

DYNAMIC LEADER

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POLITICS, POWER & INFLUENCE IN THE WORKPLACE

Ignoring the external and internal politics surrounding your team and organization can be hazardous. Successful leaders, managers and team members understand the importance of dealing with individuals through personal power and influence. It is very important to analyze the political context in your environment and learn how to convert adversaries into allies and uncover ways to manage politics at all levels.

Politics is always about power and influence. Hence, politics, power and influence are not separated. Whenever there is power and control, the powerful one, be it a manager or a father in a home would exercise influence through politics. Politics is about maintaining power and influence regardless of whether it is done in a healthy/just or unhealthy/unjust way. Politics and power are therefore, inseparable. Of course, power and politics are different and their definitions serve to describe their differences. Power can be strength without the use of politics, e.g., in the case of a newly-assigned manager who quits his job and takes the role of an officer in a less powerful position because he wants less responsibility at the job. This manager refuses to use politics in his powerful position. Needless to say, such managers are rare. Many leaders are preoccupied with power because power pays a higher price for work to people than does subordination. Although it involves a great deal of responsibility, the benefits of power are immense. Nevertheless, power is essential seeing that no organization can survive without leaders and their guidance. All leaders must have power, and it is a “given” in any organization. Leaders do not have to base all their decisions with the use of politics. “Like it or not”, politics, power and influence are a part of all organization.”

“The environment you fashion out of your thoughts and philosophy, is the only climate you will ever live in.”

-Alfred A. Montapert

Knowing this, how should we think of power, politics and influence? Our understandings of power, politics and influence are related to relationships and maintained through interactions with others. When we talk and interact we initiate, maintain, justify, reinforce structures of organizational membership, and acceptance and decision-making. The classical administrative theory portrays organizations as “logical, functional, bland, impersonal, passionless entities that operate according to neutral rules of efficiency and economy.” However, organizations are social constructions characterized by relationships, ownership and membership. Social or persuasive power is manifested through the exertion and ability of individuals and other stakeholders as they generate and maintain their position and relationships. These matters are human and illustrate human frailty, skill, ability, learning capacity, opportunism, willingness to engage, control over passions, self-centeredness, altruism and virtue, ingenuity and disingenuousness.

Social or persuasive power is “the ability to get another person to do something that he or she would not otherwise have done.” The weakness in the social construction argument is that it neglects pure, real, coercive force. The fist speaks louder than words. The person who does not speak but acts, using the sword to force others into submission has power. Coercion albeit mediated by social mores and the law is nevertheless still evident. Moreover, organizational managers in power do not always have to provide reasons for their behavior. Political behavior has been defined as the “non-rational influence on decision making”. To put it another way, organizational politics can be used any time and for any reason. The only requirement for organizational political activity is power. When there is power, there are politics. Both power and politics are different to the extent that power is potency while politics is the use of that potency to acquire higher standards. Organizations are running as they must in the presence of both power and politics, both of which are impossible to do away with seeing that there will always be people with superior abilities and bargaining powers with respect to the others.



Here are 6 tips to help you achieve a better balance in your life. Take a moment to read and reflect on these tips -- and then get your life in balance!

1. **Slow Down.** Life is simply too short, so don't let things pass you in a blur. Take steps to stop and enjoy the things and people around you. Schedule more time between meetings; don't make plans for every evening or weekend, and find some ways to distance yourself from the things that are causing you the most stress.
2. **Learn to Better Manage Your Time. Avoid Procrastination.** For many people, most of the stress they feel comes from simply being disorganized and procrastinating. Learn to set more realistic goals and deadlines, and then stick to them. You'll find that not only are you less stressed, but your work will be better.
3. **Share the Load.** Even though we may sometimes feel we're the only ones capable of doing something, it's usually not the case. Get your partner or other family members to help you with all your personal/family responsibilities. Taking care of the household, children, or parents should not be the responsibility of just one person.
4. **Let Things Go. (Don't Sweat the Small Stuff.)** It's easier said than done, but learn to let things go. So what if the dishes aren't washed everyday or that the house doesn't get vacuumed every week. Learn to recognize the things that don't really have much impact in your life and allow yourself to let them go, and not beat yourself up for doing so.
5. **Take Charge. Set Priorities.** Sometimes it's easier for us to allow ourselves to feel overwhelmed rather than taking charge and developing a prioritized list of things that need to get done. Develop a list and set priorities, then enjoy the satisfaction of crossing things off your list.
6. **Simplify.** It seems human nature for just about everyone to take on too many tasks and responsibilities, to try to do too much, and to own too much. Find a way to simplify your life. Change your lifestyle. Learn to say no to requests. Get rid of the clutter and baggage in your house and your life.

In the end, the key word is balance. You need to find the right balance that works for you. Celebrate your successes and don't dwell on your failures. Life is a process, and so is striving for balance in your life.

The Secrets to Creating and Sustaining an Energized and Engaging Workplace

Your Work Environment Is What You Make It!

A One or Two Day Seminar

The secrets to **Creating and Sustaining An Engaged and Energized Workplace** is an all-new training program that draws from the collective wisdom of organizations and leading professionals who've mastered the secrets to creating a great places to work. It's an empowering day of sharing and learning where you'll draw lessons from the real world on how to energize your work environment. You'll learn to identify the sources that spawn negativity and drain energy and how to combat them. You'll discover how simple changes in the way work gets done will have an incredible impact on the way you and others become more engaged, more focused and downright happier with the work you're doing. And you'll learn how to inject more fun "into" work (without risking others substituting fun "instead" of work!).

You'll Leave This Training Excited and Eager to Get Back to Work to Share What You've Learned!

Participants in this training have one thing in common: They are so pumped by the end of the training that they can't wait to get back to work and share their newfound skills with others in the organization. You'll find that this training sparks so many ideas that you'll return to work fully assured that the sky's the limit when it comes to transforming your work environment!

You'll Learn:

- Tips for giving their departments a positive "kick in the pants"
- An immediate boost in morale for themselves – and then for their coworkers
- Techniques to change attitudes from "Can I do it?" to "I can do it!"
- Happier customers who get vastly improved customer service
- Energy to make work more engaging, fulfilling and (dare we say it?) entertaining
- Dramatically increased job satisfaction and loyalty from their employees
- A re-energized and invigorated workforce
- More passion for their work
- The ability to identify and remove obstacles for having more fun at work
- Empowered employees who aren't afraid to improve their own work situations
- The power to take their business seriously and themselves less serious

Call 614-920-1323 to learn more about the Leadership Dynamics on-site training advantage.