Political Skill: An Antidote for Workplace Stressors

Author(s): Pamela L. Perrewé, Gerald R. Ferris, Dwight D. Frink and William P. Anthony

Source: *The Academy of Management Executive (1993-2005)*, Aug., 2000, Vol. 14, No. 3, Themes: Structure and Decision Making (Aug., 2000), pp. 115-123

Published by: Academy of Management

Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/4165664

Political skill: An antidote for workplace stressors

Pamela L. Perrewé, Gerald R. Ferris, Dwight D. Frink, and William P. Anthony

Executive Overview

Why do so many executives thrive in stressful situations while others break down? Why are some so adept at coping with the complex and dynamic ambiguity, accountabilities, politics, and interpersonal dimensions of executives' jobs? Executives face numerous work stressors and job demands that can lead to stress. We suggest that succeeding in and managing stressful organizational environments is at least partially due to the exceptionally good political skills possessed by many executives. Political skill is an interpersonal style that manifests itself in social astuteness and the ability to engage in behaviors that give impetus to feelings of confidence, trust, and sincerity. Executives high in political skill are better able to cope with the chronic workplace stressors they encounter. Specifically, political skill represents a type of interpersonal control that allows people to differentially interpret workplace stressors in less aversive ways, and thus cope more effectively, which reduces strain. We believe political skill can be shaped, and thus represents a productive new area for management development programs.

A Stressful Day

Meet with securities' analysts at 8:00 a.m. Meet with major supplier at 10:00 a.m. Lunch with senior management staff. Regulatory agency meeting at 2:00 p.m. and a stockholder briefing at 4:00 p.m., with media interview afterwards. Dinner meeting and speech to community service organization at 7:00 p.m.

This is a typical day for Jack Frazee, CEO of PageNet, the world's largest paging organization. These meetings involve a great deal of interaction with a diverse set of people who are members of groups that have their own agendas. While many people would find such a schedule and interactions very stressful, Frazee, as well as many other CEOs, actually thrives on such a schedule. Why? We suggest that many CEOs and other senior managers have exceptional political skill, which they use to prevent these situations from causing stress, and, if it does occur, to cope and deal successfully deal with it.

Stress on corporate executives will continue to increase as competition intensifies, labor market conditions create a scarcity of talent, technology continues to change in rapid and unpredictable ways, and the degree of accountability at all levels of organizations increases. Indeed, increasingly fast-paced, turbulent work contexts, fueled with ambiguity through organization downsizing, restructuring and redesign, technological change, and mergers and acquisitions suggest that stressful work environments are becoming even more noxious, causing physical and mental health-related illnesses to be at an all-time high, particularly among top executives.[1] As societal demands for increased accountability of executives have resulted in more careful scrutiny of their behavior by boards of directors and shareholder groups, including institutional investors, we must seriously consider the potential health-related toll such changing conditions take on executives, their families, and the nation.[2]

Many executives cope with increased work stress and strain through exercise, relaxation techniques, and vacations. We examine a process that has not been looked at as a means to cope with stress. This process involves the use of political skill, which can serve as a built-in antidote to the potentially devastating consequences to health and well-being of stressful work environments.

Scholars and practitioners alike have tended to characterize organizations as inherently political arenas that can serve as major sources of stress.[3] Furthermore, the nature of politics and concomitant stress is intensified as organizations go

115

through major changes in design, escalating ac-
countability, and increasing uncertainty in highly
competitive environments. At the executive level,
we are more hard pressed to identify useful and
effective coping mechanisms that can provide sup-
port and resistance to stressful conditions. For ex-
ample, exercise might work as a stress reducer for
many people, but others may be unable to exercise
because of health or time constraints. Therefore, it
is important to expand the search for other factors
that might serve as protective mechanisms to al-
low people to not simply withstand, but even flour-
ish, in such intensely stressful environments.
These factors could be inherent in the person's
style of interaction with others.

Social Skill in Organizations

In recent years, considerable attention has been
devoted to the nature of social skill in organiza-
tions, and its effects on job performance and career
success. Perhaps stimulated in part by the increas-
ing realization that intelligence or cognitive men-
tal ability is not the best predictor of work out-
comes, some research efforts have conceptualized
such social skills as alternative forms of intelli-
gence, with such labels as practical intelligence
and emotional intelligence.[4]

Sternberg argues that managerial intelligence
involves three levels of intelligence: analytical,
practical, and creative.[5] Political skill rests in prac-
tical intelligence, a level that may be even more
important than analytical. Practical intelligence
rests on the concept of tacit knowledge—knowl-
edge that is gained through experience. It is pro-
cedural in nature, relevant to the attainment of
goals, and is acquired with little help from others.
It is called tacit because it must be inferred from
actions or statements a person makes.

A senior VP of operations of a medium-sized
electric utility is able to disarm his critics with
humor, often using down-home diction. While this
can be dangerous when used inappropriately, this
manager can read the situation accurately and
knows when to bring in humor to diffuse tension.
His ability rests on his knowledge of people and
the situation and is based on years of experience
working with his top-management team.

Political skills, while learnable to some degree,
rest at least in part on a tacit knowledge base.
Tacit knowledge is a type of social skill that is
acquired over time through a variety of experi-
ences. Some call this knowledge intuition, gut feel-
ing, common sense, or a knack. Individuals with a
strong tacit knowledge base and a knack for un-
derstanding people are more likely to successfully
demonstrate political skill than those without this
base.

> *Political skills, while learnable to some
> degree, rest at least in part on a tacit
> knowledge base.*

The importance of political skill

Mintzberg suggested that the person exercising
influence must not only have some basis for power,
and expend some energy, but often must do so in a
clever manner with political skill.[6] Much of the
informal and formal power backed by great effort
has failed because of political ineptness. Mainiero
argued that "political skill is a necessary, even
vital, aspect of women's career advancement—
that breaking the glass ceiling without shattering
hopes for a promising executive career requires
delicate political skill."[7] Others have proposed
that political skill or savvy is a key contributor to
managerial performance and success.[8] However,
Jones noted that, despite all the research con-
ducted on interpersonal influence and political
skill, we know surprisingly little about how one
can exercise this skill in a clever and convincing
way.[9]

Ferris and his colleagues recently attempted to
not only define political skill more precisely, but to
demonstrate its relationship with, and distinctive-
ness from, other social skill characteristics.[10] They
view political skill as an interpersonal style that
combines social awareness with the ability to com-
municate well. People who practice this skill be-
have in a disarmingly charming and engaging
manner that inspires confidence, trust, sincerity,
and genuineness. People who are high on political
skill are at their best in interpersonal interactions
and thrive in social situations where working with
and through others is requisite to job and work-
unit success.

Indeed, political skill reflects today's wide-
spread interest in the increasingly social nature
of organizational settings, and the necessary so-
cial skills required for individual effectiveness
and career success. Although always important
to some degree, social skills such as facilitating,
coordinating, coaching, and influencing are
viewed as particularly critical today, especially
for managers and executives. A leading cause of
managerial derailment, identified in studies at
the Center for Creative Leadership, is lack of
good interpersonal or social skill.[11] Baron and
Markman argue convincingly that face-to-face
interactions are critical for success and that spe-
cific social skills—such as the ability to read
others accurately, make favorable first impres-
sions, and be persuasive—can influence the
quality of these interactions.[12]

Social skill is a broad category that includes a number of related but distinctive constructs that date back nearly 80 years to interest in social intelligence that concerned itself with the ability to understand and manage people.[13] Similarly, we have witnessed the popularity of what Daniel Goleman called "emotional intelligence."[14] Emotional intelligence focuses on the ability to monitor both one's own and others' feelings and emotions, and to use such information and skills to control and regulate emotions, impulses, and moods, delay gratification, and empathize. This ability allows emotionally intelligent people to work effectively with others.

Political skill has something in common with social and emotional intelligence, but is distinctive as well. Political skill is perhaps the first social skill construct to be aimed specifically at behavior in organizational settings. We see political skill as a construct that combines knowing what to do in a particular work situation with how to execute the behaviors in a convincing manner. This is in contrast to interpersonal influence tactics, such as ingratiating and self-promotion.[15] Research on these tactics virtually ignored the style component that largely explained the extent to which the tactic or behavior was successful.[16] We contend that political skill allows people to create synergy among discrete behaviors that create an interpersonal dynamic greater than the simple sum of the parts contributing to personal and career success.

We see a key component of political skill as the development and leveraging of social capital needed to promote effectiveness in achieving one's goals. This ability reflects one's reputation, which is a key part of political skill. People high in political skill are quite calculating and shrewd about the social connections they form, inspiring trust and confidence in others, which allows them to effectively leverage such social capital.

People high in political skill are quite calculating and shrewd about the social connections they form, inspiring trust and confidence in others, which allows them to effectively leverage such social capital.

Executives high in political skill seek out and relish personal interactions, and their control over others contributes to a sense of confidence that goes along with predictability of success. Such executives do not experience personal interactions as stressful, and, in fact, enjoy demonstrating their

political skill so much that tension and stress are actually reduced.

A senior consultant in a large, well-known consulting firm thrives on conflict. Her job involves resolving disputes with clients over interpretations and implementation of consultant recommendations. She is almost always successful in resolving the issues so that the client and the firm are happy and final billing problems are avoided. She sees these situations as an opportunity to successfully demonstrate her unique competence.

Political skill and stress

The utility of social and political skills is nothing new to executives. What is new is the notion that the effective use of these skills can reduce job stress. The use of political skill to reduce stress and improve executive health is shown in two ways in Figure 1. First, political skill is conceptualized as directly reducing executives' perceptions of organizational and extraorganizational stressors. If executives possess political skill, they are less likely to perceive their environment as stressful. Research has found that concerns about self-presentation and managing impressions can lead to social anxiety with potential health risks.[17] We argue that executives high in political skill are more confident about their ability to control images, impressions, and interactions at work; thus they are less likely to perceive their situation as stressful. When executives do not perceive their organizational environment as stressful, they are less likely to experience psychological and physiological strain.

Second, political skill is seen as a moderator or buffer between perceived stressors and strain. Even when executives perceive their environment as stressful, political skill can be used as a coping mechanism to reduce the negative effects of stressors. Dealing actively with a problem in this way is associated with improved mental and sometimes physical health.[18] We argue that political skill can help executives feel more in control of their environment. Hence, political skill can be viewed as a coping mechanism that can lessen the negative impact of stressors, and thus can serve as an antidote to work stressors.[19]

Recent statistics that show both physical and mental health problems among managers and executives are at an all-time high.[20] Since such problems will probably only intensify in the future, we need to develop a better understanding of executive health problems and their causes, in order to address the problems of leadership and organizations in the next millennium.[21] A recent joint conference of the American Psychological Association
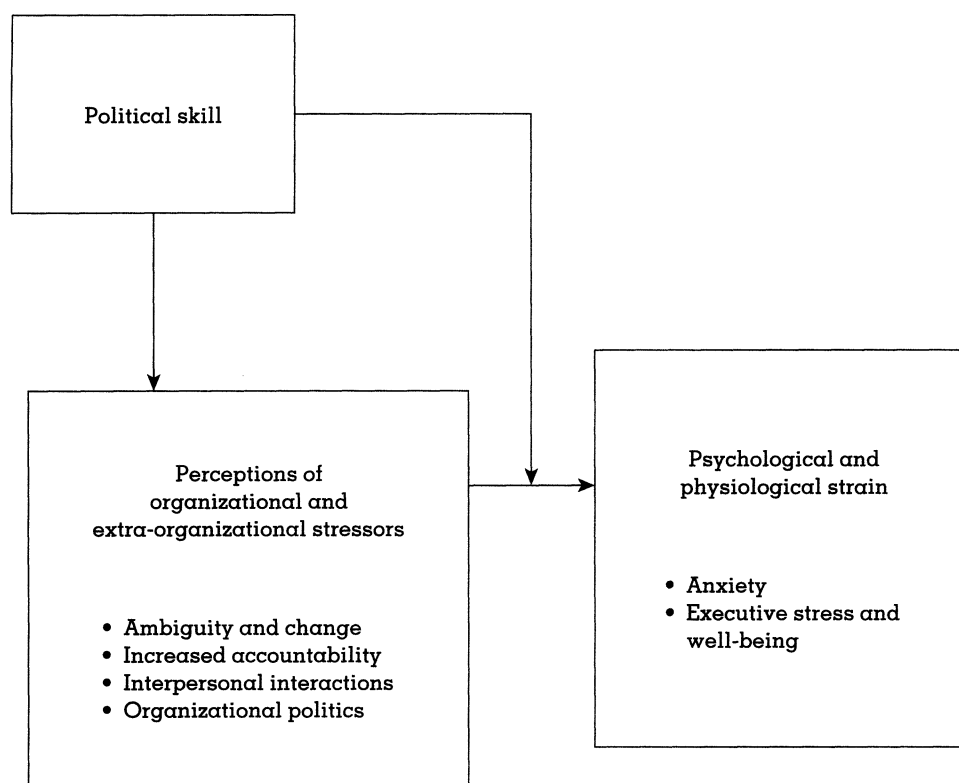
FIGURE 1
Consequences of Political Skill

and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health concluded that the workforce is more at risk than ever for psychological, physical, and behavioral health problems.[22]

In April 2000, the jobless rate hit a 30-year low of 3.9 percent. Strong economic growth and employment has allowed the U.S. to enjoy the longest period of prosperity since records have been kept.[23] The possibility of rising inflation has led the Federal Reserve to raise interest rates six times from January 1999 to June 2000. There are fears that continuing increases in rates will cause a recession, typical of the business cycle. Executives and workers alike face increased stress to maintain this unusual growth rate and fear that interest rate increases will make it difficult for them to do so, possibly resulting in layoffs and downsizing typical of the decade of the '80s.[24]

Nature and Causes of Executive Stress

We have witnessed monumental changes in the structure, function, and operation of both internal and external organizational environments in the past two decades as many organizations have made concerted efforts to increase their competitive positions. The resulting stress—defined as "a

state that occurs when persons perceive that demands exceed their abilities to cope"[25]—emanates from several sources.

Ambiguity and change in turbulent environments

To be competitive in global markets, organizations must be agile, flexible, and adaptable. They must not merely accept change, but must embrace it as a standard feature of operation. Peters argued that winning companies will be constantly changing and adapting ones, those that see chaos and ambiguity as market opportunities and thrive on them.[26] Major changes through downsizing, restructuring and redesign, business process reengineering, technology adoption, and mergers and acquisitions have been undertaken with the explicit purpose of increasing organizations' abilities to survive and be successful in fast-paced, turbulent environments. However, all this change has increased the stress on employees throughout organizations, and particularly on executives. The bureaucratic form of organization is increasingly being replaced by more flexible structures that are flatter, more rectangular in shape, and with power and authority more diffused and vested in those who deal directly with customers and the external

environment. These changes have been found to have both physical and psychological consequences[27] as executives can no longer use existing structures to make or support their decisions.

Increased accountability of executives

As ambiguity and turbulence increase for executives, there are increasing calls to hold them accountable to various constituencies for decisions and outcomes. Reported abuses by some executives lead various constituencies to criticize corporate governance structures, and especially CEOs. Trying to appease these critics, without additional resources to meet their demands, can result in loss of personal control, ambiguity, role conflict, and stress. Such demand-based stress has been found to be more closely associated with burnout than resource-based stress.[28]

Executives are likely to be held accountable for results because there are no specific prescriptions for how to do their jobs. Such accountability produces stress[29] that is exacerbated when divergent stakeholders are present. The increased stresses resulting from a complex, disjointed web of accountabilities can lead to emotional and mental exhaustion, decreased commitment and satisfaction, and finally to burnout.[30]

The increased stresses resulting from a complex, disjointed web of accountabilities can lead to emotional and mental exhaustion, decreased commitment and satisfaction, and finally to burnout.

Organizational politics

Organizational politics has been characterized as "behavior not formally sanctioned by the organization, which produces conflict and disharmony in the work environment by pitting individuals and/or groups against one another, or against the organization."[31] The behavior tends to be more prevalent at higher levels in organizations where it is viewed simply as the way things get done.[32] Indeed, some organizational scientists who have discussed the prevalence and pervasiveness of politics characterize many organizations as political arenas.[33] Furthermore, effectiveness at dealing with organizational politics has been identified as a key and even vital characteristic of effective managers.[34] In recent years, stress researchers have identified organizational politics as an important, albeit not well studied, source of stress in the work environment,[35] which can be perceived as a threat or an opportunity.[36]

Executives operate in highly political contexts as they address competing interests, deal with scarce resources, and try to satisfy multiple stakeholders in efforts to maximize the organization's reputation and effectiveness. Not all executives are equally adept and skilled at politics and thus may find political environments threatening and stressful because these environments demand abilities they lack.[37]

An example of a CEO who demonstrated poor political skill, at least in his position as CEO of Sunbeam, is Al Dunlap. After turning around and rescuing American Can, Lily Tulip, Crown Zellerbach, and Scott Paper, Dunlap failed miserably in his attempt to rescue Sunbeam and was fired by the board of directors. Although his termination eventually occurred because he soft-pedaled and tried to disguise a string of serious quarterly losses, his loud, gruff, and demeaning style were reported to have alienated those around him. Richard L. Boynton, president of the household-products division of Sunbeam, described Dunlap's first series of meetings with his senior staff: "It was like a dog barking at you for hours. He just yelled, ranted, and raved. He was condescending, belligerent, and disrespectful."[38] Dunlap browbeat those around him by telling them in a very loud voice over and over again that they were responsible for the demise of Sunbeam. He placed blame on individuals in front of others, threatened people with termination and, in fact, fired a large number of senior executives. Given the stressful organizational environment, others simply left Sunbeam on their own. David Fanin, Sunbeam's general counsel, told the board of directors: "I cannot work for that man another day. I just cannot do it. The day-to-day atmosphere at the company has really deteriorated. Al is no longer in touch with the business and what's going on at the company. Al isn't talking to people. He has cut himself off."[39]

Interpersonal relationships

A number of efforts have been made to categorize the sources of managerial stress, but one category that is pervasive across studies is the role of interpersonal interactions or relationships as a key source of stress.[40] Nonfunctional interpersonal interactions are related to ill health, job dissatisfaction, absenteeism, and turnover.[41] In top management positions, much of the work involves interactions with others, which likely explains why lack of skill in interactions and political astuteness is a leading contributor to management derailment.[42] A managerial style characterized by effective interpersonal skills is more important than ever, given expecta-

tions that management style[43] emphasize teamwork and open communications.

Drive, ambition, and technical and financial skills may contribute to success in lower- and middle-level management positions, but skill at dealing effectively with others with a wide variety of backgrounds, styles, and personalities is indispensable for top management. As we saw from the busy manager's schedule at the beginning of this article, top executives must deal with a broad range of stakeholder groups, each with its own agenda. Balancing the demands of stockholders, board members, other senior managers, investment analysts, employees, customers, government, the media, and community organizations can be extremely stressful and requires very effective social skills. The climate can also be highly political as executives try to bargain, sell ideas, and find compromise positions.

The requirement to interact effectively with others can emerge as a key source of stress, and can also cause stress in others with whom the executive interacts. Fueled by increased accountability and the intense political environment found in higher-level positions, these stresses are exacerbated by rapid, dynamic change in situations and people. These unstable situations present new challenges just when executives believe they have solved the previous challenges.

Executive Implications of Political Skill

Political skill creates feelings of success, accomplishment, and self-efficacy. Those high in political skill possess a keen sense of social astuteness, savvy, and understanding of people, along with a fundamental belief that they can control the processes and outcomes of interactions with others.

> *Those high in political skill possess a keen sense of social astuteness, savvy, and understanding of people, along with a fundamental belief that they can control the processes and outcomes of interactions with others.*

These feelings lead to positive health-related outcomes. Executives with strong political skill also view interpersonal interactions as opportunities rather than threats. They cognitively evaluate and interpret work environmental stimuli differently from those low in political skill. Finally, political skill allows executives to leverage social capital. They are able to resolve differences and allow individuals to move toward consensus or

compromise, and to accomplish goals. They also cultivate extensive networks of relationships, allegiances, and personal ties throughout the organization that can be mobilized as situations dictate to promote collective action and social synergy.

Political skills can help deal with ambiguity and turbulence. The politically skilled executive will be less threatened and challenged by the need to successfully manage multiple and divergent constituencies and interpersonal relationships. Executives may find that being accountable for outcomes actually serves them well, even in stockholder meetings where they are lightning rods for discontent, but are able to disarm their detractors by inspiring trust and confidence.

We know of one senior executive in a high-technology, defense-related company who enjoys dealing with stockholder groups, civic organizations, and the press, groups many executives find stressful. A retired Air Force general with extensive overseas experience in intelligence, he has a quick wit and strong analytical mind that, combined with some unique skills—he speaks fluent Chinese and sings opera—allow him to charm even hostile audiences. He views battles with stockholders or the press as an opportunity to demonstrate his political skills.

Politically skilled people fit naturally in executive positions. Less-skilled executives experience frustration, try methods such as intimidation, or simply ignore situations the skilled executive views as an opportunity. The absence of political skill is a stress-producer; the use of political skill reduces stress in the executives themselves and in those around them, thus creating a healthier organization.

Developing political skill

Political skill can be developed within limits. A good example of a CEO who initially disdained the practice of political skill is Microsoft's Bill Gates. Gates at first shunned the media and any active role in dealing with outside groups that might challenge him. When the U.S. Department of Justice sued the company for antitrust violations, Gates was required to interact more with the media, government agencies, and attorneys, and he developed his political and communication skills to be more effective. He practiced brinkmanship and taking a hard bargaining position, and bought the company time and the hope of more favorable treatment from a Republican Administration.[44] Even though Gates greatly developed his political skill, he resigned as CEO in January 2000, to devote more time to software innovation and development.

Managers seeking to develop political skill should first identify interactions where there is

likely to be a high degree of conflict, such as shareholder meetings when profits are down, or particularly difficult negotiations with primary suppliers. Once these situations are identified, the executive can rehearse mentally and develop political responses. These rehearsals can enhance political skills that are inherent and rest in tacit knowledge. Role-playing and other exercises also help develop political skills.

> **Managers seeking to develop political skill should first identify interactions where there is likely to be a high degree of conflict, such as shareholder meetings when profits are down, or particularly difficult negotiations with primary suppliers.**

Executives should make honest assessments of their level of political skill. They should ask themselves where they are strong and where they are weak, and should seek informed assessments from qualified and trusted colleagues. In areas where they are weak, they can seek out management and executive development programs focusing on the training or shaping of such skills. They should ask for honest critiques from others; these coaching techniques will help them improve their skills and avoid repeating mistakes. Executive coaches, who focus largely on building interpersonal and political skill, are helping managers at many companies.

Organizational Implications

Firms selecting managers and executives for high-level jobs, particularly where stress is involved, should choose individuals with high levels of political skill who will relish the challenge and be able to deal with the stress. Such organizations will reap benefits if executives are better able to communicate, engage in interpersonal interactions, cope with accountabilities, operate in turbulent environments, and be flexible without manifesting strain. They will experience greater success, reduced anxiety, and better interpersonal relationships. These interactions will contribute to increased successes in negotiations, and higher levels of satisfaction among subordinates.

Managing and coping with accountability is critical for reducing an organization's negative public image resulting from regulatory pressures on the organization, such as may come from public image or regulatory compliance problems. As an exam-

ple, John Chambers, CEO of Cisco Systems, attempted to preempt government antitrust action, even though his company has 81 percent of the high-speed server market, by meeting with Justice Department officials. Chambers was described as follows: "The whole thing about Chambers being cuddly is carefully cultivated. He is a ferocious animal."[45] This political skill may deflect government action in a way Microsoft's Gates was unable to do. Internally, the skilled politician who can coalesce rather than polarize various organizational constituencies may reduce the potentially fractural pressure from those quarters. In the increasingly turbulent environments that embed contemporary organizations, the rank-and-file membership would clearly benefit from the stable leadership of the politically skilled executive. Organizations are widely viewed as political arenas and it is long overdue for us to seriously consider the repertoire of skills that contribute to success in such environments.

Endnotes

[1] American Psychological Association Monitor. 1999. Worker stress, health reaching critical point. May 1, 27.

[2] DeFrank, R. S. & Ivancevich, J. M. 1998. Stress on the job: An executive update. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 12: 55–66.

[3] Mintzberg, H. 1983. *Power in and around organizations.* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall.

[4] Sternberg, R. J. 1997. Managerial intelligence: Why IQ isn't enough. *Journal of Management*, 23: 475–493; Wagner, R. K. & Sternberg, R. J. 1990. Street smarts. In K. E. Clark & M. B. Clark (Eds.), *Measures of leadership:* 493–504. West Orange, NJ: Leadership Library of America. Goleman, D. 1995. *Emotional intelligence.* New York: Bantam Books; *Time.* 1995. The EQ factor. October: 60–68.

[5] Sternberg, op. cit.

[6] Mintzberg, op. cit.

[7] Mainiero, L. A. 1994. On breaking the glass ceiling: The political seasoning of powerful women executives. *Organizational Dynamics*, 22: 5–20.

[8] DeLuco, J. M. 1992. *Political savvy: Systematic approaches to leadership behind the scenes.* Horsham, PA: LRP Publications; Jackall, R. 1988. *Moral images: The world of corporate managers.* New York: Oxford University Press; Ferris, G. R., Fedor, D. B., & King, T. R. 1994. A political conceptualization of managerial behavior. *Human Resource Management Review*, 4: 1–34.

[9] Jones, E. E. 1990. *Interpersonal perception.* New York: W. H. Freeman.

[10] Ferris, G. R., Berkson, H. M., Kaplan, D. M., Gilmore, D. C., Buckley, M. R., Hochwarter, W. A., & Witt, L. A. 1999. *Development and initial validation of the political skill inventory.* Presented at the 59th Academy of Management Meetings, Chicago.

[11] Van Velsor, E. V. & Leslie, J. B. 1995. Why executives derail: Perspectives across time and cultures. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 9: 62–72.

[12] Baron, R. A. & Markman, G. D. 2000. Beyond social capital: How social skills can enhance entrepreneurs' success. *The Academy of Management Executive*, 14(2): 106–116.

[13] Thorndike, E. L. 1920. Intelligence and its uses. *Harper's Magazine*, 140: 227–235.

[14] Goleman, op. cit.

[15] Yukl, G. A. & Falbe, C. M. 1990. Influence tactics and objectives in upward, downward, and lateral influence attempts. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75: 132–140; Kipnis, D., Schmidt, S. M., & Wilkinson, I. 1980. Intra-organizational influence tactics: Explorations in getting one's way. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 65: 440–452.

[16] Jones, op. cit.

[17] Leary, M. R. 1995. *Self-presentation: Impression management and interpersonal behavior*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.

[18] Bhagat, R. S. & Beehr, T. A. 1985. An evaluation summary and recommendations for future research. In T. A. Beehr & R. S. Bhagat (Eds.), *Human stress and cognition in organizations: An integrated perspective*. New York: John Wiley & Sons; Cohen, S. 1987. Measurement of coping. In S. V. Kasl & C. L. Cooper (Eds.), *Stress and health: Issues in research methodology*. New York: John Wiley & Sons; Aldwin, C. & Revenson, T. 1987. Does coping help? A re-examination of the relationship between coping and mental health. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 53: 337–348; McCrae, R. R. & Costa, P. T. 1986. Personality, coping, and coping effectiveness in an adult sample. *Journal of Personality*, 54: 385–405; Semmer, N. 1996. Individual differences, work stress, and health. In M. J. Schabrocq, Winnulist, J. A. M. & C. L. Cooper (Eds.), *Handbook of work and health psychology*: 51–86. Chichester; U.K., John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

[19] Ganster, D. C. 1989. Worker control and well-being: A review of research in the workplace. In S. L. Sauter, J. J. Hurrell, Jr., & C. L. Cooper (Eds.), *Job control and worker health*: 3–23. London: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.; Perrewé, P. L. & Ganster, D. C. 1989. The impact of job demands and behavioral control on experienced job stress. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 10: 213–229; Sutton, R. & Kahn, R. L. 1987; Tetric, L. E. & LaRocco, J. M. 1987. Understanding, prediction, and control as moderators of the relationships between perceived stress, satisfaction, and psychological well being. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 72: 538–543.

[20] DeFrank & Ivancevich, op. cit.

[21] *American Psychological Association Monitor*, op. cit.

[22] Ibid.

[23] Cooper, J.C., & Madigan, K. 2000. Productivity is winded as wages find their stride. *Business Week*, May 22: 41–42.

[24] Miller, R. & Cohen, L. 2000. Greenspan: No more Mr. Quarterpoint? *Business Week*, May 22: 47.

[25] Adler, N. E., Boyce, T., Chesney, M. A., Cohen, S., Folkman, S., Kahn, R. L., & Syme, S. L. 1994. Socioeconomic status and health: The challenge of the gradient. *American Psychologist*, 49: 15–24.

[26] Peters, T. 1987. *Thriving on chaos: Handbook for a management revolution*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf.

[27] Ashford, S. J. 1988. Individual strategies for coping with stress during organizational transitions. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 29: 19–36; Schweiger, D. M. & DeNisi, A. S. 1991. Communication with employees following a merger: A longitudinal field experiment. *Academy of Management Journal*, 34: 110–135; Lau, C. M. & Woodman, R. W. 1995. Understanding organizational change: A schematic perspective. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38: 537–554.

[28] Lee, R. T. & Ashforth, B. E. 1996. A meta-analytic examination of the correlates of the three dimensions of job burnout. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 81: 123–133.

[29] Lerner, J. S. & Tetlock, P. E. 1999. Accounting for the effects of accountability. *Psychological Bulletin*, 125: 255–275.

[30] Lee & Ashforth, op. cit.

[31] Ferris, et al., op. cit., p. 234.

[32] Ferris, G. R., Russ, G. S., & Fandt, P. M. 1989. Politics in organizations. In R. A. Giaclone & P. Rosenfeld (Eds.), *Impression management in the organization*: 143–170. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum; Madison, D. L., Allen, R. W., Porter, L. W., Reswick, P. A., & Mayes, B. T. 1980. Organizational politics: An exploration of managers' perceptions. *Human Relations*, 33: 79–100.

[33] Mintzberg, H. 1985. The organization as a political arena. *Journal of Management Studies*, 22: 133–154.

[34] Kelley, R. & Kaplan, J. 1993. How Bell Labs creates star performers. *Harvard Business Review*, 71: 128–136; Luthans, F., Hodgetts, R. M., & Rosenkrantz, S. A. 1988. *Real managers*. Cambridge, MA: Ballinger Publishing Co.; Pfeffer, J. 1981. Management as symbolic action: The creation and maintenance of organizational paradigms. In L. L. Cummings & B. M. Staw (Eds.), *Research in organizational behavior*, 3: 1–52, Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

[35] Jex, S. M. & Beehr, T. A. 1991. Emerging theoretical and methodological issues in the study of work-related stress. In G. R. Ferris & K. M. Rowland (Eds.), *Research in personnel and human resources management*, 9: 311–365, Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

[36] Ferris, et al., op. cit.

[37] Baum, H. S. 1989. Organizational politics against organizational culture: A psychoanalytic perspective. *Human Resource Management*, 28: 191–206.

[38] Byrne, J. A. 1999. *Chainsaw: The notorious career of Al Dunlap*. New York: HarperCollins, 1999.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Cooper, C. L. & Marshall, J. 1976. Occupational sources of stress: A review of the literature relating to coronary heart disease and mental ill health. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 49: 11–28; Cooper, C. L. & Marshall, J. 1978. Sources of managerial and white collar stress. In C. L. Cooper & R. Payne (Eds.), *Stress at work*. New York: John Wiley & Sons; Quick, J. C. & Quick, J. D. 1984. *Organizational stress and preventive management*. New York: McGraw-Hill; Burke, R. J. 1988. Sources of managerial and professional stress in large organizations. In C. L. Cooper & R. Payne (Eds.), *Causes, coping, and consequences of stress at work*: New York: John Wiley & Sons.

[41] Quick, J. C., Nelson, D., & Quick, J. D. 1990. *Stress and challenge at the top*. Chichester, U.K., and New York: John Wiley & Sons.

[42] Van Velsor & Leslie, op. cit.

[43] Kaplan, R., Drath, W. & Kofodimos, J. 1991. *Beyond ambition*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

[44] France, M. 2000. Fighting for market share is one thing. *Business Week*, May 8: 48.

[45] Serwer, A. 2000. There's something about Cisco. *Fortune*, May 15: 122.

Pamela L. Perrewé is the Jim Moran Professor of Management and Associate Dean for Graduate Programs in the College of Business at Florida State University. Dr. Perrewé received a Ph.D. in business administration from the University of Nebraska and has research interests in the areas of occupational stress, well-being, personality, and political influence in organizations. Contact: *pperrew@cob.fsu.edu.*

Gerald R. Ferris is the Francis Eppes Professor of Management in the College of Business and a professor of psychology at Florida State University. He has a Ph.D. in business administration from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. He is the author of over 150 journal articles, book chapters, and books, and is editor of the annual series *Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management.* Contact: *gferris@cob. fsu.edu.*

Dwight D. Frink is an associate professor of management in the School of Business Administration at the University of Mississippi. He received a Ph.D. in human resources management from the Institute of Labor and Industrial Relations at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His research interests include accountability, organizational politics, and stress, and he has authored numerous academic publications. Contact: *frink@bus.olemiss.edu.*
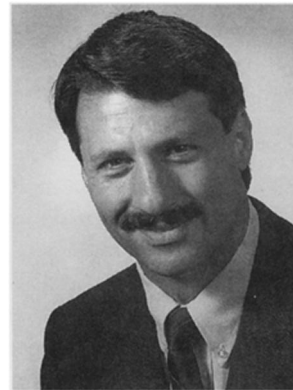
William P. Anthony is the Carl DeSantis Professor of Business Administration, professor of management, and director of the DeSantis Center for Executive Management Education in the College of Business at Florida State University. He has published 16 books and more than 80 articles and papers in a variety of journals, conducts executive education programs, and consults regularly. Contact: *banthon@cob. fsu.edu.*