



## 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



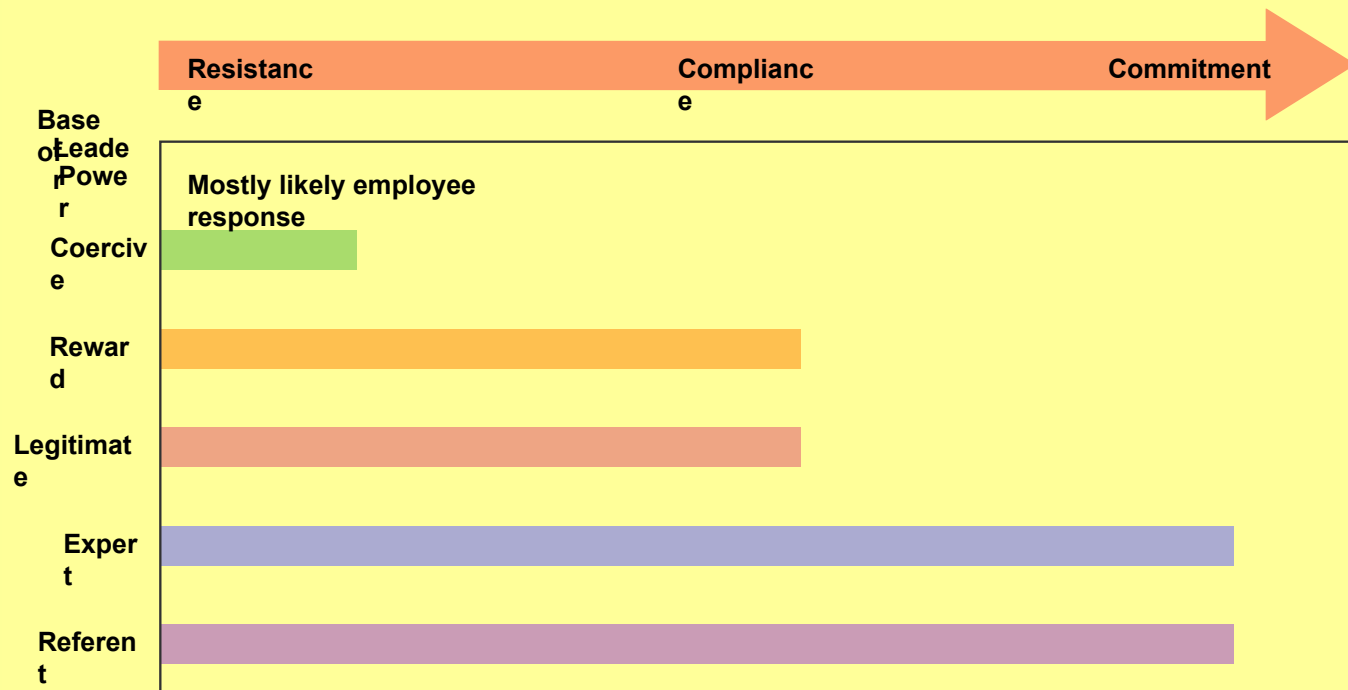
# Evaluating the Bases of Power

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





# Continuum of Responses to Power





# Popularity of Power Tactics: From Most to Least Popular

	<b>When Managers Influenced Superiors*</b>	<b>When Managers Influenced Subordinates</b>
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.**

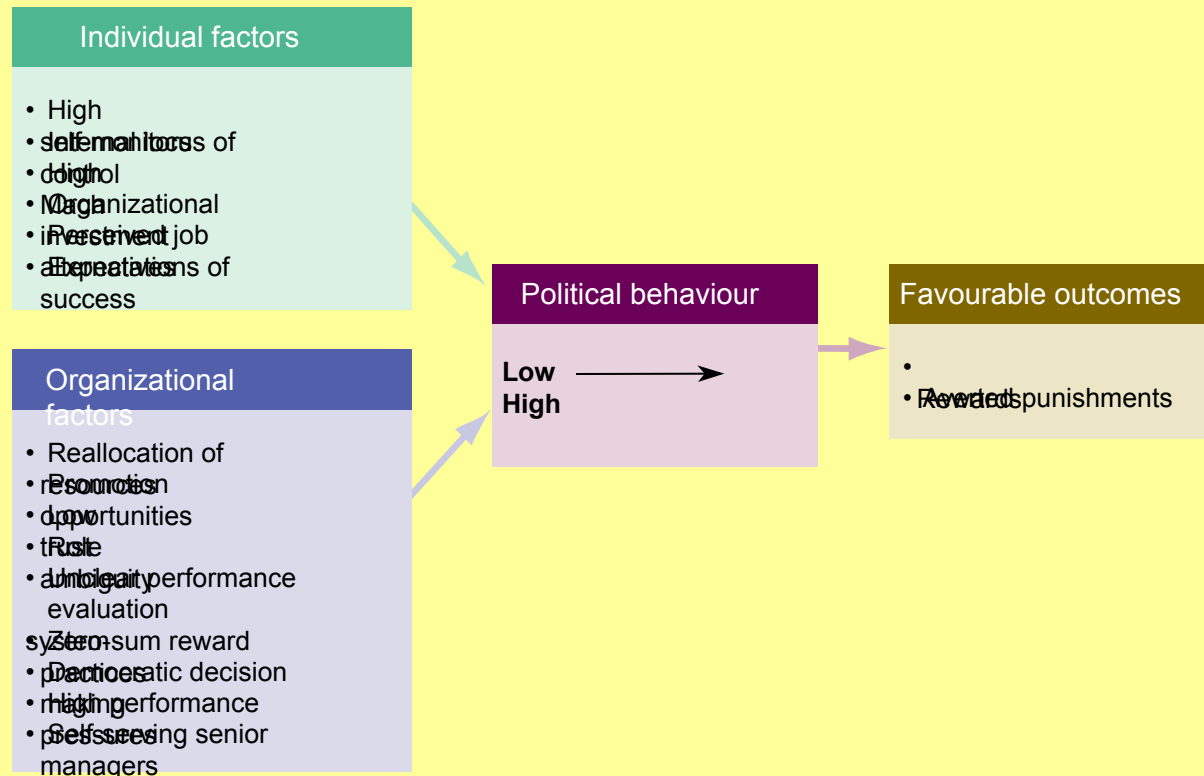


# Why Do We Get Politics?

- **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.**