



Chapter 7

Power and Politics



Chapter Outline

- A Definition of Power
- Bases of Power
- Dependency: The Key to Power
- Influence Tactics
- Empowerment: Giving Power to Employees
- The Abuse of Power: Harassment in the Workplace
- Politics: Power in Action



Power and Politics

Questions for Consideration

1. What is power?
2. How does one get power?
3. How does dependency affect power?
4. What tactics can be used to increase power?
5. What does it mean to be empowered?
6. How are power and harassment related?
7. Why do people engage in politics?



Power and Politics

- **Power**
- **Politics**



Leadership and Power

Power

- acceptance
- Intimidation
- lateral and upward influence
- gaining compliance

Leadership

- Agreement
- downward influence
- lateral and upward influence
- focuses on answers



Measuring Bases of Power

- **Coercive power**
- **Reward power**
- **Legitimate power**
- **Expert power**
- **Referent power**
- **Information Power**



Evaluating the Bases of Power

People will respond in one of three ways:

1. Commitment
2. Compliance
3. Resistance

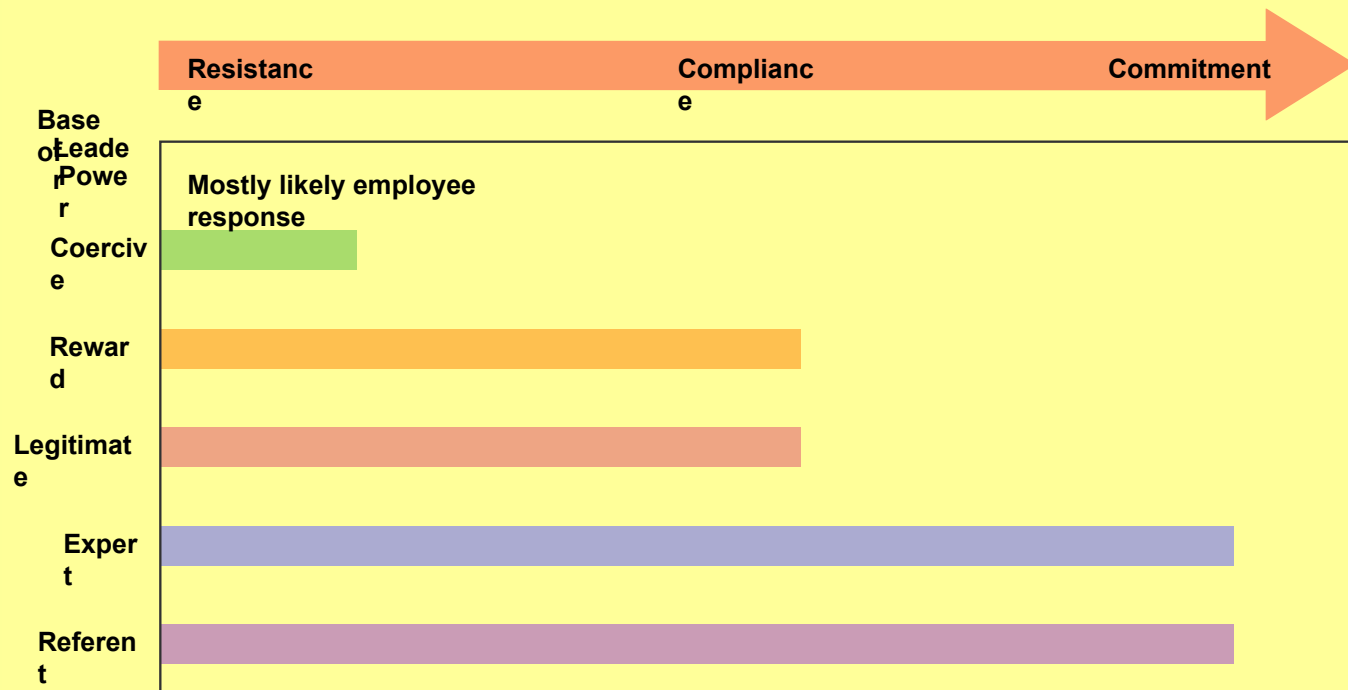


Evaluating the Bases of Power

- **Coercive power**
- **Legitimate power**
- **Reward power**
- **Expert power**



Continuum of Responses to Power





Popularity of Power Tactics: From Most to Least Popular

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

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



Dependency: Key to Power

- **Importance**
- **Scarcity**
- **Non-substitutability**



Increasing Dependency

**To increase the dependency of others on you,
you need to**

- **Control**
- **scarce**
- **substitutes**



Empowerment: Giving Power to Employees

- **The freedom and the ability of employees to make decisions and commitments**
- **Managers disagree over definition of empowerment**



Conditions for True Empowerment

- **Clear definitions**
- **Relevant skills**
- **Support**
- **Recognition**



Characteristics of Empowered People

- **Sense of self-determination**
- **Sense of meaning**
- **Sense of competence**
- **Sense of impact**



The Abuse of Power: Workplace Bullying

- Bullying can happen across levels of the organization, or among co-workers.



The Abuse of Power: Sexual Harassment

- The Supreme Court of Canada defines sexual harassment as
 - Unwelcome behaviour of a sexual nature in the workplace that negatively affects the work environment or leads to adverse job-related consequences for the employee.



Examples of Sexual Harassment

- There is disagreement as to what specifically constitutes sexual harassment.



Examples of Sexual Harassment

- **More subtle forms (harder to interpret)**
 - Unwanted looks or comments
 - Off-colour jokes
 - Sexual artifacts such as nude calendars in the workplace
 - Sexual innuendo
 - Misinterpretations of where the line between “being friendly” ends and “harassment” begins



Politics: Power in Action

- **Those activities that influence, or attempt to influence, the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organization.**

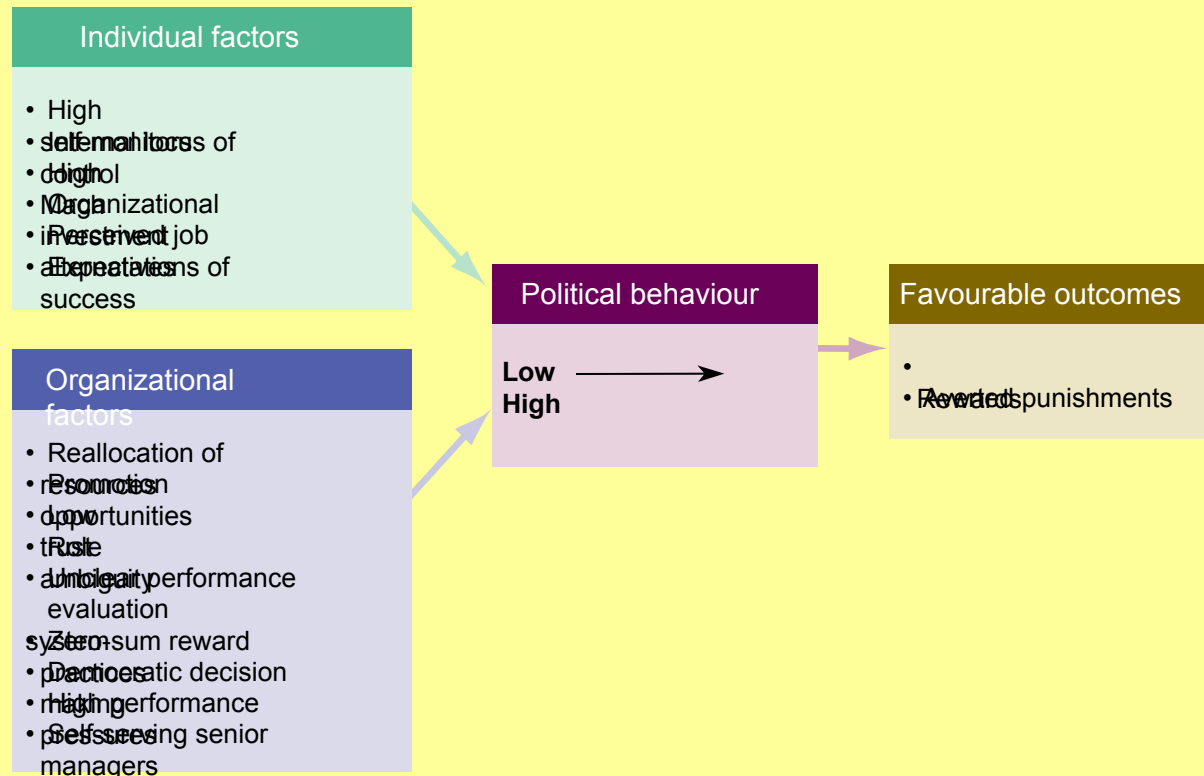


Why Do We Get Politics?

- **differing values**
- **Resources**
- **Performance outcomes**



Factors Influencing Political Behaviour





Influence Tactics

- Rational persuasion
- Inspirational appeals
- Consultation
- Ingratiation
- Personal appeals
- Exchange
- Coalition tactics
- Pressure
- Legitimizing tactics



What Individual Factors Contribute to Politics?

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



What Organizational Factors Contribute to Politics?

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



Types of Political Activity

- **Attacking**
- **Control**
- **coalitions**
- **Networking**
- **obligations**
- **impressions**



Impression Management

- **The process by which individuals attempt to control the impression others form of them**
- **More likely used by high self-monitors than low self-monitors**



Exhibit 7-8 Impression Management (IM) Techniques

- **Conformity**
- **Excuses**
- **Apologies**
- **Acclamations**
- **Flattery**
- **Favours**
- **Association**



Concepts to Skills: Politicking

- **Framing arguments**
- **Right image**
- **Organizational resources**
- **Indispensable**
- **Visible**
- **Allies**
- **Other members**
- **Support**



Making Office Politics Work

- **Nobody - everybody**
- **opinions**
- **paid back**
- **opposition**



Summary and Implications

- **Power is a two-way street.**
- **Few employees relish being powerless in their jobs and organization.**
- **People respond differently to various power bases.**
- **Expert power is the most strongly and consistently related to effective employee performance.**



Summary and Implications

- **The power of the manager may also play a role in determining job satisfaction.**
- **The effective manager accepts the political nature of organizations.**
- **The more political that employees perceive an organization, the lower their satisfaction.**
- **Regardless of level in the organization, some people are more politically “astute” than others.**
- **The politically naive and inept tend to feel continually powerless.**