

Chapter 7

Power, Politics, and Leadership

LEADERSHIP: Research Findings, Practice, and Skills

Andrew J. DuBrin, 8th Edition

Chapter Outline

CHAPTER OUTLINE

Sources and Types of Power

- Position Power
- Personal Power
- Power Stemming from Ownership
- Power Stemming from Dependencies
- Power Derived from Capitalizing on Opportunity
- Power Stemming from Managing Critical Problems
- Power Stemming from Being Close to Power
- Power and Self-Serving Behavior

Tactics for Becoming an Empowering Leader

- The Nature of Empowerment
- Empowering Practices
- Effective Delegation and Empowerment

Factors that Contribute to Organizational Politics

- Pyramid-Shaped Organization Structure
- Subjective Standards of Performance
- Environmental Uncertainty and Turbulence

- Emotional Insecurity
- Machiavellian Tendencies
- Encouraging Admiration from Subordinates

Political Tactics and Strategies

- Ethical Political Tactics and Strategies
- Unethical Political Tactics and Strategies

Exercising Control over Dysfunctional Politics

Summary

Key Terms

Guidelines for Action and Skill Development

Leadership Case Problem A

Leadership Case Problem B

Notes

Learning Objectives

- Recognize the various types of power.
- Identify tactics used for becoming an empowering leader.
- Know how to use delegation to support empowerment.
- Pinpoint factors contributing to organizational politics.
- Describe both ethical and unethical political behaviors.
- Explain how a leader can control dysfunctional politics.

Power

Potential or ability to influence decisions and control resources

- **Position**
 - Legitimate
 - Reward
 - Coercive
- **Personal**
 - Expert
 - Referent
 - Prestige
- Power Stemming from **Ownership**
- Power Stemming from **Dependencies**
- Power Derived from **Capitalizing on Opportunity**
- Power Stemming from **Managing Critical Problems**
- Power Stemming from **Being Close to Power**
- Power and **Self-Serving Behavior**

Empowerment

- Passing decision-making authority and responsibility from managers to group members.
- Leader's power and influence increases when shared with others.
- Companies that empower and train people at all levels can create competitive advantage.
- Empowering leadership by the CEO influences top-management team processes, thereby improving performance of the company.

Nature of Empowerment

- Spreitzer's Psychological Definition of Empowerment:
 - **Meaning**
 - Value of a work goal, evaluated in relation to a person's ideals or standards
 - **Competence or Self-Efficacy**
 - Individual's belief in his/her capability to meet performance requirements
 - **Self-Determination**
 - Individual's sense of having a choice in imitating and regulating actions
 - **Impact**
 - Degree to which the worker can influence strategic, administrative, or operating outcomes on the job
 - **Internal Commitment**
 - Takes place when workers are committed to a project, person, or program for individual motives

Tactics for Becoming an Empowering Leader

- Foster Initiative and Responsibility
- Link Work Activities to Organizational Goals
- Provide Ample Information
- Allow Group Members to Choose Methods
- Encourage Self-Leadership
- Establish Limits to Empowerment
- Continue to Lead
- Take Cultural Differences into Account
- Take Empowerment Expectations into Account

Delegation

- Assigning formal authority and responsibility for accomplishing a specific task to another person.
- A major contributor to empowerment.
- An opportunity for group members to develop their skills and demonstrate competence.
- Without delegation, effective leadership and management cannot take place.

To lead is to inspire and persuade others to accomplish tasks, not to accomplish everything by working alone.

Organizational Politics

- Informal approaches to gaining power through means other than merit or luck.
- Politics are played to achieve power, either directly or indirectly.
- Leaders need political skill to build alliances and gain resources.
 - **Leader political support**

Leaders need political skill for such purposes as building alliances and gaining resources for their constituents.

Factors Contributing to Organizational Politics

- Pyramid-Shaped Organizational Structure
- Subjective Standards of Performance
- Environmental Uncertainty & Turbulence
- Emotional Insecurity
- Machiavellian Tendencies
- Encouraging Admiration from Subordinates

Political Tactics & Strategies

- To make effective use of organizational politics, leaders must be aware of specific political tactics and strategies.
- The impact of politics on subordinates and colleagues depend on perceptions of politics.
- Ethical Political Behaviors Aimed At:
 - Gaining Power
 - Building Relationships with Upper Management & Employees
 - Avoiding Political Blunders
- Unethical Political Behaviors Aimed at Gaining Power Through Devious Methods

Gaining Power

- Develop Power Contacts
- Have a Compelling Vision
- Control Vital Information
- Do What the Political Environment Demands
- Make a Quick Showing
- Remember the Expectation of Payback
- Be Politically Correct
- Be the First to Accept Reasonable Changes
- Develop Positive Psychological Capital

Building Relationships

- Display Loyalty
- Manage Your Impression
- Ask Satisfied Customers to Contact Your Boss
- Be Courteous, Pleasant, and Positive
- Ask Advice
- Send Thank-You Notes to Many People
- Flatter Others Sensibly

Political Blunders

- Criticize the Boss Publicly
- Bypass the Boss, Disregarding Hierarchical Protocol
- Decline an Offer from Top Management
 - Especially More Than Once
- Put Your Foot in Your Mouth
- Not Conforming to Dress Code

Unethical Political Tactics & Strategies

- Backstabbing
- Embrace or Demolish
- Setting a Person Up for Failure
- Divide and Rule
- Playing Territorial Games
- Creating and Then Resolving a False Catastrophe
- Abusing Power

Exercising Control Over Dysfunctional Politics

- Be Aware of Its Causes and Techniques
- Avoid Favoritism and Cronyism
- Set Good Examples at the Top
- Implement Shared Goals Amongst the Firm and the Human Element in the Firm
- Encourage Goal Congruence
- Discuss Questionable Information in a Public Forum
- Hire People with Integrity

Summary

- Organizational power may be derived from many sources, including position power, personal power, ownership, dependencies, capitalizing on opportunity, managing critical problems, and being close to power.
- People with strong moral identity are less likely to use power for self-interest.
- Full-fledged empowerment includes the dimensions of meaning, self-determination, competence, impact, and internal commitment.
- Delegation is an important part of empowerment.
- To acquire and retain power, a leader must skillfully use organizational politics.
- Political tactics and strategies may be either ethical or unethical.
- Carried to the extreme, organizational politics can hurt an organization and its members.