Through the leadership of Lenin, the Bolshevik party was able to solve widespread urban and rural discontent in Russia whilst further centralising power, despite the movement away from the Party’s Marxist theology. Lenin provided the stability and pragmatism that the party required and that the anti-revolutionists lacked. Through his immediate use of decrees, use of force, military dominance and possession of centralised control of the economy, Lenin was able to lead the Bolsheviks to a more widespread control of Russia.

Lenin understood the importance of capturing the hearts, minds and stomachs of the Russian people, and it was this pragmatic leadership which was the most considerable factor in helping to fortify Bolshevik Power. Lenin adapted Marxist theory in order for it to fit to the specific Russian social, economic and political climate, with Lynch highlighting, “his success as a revolutionary lay in his ability to adjust and modify theory to fit particular circumstance”. Within hours of gaining power in October 1917, Lenin sought to introduce various decrees with the aim to give the Bolshevik Party initial support in order to consolidate their power. These included the Decree on Land, which confiscated private land without compensation and gave it to the peasants, as well as the Decree on Peace, which proposed the immediate withdrawal of Russian troops from WW1 without the loss of land and the payments of indemnities. As Crampton states, "It was a devise to trade space for time, time which was needed to consolidate their revolutionary rule". Furthermore, the Dissolution of the Constituent Assembly in 1918, effectively handed over all power to Lenin and Bolsheviks. To add to this, in 1921 Lenin banned other parties making the Bolshevik party the sole party of Russia. It was Lenin’s pragmatic thinking which gained the support of the peasants and the working class, and thus an essential part in the Bolsheviks consolidation of power.

Furthermore, the implementation of the New Economic Policy (NEP) was another practical aspect of Lenin's leadership as it met the immediate demands of the population, which was significant in the consolidation of power by 1924. Following victory in the civil war, the harsh policies of War Communism were no longer required and strikes in urban areas, as well as in rural areas and the Kronstadt Sailors Rebellion of 1921, signified that the peasants, workers and soldiers were discontented with the economic and social conditions of society. As a result Lenin introduced the NEP which aimed to reignite domestic trade within Russia, encouraging private trading and the allowing of commerce to occur, which saw the emergence of a new social class, the Nepman. The NEP was vital in allowing Lenin to remain in complete control over the key industries of the Russian economy, including banking, heavy industry, transport and foreign trade. As a result, the economy had significantly improved by 1924, with “coal production risen by 250%” (Service). Lenin’s implementation of the NEP saw the state employ the "majority of the workforce" (Thomas and McAndrew), thus consolidating control to the Bolshevik Party.

The use of terror under Lenin’s rule was another significant factor that helped bolster the Bolshevik power, as it removed political dissident and exerted Bolshevik authority. After the October/November 1917 revolution, Lenin introduced the Cheka in order to defend the government and control the people; "I will be merciless with all counter revolutionaries" (Lenin). It began as a small agency, commanded by Dzerzhinsky however grew out to be a ruthless well-structured organisation of over 100,000 operatives (1919). The Cheka was responsible for the Red Terror (1918), an intimidation campaign targeting any individual or group deemed to be a threat to Bolshevik rule or policies, in which 50,000 people were executed. Pipes highlights the significance of the Red Terror as “a prophylactic measure designed to nip in the bud any thoughts of resistance to the dictatorship”. As a result, Lenin’s introduction of the Cheka and the emergence of the Red Terror ensured his rule was absolute not only within the party but across the Soviet Union.

The final major reason that the Bolsheviks were able to consolidate their power was the advent of the Russian civil war and the Bolsheviks’ victory in it. Pipes references the fact that the majority of
the peasantry and industrial working class were oblivious to the ideology and Bolshevik rule. One of the key reasons the Reds could win the war was because of the ignorance of the masses and the disorganization of their opponents. The main reason for the outbreak of this war was the treaty of Brest-Litovsk. Thomas and McAndrew write that “Anti-German and anti-Bolshevik feeling ran high after the signing of this treaty”. War allowed the Bolsheviks to further tighten their grip on power and Pipes argues that the civil war was a deliberate and necessary part of the Bolshevik program as the leaders of the party were convinced that it would be impossible to achieve, and then maintain, power without a period of civil war. The organization of the Red Army under Trotsky was able to defeat the disorganized Whites leading to the centralization of power and rallying of support that the Bolsheviks had been previously unable to acquire. The Civil War and the tightening grip on the country that it allowed was one of the key ways that the Bolsheviks were able to stay in power.