

Your office is therefore:

- Challenging to a person who also feels power, or needs to.
- Threatening to a person who doesn't feel power.
- Official and serious, even scary, to an employee—kind of like going to the principal's office when you were a kid.
- A plus if your employee wants the reassurance of your power, which may then be used on his/her behalf.

The challenge in your office is to reassure meeting participants that although you *do* have the power, you can be flexible and responsive, too.

### *Their Office*

Going to someone else's office implies respect.

- It gives him/her extra turf, especially if you're the senior person.
- It puts that person at ease, because we all respond with comfort to familiar surroundings. Our eyes subliminally send us the message that "all is well, we're in our own cave, nothing can get us here."
- If you're a peer, going to someone else's office gives him/her a leg up, but in certain circumstances you might want to do just that: to flatter and thus disarm him/her in order to get a more receptive audience.
- If you're the boss, going to a staff member's office has the element of the unusual and the noteworthy. Employees don't usually get a visit from the boss.
- If you want to do some motivating and team building, the informality and gesture of appreciation that going to his/her office implies is very effective. Again, remember to tell your employee and make a real appointment. You could still keep it casual and relaxed by saying, "Let me drop by your office tomorrow at about three to talk over a few things."
- It's very informative to see where someone else works and to discover what symbols *they* use to say "power" and "comfort" and "mine" to themselves and to others.
- It tells you something about someone else's work habits (cluttered desk or cleared and organized, reference books all over the place, other interests suggesting a sense of balance and proportion, etc.)