

Racing Ahead: Leadership and Power Dynamics in Ford v Ferrari



MANJIRI | MANISH | SAMAR | ADWAIT | ABHISHEK

Purpose of the Analysis

Leadership Challenges

1

Ford v Ferrari serves as a case study on the leadership challenges faced when navigating complex power dynamics and intense rivalries.

Lessons for Leaders

2

The film offers valuable insights on effective leadership, teamwork, and the importance of aligning goals and priorities.





Setting the Stage

1. Shelby's Vision

Lendary racer Carroll Shelby aims to design a car that can outpace Ferrari and secure the first Le Mans victory for an American manufacturer.

2. Ford's Challenge

Henry Ford II, determined to avenge his family's past defeat by Ferrari, tasks Shelby and Miles to lead the charge.

3. The Rivalry Intensifies

As the 1966 Le Mans race approaches, the clash of egos and competing priorities between Ford and Ferrari reaches a fever pitch.



Leadership Styles in Ford v Ferrari

- **Carroll Shelby's Transformational Leadership**

Vision: Shelby's dream to beat Ferrari in the 24 Hours of Le Mans fueled his determination, inspiring his team.

Motivation: He motivates the team to overcome challenges and push boundaries, even when odds are against them.

- **Ken Miles as an Achievement-Oriented Leader**

Focus on Performance: Miles prioritizes speed and precision, setting high standards for himself and the team.

Resilience: Shows relentless commitment to perfecting the car, pushing through challenges to achieve optimal performance.



POWER BASES IN ACTION

Henry Ford II's Legitimate Power

Authority: As CEO, Ford has legitimate power and final say over major decisions.

Influence Example: Ford's decision to enter Le Mans and his approval or denial of Shelby's proposals.

Carroll Shelby's Expert Power

Specialized Knowledge: Shelby's expertise in racing gives him credibility and authority within the team.

Influence Example: His technical skills and experience earn him respect and trust, allowing him to challenge and negotiate with Ford executives.

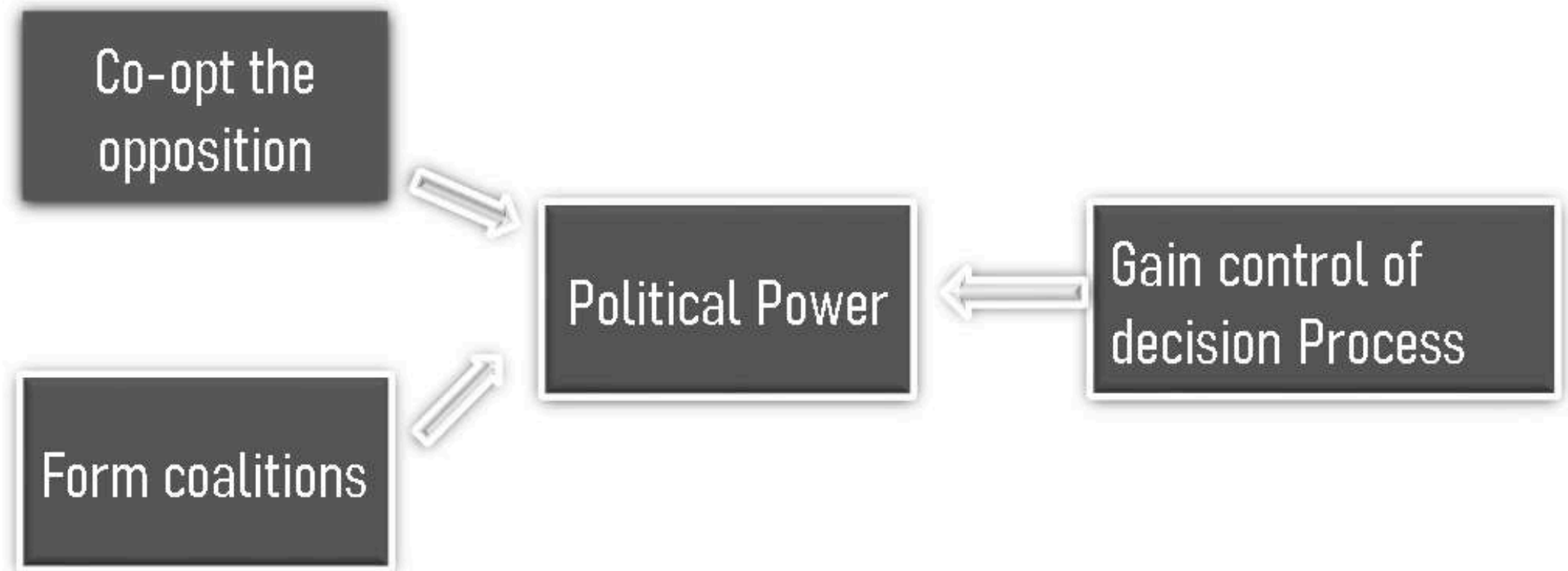
Leo Beebe's Coercive Power

Control through Punishment: Beebe uses his position to undermine Miles, attempting to exclude him from the race.

Influence Example: Threatening Shelby and Miles, creating tension within the team to enforce his own vision.



POLITICAL SKILLS OBSERVED



- ØSOCIAL ASTUTENESS: ABILITY TO UNDERSTAND PEOPLE AND SOCIAL SITUATIONS .
- ØINTERPERSONAL INFLUENCE SKILLS: CONVINCING OTHER PEOPLE TO ENGAGE IN BEHAVIOUR DESIRED OR ACCEPT PARTICULAR POSITION.
- ØAPPARENT SINCERITY: SKILL OF APPEARING TO BE REALLY BEING HONEST, OPEN AND TRUSTWORTHY.



Leadership Theories in Context

-> Fiedler's Contingency Theory

- **Task-Oriented Leadership**

Shelby's focus on winning Le Mans, emphasizing precision, innovation, and strategy.

- **Relationship-Oriented Leadership**

Shelby's support for Ken Miles, advocating for him amid corporate resistance.

Application:

Shelby's adaptive leadership in high-pressure situations.



7000 RPM

Symbolic Elements of Leadership

-> *SYMBOLIC LEADERSHIP*

SHELBY'S AND MILES'S ACTIONS OFTEN TRANSCEND MERE TECHNICAL ACCOMPLISHMENTS, EMBODYING THE SYMBOLIC ASPECTS OF LEADERSHIP

Key Example from Ford v Ferrari:

Pushing Beyond 7000 RPM:

The decision to push the car beyond 7000 RPM represents the metaphorical and literal pursuit of breaking boundaries.



Impact of Leadership Styles

1. Team Morale

Supportive leadership builds trust, empowering individuals to perform at their best and fostering a cohesive team spirit.

2. Innovation

Effective leaders encourage creativity and risk-taking, enabling teams to develop groundbreaking solutions or strategies.

3. Results

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Scene Analysis – 1

The Negotiation with Henry Ford II



1. Yukl's Controlling Decision Making (Carroll Shelby):

- Shelby demonstrates control over the decision-making process by locking Beebe out and taking Henry Ford II on a decisive test ride to secure support for his vision.

2. Apparent Sincerity (Carroll Shelby):

- Shelby apparent sincerity's authentically showcasing the GT40's capabilities, building trust and confidence in Ford's leadership.

3. Path-Goal Theory (Henry Ford II):

- Ford applies a directive leadership style by setting clear expectations for Shelby to deliver results that challenge Ferrari's dominance.

Scene Analysis – 2

Le Mans Finale



1. **Vroom–Yetton Model – Ken's Ability for Decision–Making:**

- Ken Miles uses his situational judgment to prioritize the team's directive over personal victory, reflecting collaborative decision-making under the Vroom–Yetton Model.

2. **Ken Miles Gaining Referent Power After Win:**

- Ken Miles earns referent power through his exemplary performance, gaining admiration and loyalty from the team and competitors.

3. **Forming Coalitions (Leo Beebe):**

- Leo Beebe forms coalitions within Ford's leadership to undermine Miles, prioritizing PR goals over individual merit.



Evaluation of Shelby's Leadership:

- Transformational leadership driving innovation.
- Success in overcoming internal (corporate) and external (Ferrari) challenges.

Ken Miles's Contribution:

- Achievement-oriented approach pushing performance limits.

Outcome:

- Victory at Le Mans; demonstrating the power of aligned vision and execution.



Personal Reflections on Leadership

Key Lessons from the Film:

1. Balancing innovation with structure is crucial for success.
2. Team dynamics thrive under leaders who inspire and support.
3. Conflict resolution and adaptability are integral in high-pressure environments.

Individual Takeaways:

1. The importance of passion and precision in leadership.
2. Aligning personal values with organizational goals.



Real-World Applications

Modern Leadership Challenges:

- Navigating corporate politics with integrity.
- Driving innovation in competitive industries.
- Building trust to lead diverse, high-performing teams.

Examples:

- Tech startups balancing creative freedom with deadlines.
- Organizations innovating under resource constraints.