

ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR

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T E N T H E D I T I O N

Power and Politics

PART THREE

THE GROUP

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**AFTER STUDYING THIS CHAPTER,
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:**

- 1. Contrast leadership and power.**
- 2. Define the four bases of power.**
- 3. Clarify what creates dependency in power relationships.**
- 4. List seven power tactics and their contingencies.**
- 5. Explain how sexual harassment is about the abuse of power.**
- 6. Describe the importance of a political perspective.**

**AFTER STUDYING THIS CHAPTER,
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO:**

- 7. List the individual and organizational factors that stimulate political behaviors.**
- 8. Identify seven techniques for managing the impression one makes on others.**
- 9. Explain how defensive behaviors can protect an individual's self-interest.**
- 10. List the three questions that can help determine if a political action is ethical.**

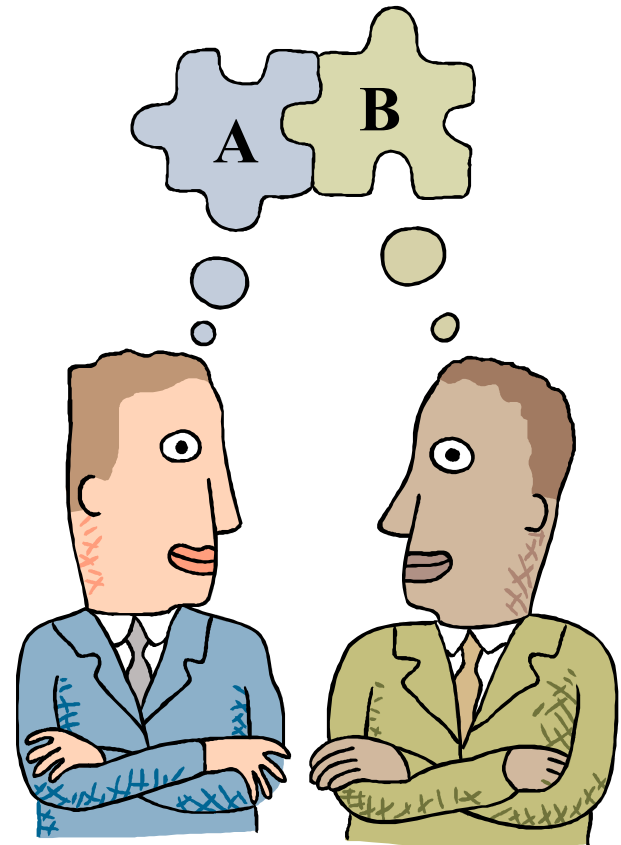
A Definition of Power

power

A capacity that *A* has to influence the behavior of *B* so that *B* acts in accordance with *A*'s wishes.

dependency

B's relationship to *A* when *A* possesses something that *B* requires.



Contrasting Leadership and Power

➤ Leadership

- Focuses on goal achievement.
- Requires goal compatibility with followers.
- Focuses influence downward.

➤ Research Focus

- Leadership styles and relationships with followers.

➤ Power

- Used as a means for achieving goals.
- Requires follower dependency.
- Used to gain lateral and upward influence.

➤ Research Focus

- Power tactics for gaining compliance.

Bases of Power

coercive power

A power base dependent on fear.

reward power

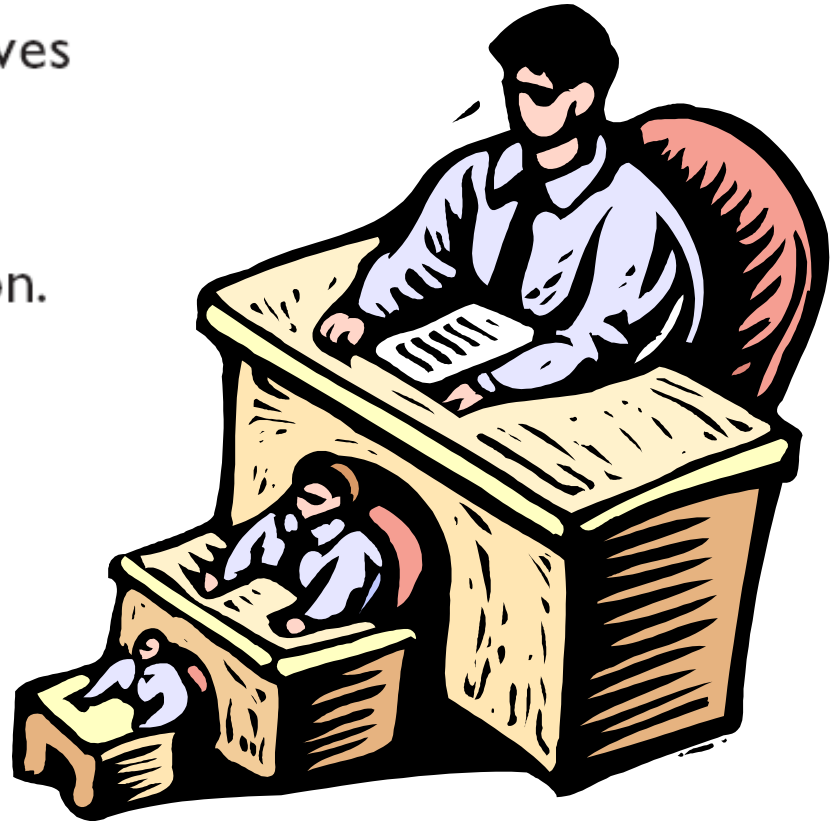
Compliance achieved based on the ability to distribute rewards that others view as valuable.



Bases of Power

legitimate power

The power a person receives as a result of his or her position in the formal hierarchy of an organization.



Personal Power

information power

Power that comes from access to and control over information.

expert power

Influence based on special skills or knowledge.



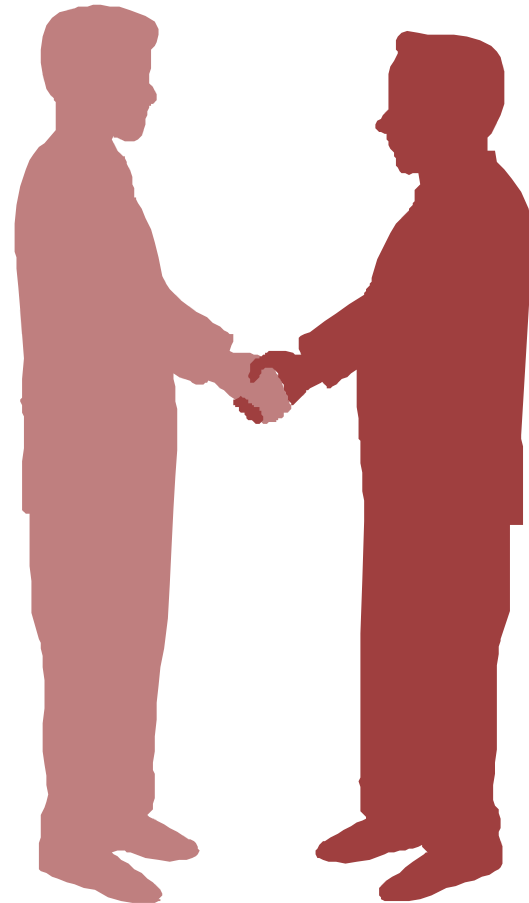
Personal Power

referent power

Influence based on possession by an individual of desirable resources or personal traits.

charismatic power

An extension of referent power stemming from an individual's personality and interpersonal style.



Dependency: The Key To Power

➤ **The General Dependency Postulate**

- The greater B's dependency on A, the greater the power A has over B.
- Possession/control of scarce organizational resources that others need makes a manager powerful.
- Access to optional resources (e.g., multiple suppliers) reduces the resource holder's power.

➤ **What Creates Dependency**

- **Importance** of the resource to the organization
- **Scarcity** of the resource
- **Nonsubstitutability** of the resource

Power Tactics

power tactics


Ways in which individuals translate power bases into specific actions.



Tactical Dimensions:

- Reason
- Friendliness
- Coalition
- Bargaining
- Assertiveness
- Higher authority
- Sanctions

Use of Power Tactics: From Most to Least Popular

	When Managers Influenced Superiors*	When Managers Influenced Subordinates
Most Popular	Reason	Reason
	Coalition	Assertiveness
	Friendliness	Friendliness
	Bargaining	Coalition
	Assertiveness	Bargaining
	Higher authority	Higher authority
	Least Popular	

*The dimension of sanctions is omitted in the scale that measures upward influence.

Source: Reprinted, by permission of the publisher, from "Patterns of Managerial Influence: Shotgun Managers, Tacticians, and Bystanders," by D. Kipnis et al. *Organizational Dynamics*, Winter 1984, p. 62. © 1984 Periodicals Division, American Management Association, New York. All rights reserved.

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Power in Groups: Coalitions

coalitions

Clusters of individuals who temporarily come together to achieve a specific purpose.



- **Seek to maximize their size to attain influence.**
- **Seek a broad and diverse constituency for support of their objectives.**
- **Occur more frequently in organizations with high task and resource interdependencies.**
- **Occur more frequently if tasks are standardized and routine.**

Sexual Harassment: Unequal Power in the Workplace

sexual harassment

Unwelcome advances, requests for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.



Politics: Power in Action

political behavior

Activities that are not required as part of one's formal role in the organization, but that influence, or attempt to influence, the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organization.

legitimate political behavior

Normal everyday politics.

illegitimate political behavior

Extreme political behavior that violates the implied rules of the game.

Politics Is in the Eye of the Beholder

“Political” Label		“Effective Management” Label
1. Blaming others	vs.	1. Fixing responsibility
2. “Kissing up”	vs.	2. Developing working relationships
3. Apple polishing	vs.	3. Demonstrating loyalty
4. Passing the buck	vs.	4. Delegating authority
5. Covering your rear	vs.	5. Documenting decisions
6. Creating conflict	vs.	6. Encouraging change and innovation
7. Forming coalitions	vs.	7. Facilitating teamwork
8. Whistleblowing	vs.	8. Improving efficiency
9. Scheming	vs.	9. Planning ahead
10. Overachieving	vs.	10. Competent and capable
11. Ambitious	vs.	11. Career-minded
12. Opportunistic	vs.	12. Astute
13. Cunning	vs.	13. Practical-minded
14. Arrogant	vs.	14. Confident
15. Perfectionist	vs.	15. Attentive to detail

Source: Based on T. C. Krell, M. E. Mendenhall, and J. Sendry, “Doing Research in the Conceptual Morass of Organizational Politics,” paper presented at the Western Academy of Management Conference, Hollywood, CA, April 1987.

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Factors That Influence Political Behaviors

Individual factors

- High self-monitors
- Internal locus of control
- High mach
- Organizational investment
- Perceived job alternatives
- Expectations of success

Organizational factors

- Reallocation of resources
- Promotion opportunities
- Low trust
- Role ambiguity
- Unclear performance evaluation system
- Zero-sum reward practices
- Democratic decision making
- High performance pressures
- Self-serving senior managers

Political behavior

Low → High

Favorable outcomes

- Rewards
- Averted punishments

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Employee Responses to Organizational Politics

Perceptions of organizational politics

Decreased job satisfaction

Increased anxiety

Increased turnover

Reduced performance

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Defensive Behaviors

Avoiding Action:

- Overconforming
- Buck passing
- Playing dumb
- Stretching
- Stalling

Avoiding Blame:

- Buffing
- Playing safe
- Justifying
- Scapegoating
- Misrepresenting

Avoiding Change:

- Prevention
- Self-protection

Impression Management (IM)

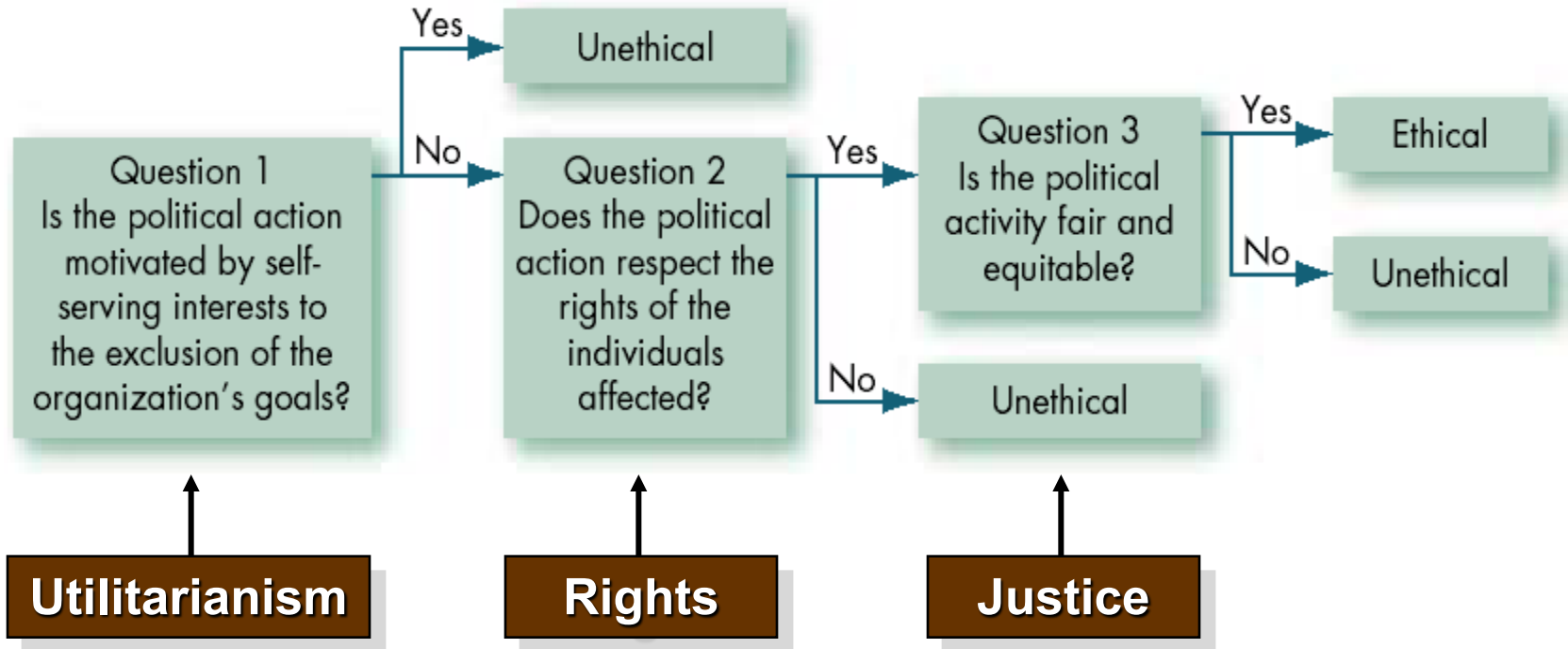
impression management

The process by which individuals attempt to control the impression others form of them.

IM Techniques:

- **Conformity**
- **Excuses**
- **Apologies**
- **Self-Promotion**
- **Flattery**
- **Favors**
- **Association**

Is Political Action Ethical?



Source: Adapted from G. F. Cavanagh, D. Moberg, and M. Valasquez, "The Ethics of Organizational Politics," *Academy of Management Review*, July 1981, p. 368. Reprinted with permission.

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