of self-esteem or a possible abusive person using the lifestyle to hide their abusive nature.

Intelligence:

By intelligence I don't mean book smart, the ability to do long involved mathematical equations or pull apart and rebuild a computer. As it applies to a successful dominant intelligence is the ability to learn the proper way of playing with the toys inherent in the lifestyle before using them on a person. The willingness and ability to research and learn about the lifestyle itself. The ability to make informed decisions about what their needs are and how to attain them and just how far their domination goes. The ability to take the time to learn their partner outside the roles of dominant and submissive, to learn him/her as the person they are, their likes and dislikes. The ability to learn what pleases their submissive and remember those things. The dominant should not only take the time and intelligence to know the physical tools, but also the psychological tools of dominance. Along with some basic psychological aspects of their submissive. (Knowledge should grow as people change constantly) There is nothing uglier than seeing an ignorant dominant trying to use humiliation as a tool of dominance. Humiliation is a difficult tool that requires maturity, intelligence, and skill

Loyalty:

This is a very important trait in a dominant. It is the ability to uphold your personal honor and remain true to the agreement between you and your submissive should the agreement be one of monogamy or whatever. Fickleness is very unattractive in a dominant and dangerous to the emotional well-being of the submissives who serve you.

Patience:

A good dominant has patience. The ability to wait for things. Being pushy is aggravating and not being dominant. This does not mean you have to be lax or soft, but to learn the proper time to push and the proper time not to. It is also the ability to wait for those things which take time to develop and to learn, especially within yourself. To realize that it takes time for a submissive to learn all the intricacies of serving you and have the patience to teach the submissive what you prefer.

Pride:

This is the ability to know your capacities and realize you are not only a good person but a good dominant. The ability to recognize your own strengths. This does not mean you should be closed-minded to new ideas. Nor does it mean you should be unaware of your faults or keep an inflated ego. Pride in your dominance is a beautiful thing, arrogance or false pride are deadly. False pride usually masks insecurities which can be life threatening to the submissive.

Respect:

A successful dominant will show respect at all times, until such time as the submissive proves he/she is unworthy of such respect. A disrespectful dominant does not earn the respect of his/her peers or the submissives around them. By giving respect to others, you earn it for yourself.

Responsibility:

A good dominant should have a sense of responsibility and be aware that they are the ones who are in control of a scene. They should take this responsibility seriously and act in such a manner that will keep themselves and their submissive as safe as possible. A good dominant should take responsibility for his/her own actions, even so far as admitting a mistake when one is made and not push the blame onto someone else. A good dominant should use this sense of responsibility to learn before acting.

Self-Control

A good dominant must be in control of themselves first before they can even hope to control another safely. A good dominant is not one who is prone to fits of out-of-control behavior, raging fits and other actions which show a lack of self-control. A dominant should be able to keep his physical needs in check in order to maintain a scene safely for the submissive. A good dom should also have the self-control needed to stick to his/her guns when they are faced with a begging sub for something new that they know is dangerous and that they know they have no experience in.

Self-Respect:

A good dominant, values themselves and respects their own limits. A bully does not thrill a submissive. A solid sense of self-worth is a necessity for a dominant or they can cause serious damage to the submissive's psyche. This does not mean acting like you are the universe's gift to domination.

Service:

This is applicable to dominants but not in the same way as a submissive. A dominant serves their submissive by and through their dominance. By intelligently applying their dominant nature and meeting the physical and emotional needs of the submissive, the dominant mutually serves the submissive. A successful dominant remembers that without a submissive, there is no such thing as a dominant. And to receive the submission of a person is a gift. The dominant will therefor cherish that gift and do their best to uphold it and not abuse it. This is the key to an exchange of power relationship.

Those are the traits which I have repeatedly heard make a successful dominant. Many of them overlap and refer to other traits within them. And most of them are applicable to every relationship not just those within D/s. These are the traits I have heard many submissives speak of as what they are looking for in a dominant. Not everyone will have all of those traits bred into them, and some of them can be learned. But those traits do reflect what is within a true dominant. This list is meant as an informational aide only and not as a hard-core end all and be all ruling of what makes a dominant.