

Lecture 29/30, Mar 27, 2023

Power

- Power is the capacity to influence others who are in a state of dependence
- Not always perceived or exercised
- Does not imply a good or poor relationship – people can like or dislike the people who have power over them
- Power comes from 5 bases:
 1. Legitimate power: derived from a person's position, formal authority and level in an hierarchy (results in compliance)
 - e.g. politicians, CEOs
 - We are socialized to accept its influence
 2. Reward power: derived from ability to provide positive and prevent negative outcomes (results in compliance)
 - e.g. payment, but also praising, complimenting
 - The reward doesn't always take into consideration everything we want
 - Largely about influencing and encouraging desired behaviour
 3. Coercive power: derived from use of punishment and threat (results in the most resistance)
 - Generally less effective and can provoke resistance
 4. Referent power: derived from being well liked by others (results in commitment)
 - Friendly interpersonal relations cause influence to go beyond organizations
 - Tends to be by choice
 5. Expert power: derived from having special knowledge/information that is valuable (results in commitment)
 - Also tends to be by choice
- Referent and expert power are the most effective because they result in commitment – we comply and we want to do it
- Reward and legitimate power result in compliance, but people may not want it
- Coercive power is the least effective because it will result in resistance

Acquiring Power

- People obtain power by getting into positions, doing certain activities, and developing relationships with others
- Certain activities are more effective for generating power:
 - Extraordinary: unusual, non-routine activities (e.g. innovation, taking big risks, new roles)
 - Visible: power can only be generated if others know about your activities
 - Relevant: people have to care about your activity to generate power
- Developing relationships with the right people can generate power:
 - Outsiders
 - Subordinates
 - Peers
 - Superiors

Need for Power

- Need for power (n Pow) is the need to have strong influence over others
- Power has consequences – it comes with responsibilities
- n Pow is a personality characteristic; some people want power more than others
 - Individuals with internal locus of control tend to have high n Pow
- *Institutional managers* are effective managers that use their power for the good of the organization
 - Typically high n Pow
 - Relative unconcerned with how much others like them

- There are positive and negative ways that we influence people (influence means); this is also affected by our intentions

Organizational Politics

- Using and abusing power/influence to further your own goals, whether or not it aligns with the goals of the organization
- Typically involves using means of influence that the organization does not sanction or pursuing goals that it does not sanction
- Political activity is self-conscious and intentional (unconscious behaviour is not organizational politics)

Influence Means	Influence Ends	
	Organizationally Sanctioned	Not Sanctioned by Organization
Organizationally Sanctioned	Nonpolitical Job Behaviour I	Organizationally Dysfunctional Political Behaviour II
Not Sanctioned by Organization	Political Behaviour Potentially Functional to the Organization III	Organizationally Dysfunctional Political Behaviour IV

Figure 1: Types of organizational behaviour

- Political behaviour can involve using means not sanctioned by the organization to achieve ends sanctioned by the organization; in this case the outcomes can be beneficial even though the tactics are questionable
- Political skill is the ability to understand others and use it to your advantage to enhance your own objectives
- 4 facets to political skill:
 1. Social astuteness: being able to “read” people, interpersonal skills/emotional intelligence
 2. Interpersonal influence: being able to convince and persuade others; not to pressure but to make them feel at ease
 3. Apparent sincerity: coming across as genuine and exhibiting high integrity; making people think you care more than you actually do
 4. Networking ability: establishing good relations with key people to establish your goals; building a good reputation

- Positive:*
- Pressure/Assertiveness
 - Ingratiation
 - Rationality
 - Exchange
 - Upward Appeal
 - Coalition
 - Consultation
 - Inspirational Appeals
 - Personal Appeals
 - Legitimizing Tactics
- Negative:*
- Blaming/attacking others (using scapegoats)
 - Controlling access to information
 - Avoiding, stalling
 - Intimidation
 - Taking credit for other's work
 - Deceit
 - Buffing
 - Buck passing
 - Over-conforming

Figure 2: Means of influence