

PUT AN END TO THE
EPIDEMIC

**ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS SERIES:
BUILDING HEALTHY ORGANIZATIONS**

UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF POWER IN HEALTHY ORGANIZATIONS

Tools and Resources for Building Healthy Organizations



UNDERSTANDING THE DYNAMICS OF POWER IN HEALTHY ORGANIZATIONS

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FORWARD

Why a discussion on power is important for healthy and effective organizations

The purpose of this manual is to increase the capacity of nonprofit executive leaders at the middle and senior levels by providing information on the dynamics of power in healthy organizations. This is an important topic because understanding power and learning how to use it well are critical skills for leaders and essential to the overall health and sustainability of organizations. Two critical elements involved in understanding and using power in beneficial ways center around the concepts of shared power and empowerment, both of which occur in the context of the relationship between leaders and followers and the health of these relationships throughout the entire organization. This manual focuses on these relationships and is divided into three sections.

1. The first section addresses the topic of leadership and how it works in organizations, focusing on the components of leadership and the two types of leadership that occur in organizations.
2. The second section addresses the essentials of healthy leadership in organizations, emphasizing the occurrence of leadership in the context of relationship and the inherent responsibilities of both leaders and followers.
3. The third section helps leaders understand power and how to leverage it in ways that are beneficial to the entire organization.

In healthy organizations, the use of power is balanced and shared. It is used in ways that encourage and empower others to act for the strength of the organization. “The capacity of a company to strengthen itself comes from the empowerment of its members, which has its origin in the degree to which the organization is willing to share power with its leaders and employees.” (Bednarz, 2013)

In order to be an effective leader, you must be able to use power within your organization to produce results. Organizations that understand the connection between leadership and power

and how to use both effectively will inevitably lead healthier, more productive, and more sustainable organizations.

LEADERSHIP AND HOW IT WORKS IN ORGANIZATIONS

Leadership is Multidimensional

Most people would probably agree that strong leadership is one of the key success factors in organizational effectiveness. The challenge is to define exactly what strong leadership is and how it works best in an organizational context. If one were to search on the Internet for the word “leadership” over 490 million potential sites with information would emerge. There are literally hundreds, if not thousands, of definitions and written commentaries on the subject of leadership; and there may be some merit in all of them because leadership is a complex process that has multiple dimensions.

Leadership involves establishing a clear vision, sharing that vision with others so that they will follow willingly, providing the information, knowledge and methods to realize that vision, and coordinating and balancing the conflicting interests of all members and stakeholders.

Concepts of Leadership

Leadership has been conceptualized in many different ways. Some concepts support the idea of the “born leader,” emphasizing that some people are born with special personality traits and characteristics that enable them to be great leaders. These traits include the physical, emotional, and social characteristics of a leader. Theories that adopt the “born leader” or special traits approach focus on “identifying the innate qualities and characteristics possessed by great social, political and military leaders (e.g. Mohandas Gandhi, Abraham Lincoln, and Napoleon). It is believed that people were born with these traits, and only ‘great’ people possessed them.” (Northouse, 2007) Defining leadership solely by this approach is problematic



because of its subjective nature and also because some of the definable traits observed in “great” leaders may also be observed in non-leaders.

Another approach to leadership is characterized by style or behavior—emphasizing what leaders actually do as they lead and manage others. In this sense, leadership encompasses more than special innate personality traits but is defined by particular actions and behaviors. The style or behavior approach focuses exclusively on what leaders do and how they act,” (Northouse, 2007) and particularly on how they interact with followers. Thus, the leadership style approach emphasizes how a leader navigates both task-oriented actions, which are actions that “help group members to achieve objectives”



(Northouse, 2007) and relationship-oriented actions, which focus on motivating and supporting followers in a way that leads to goal accomplishment. There are many styles of leadership. And there is no one particular style that will work well in every organizational setting.

Other concepts view leadership as a power relationship between leaders and followers, where leaders use the power they have to get certain results and reactions from their followers. A

popular characterization of this type of leadership

is the “the carrot and the stick” approach.

Transactional leadership is a good example of this kind of leadership.

Transactional leadership makes four basic assumptions:

1. People perform their best when there is a clear chain of command.



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2. Followers are motivated by rewards and punishments.
 3. Obeying the instructions and commands of the leader is the primary goal of followers.
 4. Subordinates need to be carefully monitored to ensure that expectations are met.

Like all other types of leadership, transactional leadership has both strengths and weaknesses. While transactional leadership has come under criticism in recent years, it remains one of the primary types of leadership that exist in modern organizations today. Still, other approaches view leadership as a set of skills, knowledge, and competencies that can be learned and improved.

Trying to find one definition or approach to leadership that will work in all situations can be like embarking on a “wild goose chase.” However, there is hope. While, “we cannot define leadership, we can increase understanding and engagement by reflecting on the system of leadership and management and the processes they engage with.” (Rowe, 2007) When we approach the study of leadership in this way, understanding that it is a complex process with multiple dimensions, we may well catch that goose after all, especially when we examine the basic components that comprise leadership.

Four Components of Leadership

Although there are many definitions of leadership most scholars and practitioners agree on four key components that comprise the phenomenon of leadership:

1. *Leadership is a PROCESS (Northouse, 2007)*
2. *Leadership involves INFLUENCE (Northouse, 2007)*
3. *Leadership occurs in a GROUP context (Northouse, 2007)*
4. *Leadership involves the attainment of a GOAL (Northouse, 2007)*

Four Components of Leadership:

- Process
- Influence
- Group-based
- Attainment of Goal

If actual leadership is taking place in any organization regardless of its management systems, organizational structure, or the style, behavior, or traits of its leaders, then these four components are present.

Leadership is a process

Leadership is not static but rather the continuous interaction between leaders and followers. Defining leadership in this way “emphasizes that leadership is not a linear, one way event but

rather an interactive event.”

(Northouse, 2007) Both

leaders and followers

participate in this process and

both impact and affect the

other. This means that

leadership is not “restricted to

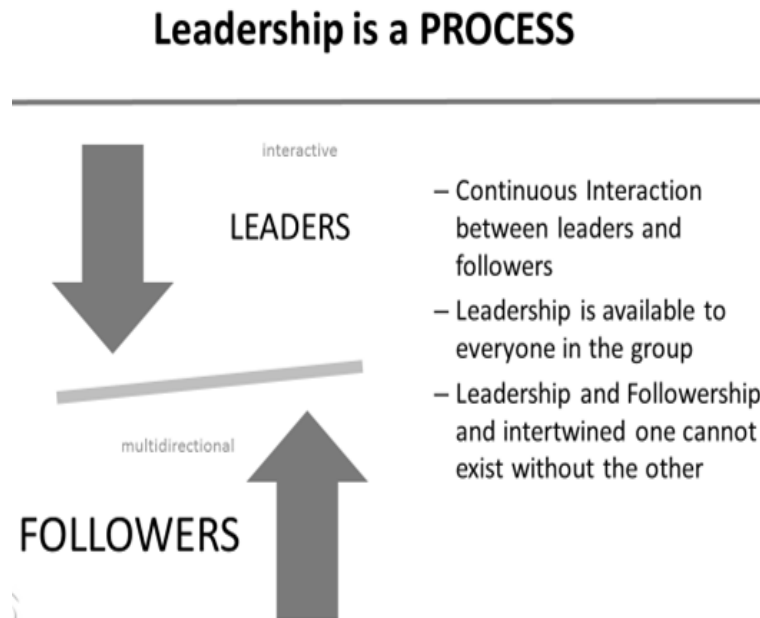
only the formally designated

leader in a group but it

becomes available to

everyone.” (Northouse, 2007)

Both leaders and followers are



intrinsically involved together in the leadership process.

Understanding leadership as a process that exists between leaders and followers is important in understanding the dynamics of the various levels of relationships in organizations and how these relationships are interconnected and affect each other, because these interactions ultimately impact the effectiveness of the whole organization. “All levels (of relationships) have impact in both directions and none can be ignored.” (Anderson & Anderson, 2001) For example, a disengaged supervisor can impact the morale of the team or work group in an organization, which not only affects individual team members but can also lead to poor organizational performance. Likewise, a disgruntled team member can have a tremendous negative effect on team morale and contribute not only to individual poor performance but also the poor performance of the entire team. Ultimately, this adversely affects both the leader and the entire organization. “Poor performance at any level will roll up into poor performance in the higher levels,” and vice versa. (Anderson & Anderson, 2001) Leadership and followership are inherently connected and one cannot exist without the other. For leadership to have

followership, leaders must influence followers in positive ways.

Leadership involves influence

Genuine leadership influence affects followers by causing them to willingly make the choice to expend energy on behalf of the organization. Therefore coercion and manipulation are not methods of influence that would meet the requirements of the kind of leadership influence necessary for leading healthy, effective organizations. When leaders are able to influence followers to willingly work towards organizational goals, both leaders and followers are impacted in positive ways. “They energize and focus people in ways that fulfill their dreams, give them a sense of purpose, and leave them with a profound sense of accomplishment when the work is done.”

(Bacon, 2011)



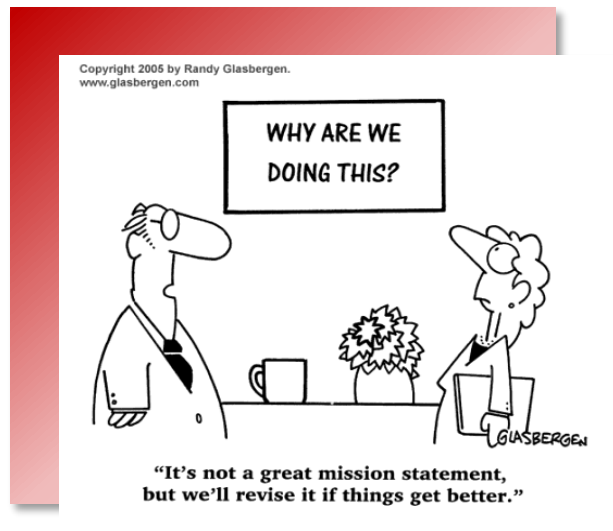
In order for this kind of influence to occur, leaders must communicate a compelling vision that has relevance and meaning to the followers. “The leader achieves this influence by humbly conveying a prophetic vision of the future in clear terms that resonates with the follower(s) beliefs and values in such a way that the follower(s) can understand and interpret the future into present-time action steps.” (Winston & Patterson, 2006)

When vision is shared, people unite around it because they believe in it enough to exert time and energy to help bring it to pass. “A shared vision helps to create a sense of commonality within the organization and provide coherence to varied activities. People who truly share a vision are connected and bound together by a common aspiration.” (Hoe, 2007) Influence then results in a group of people rallying around a shared vision and uniting around a common purpose.

Leadership occurs in groups

In organizations, groups are the context in which leadership takes place. A group is comprised of individuals who have a common purpose and exist at all levels of the organization. This can be a small task group or team or an even larger group encompassing the entire organization. If there is no group then there is no leadership. “Leadership then involves influencing a group of individuals who have a common purpose.” (Northouse, 2007) Leadership mobilizes people and organizes them in ways that lead to achievement of a common goal.

Leadership includes attention to goals



Leadership involves “directing a group of individuals toward accomplishing some task or end.” (Northouse, 2007) Leadership has its effects in contexts where individuals are moving toward a goal. In this sense, the leader influences followers to go beyond their own self-interest to that of achieving the mission and objectives of the team or group or organization as a whole. Whenever a group or team has no real direction, the

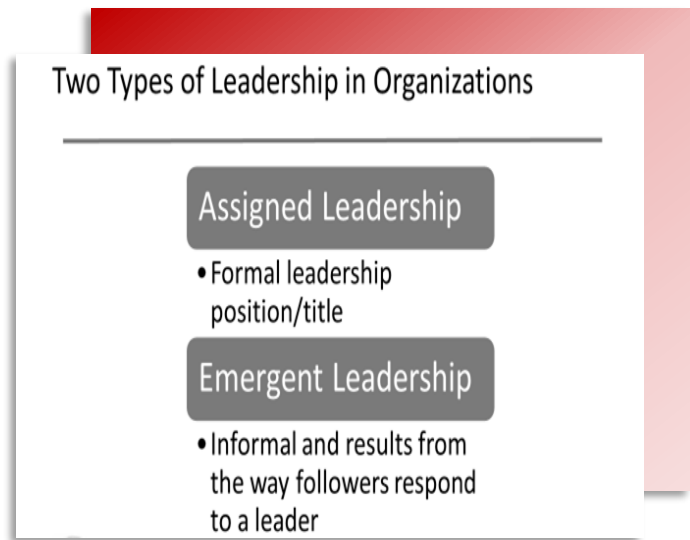
leader of the group is usually to blame because a key objective of leadership is goal attainment. People come together for a purpose. Clear goals and objectives are necessary for any organization to be effective.

A working definition of leadership

All four components of leadership when taken together provide a working definition of leadership. “Leadership is a PROCESS whereby an individual INFLUENCES a GROUP of individuals to achieve a common GOAL.” (Northouse, 2007)

Two Types of Leadership in Organizations

There are two types of leadership in organizations, assigned and emergent. Some people are leaders because of their formal position in an organization; this is referred to as “assigned leadership.” Others are leaders because of the way other group members respond to them personally, even without having any formal leadership position. This is called “emergent leadership.”



Assigned Leadership

Assigned leadership is based on occupying a position in an organization that has been assigned by leadership. It is an appointed leadership position and usually comes with some degree of delegated authority. Examples of assigned leaders are team leaders, managers, department heads, directors, and administrators. Anyone who has supervisory authority over a team or group is in an assigned leadership position because they have some measure of delegated authority to supervise and lead others.

Employees may perceive that assigned leaders are educated, intelligent, and wise, even if they are not. (Johnston, 2015) This can minimize the influence that an assigned leader has over the group he or she is responsible for leading. “If an assigned leader has areas in which he is incompetent, employees can begin to resent having to follow such a person.” (Johnston, 2015)

This kind of resentment can lead to decreased effectiveness and productivity as well as a poor working relationship between the leader and followers. Another interesting aspect of assigned leadership in organizations is that “the person assigned to a leadership position does not always become the real leader in a particular setting.” (Northouse, 2007) Title and position are not always indicative of leadership. “On occasion, you may have an assigned leader in a

department when the actual leader is an employee under that person. This subordinate leader may have the ability to encourage cooperation and consensus in a way that the assigned leader does not.” (Johnston, 2015) This kind of “unofficial leadership” is referred to as emergent leadership.

Emergent Leadership

Emergent leadership is based on the perception that others in the group have of a particular person. “When others perceive an individual as the most influential member of a group or organization, regardless of the individual’s title, the person is exhibiting Emergent Leadership. The individual acquires

Emergent Leadership through other people in the organization who support and accept that individual’s behavior.” (Northouse, 2007) A discussion of emergent leadership is important because it directly contradicts the notion that the only people who have power in an organization are those who have assigned leadership positions.

Emergent leaders are leaders because according to our working definition of leadership, they can influence others to attain a goal. Through positive communication and collaboration emergent leaders gain influence over their followers by acting in ways that followers respect. “This type of leadership is not assigned but rather emerges over a period of time through positive communication and interaction with others.” (Northouse, 2007) Respect then is a key element in understanding emergent leadership as the respect that followers feel for the emergent leader is based solely on the emergent leader’s personal influence rather than the authority that comes from an official assigned position within the organization. This discussion of assigned leadership and emergent leadership is important because it infers that leadership is available to individuals at all levels of the organization.

Emerging Leaders are:

- *Emotionally intelligent*
- *Strategically insightful*
- *Innovative in mindset*
- *Customer focused*

REFLECTION

1. Why is it not possible to have leadership without followership?
2. Who is more important to organizational success, the leaders in the organization or the followers in organization?
3. Have you ever led or been a member of a group that did not have clear goals?
 - a. If yes, how did this make you feel?
 - b. Who do you think is ultimately responsible for a group's lack of focus and direction?
4. Do you believe you operate as an assigned leader in your organization?
 - a. Why or Why not?
5. Do you believe you operate as an emergent leader in your organization?
 - a. Why or Why not?
6. What do you believe are the benefits of being an assigned leader in an organization?
7. What do you believe are the benefits of being an emergent leader in your organization?

THE ESSENTIALS OF HEALTHY LEADERSHIP IN ORGANIZATION

Leadership as Relationship

As stated, leadership can be conceptualized in many ways. However, there is no more accurate way to view leadership than through the lens of the *Leader-Follower* relationship. For example, one identifies a tyrant simply by observing the oppressive manner in which he or she relates to his or her followers. The way leaders and followers interact with one another in an



organizational context not only reveals how

healthy the organization is but also reveals much about who the people in the organization are as well. "The only real way to find out who we are is through relationships." (Miller, 1995)

Thus, leadership is revealed in relationship with others.

Three key components of healthy human relationships are: 1) genuine love and concern, 2) mutual trust, and 3) authentic communication. This remains true even in the context of organizations. In fact, understanding how these concepts apply to organizations is key to understanding the foundational principles upon which healthy organizations stand.

Genuine Love and Concern

How is genuine love and concern reflected in the relationships between leaders and their followers? One way to quickly detect whether leaders have genuine love and concern for their followers or if they just view them as cogs in a wheel is to observe how leaders actually treat their employees or staff. "Loving leaders treat employees as though they possess intelligence and creativity." (Winston B. E., 2002) This is practiced by allowing employees to participate in creative problem solving and in the process of decision making, particularly as it relates to the employee's specific work assignments. Allowing employees to participate in these activities

gives them a sense of autonomy. “A sense of autonomy has a powerful affect on individual performance and attitude,” (Pink, 2009) and has been shown to be a key motivator in employee satisfaction and high performance.

In an organizational context, treating employees with genuine love and concern equates to treating them with respect. When this love flows from leader to follower, followers or “employees reciprocate with love and performance...” (Winston B. E., 2002) This mutual exchange results in higher levels of trust between leader and follower. Loving leaders give trust to employees.” (Winston B. E., 2002) Therefore, another major component of a positive *Leader-Follower* relationship is mutual trust.

Mutual Trust

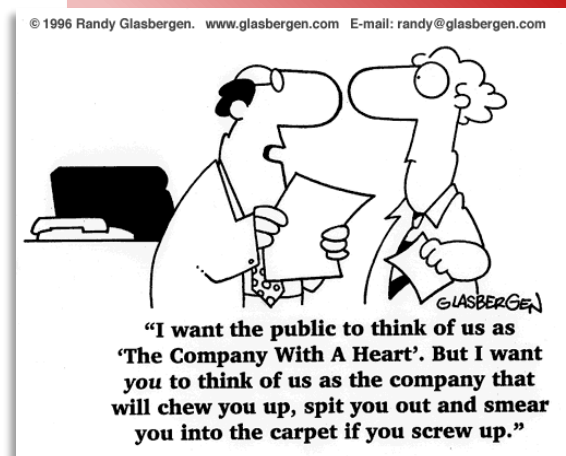
Followers respect leaders who they can trust and who they feel trust them. One of the quickest ways that leaders can undermine follower trust is by not aligning their espoused values with their practiced values. In other words, followers will distrust leaders who fail to “walk the talk.”

This misalignment of practiced versus espoused values in an organization demonstrates a lack of behavioral integrity. When behavioral integrity is

compromised or lacking in an organization, trust between leader and follower is highly unlikely because followers do not believe that leaders will behave in ways that are beneficial to followers.

This creates a values gap. In organizations, “a values gap exists when there is a disparity between the values of management and the values of employees within the same organization characterized by management espousing one set of values while

practicing a different set.” (Kuczmarski & Kuczmarski, 1995) This lack of congruency breeds an atmosphere of distrust, which undermines working relationships and thus directly impacts organizational productivity. The bottom-line is that in healthy, productive organizations, leaders must be trustworthy. “The gelling agents of trust are our word and the judgment we display in



our actions.” (Chaleff 2003) In other words, healthy, positive, and effective leadership is trustworthy leadership.

Trustworthy leadership thrives in an atmosphere where authentic communication occurs between leaders and followers. Authentic communication occurs when those engaged in the communication express themselves in ways that lead to mutual respect and understanding.

Authentic Communication

Authentic communication between leader and follower is a two-way street. Not only must leaders be able to provide followers with a clear and compelling vision, clear expectations of what is to be accomplished, and candid feedback on how well expectations are accomplished, they must create an environment where followers feel free to ask questions, make suggestions, and even voice disagreement and concerns without fear of reprisal. This requires a commitment from both leaders and followers practice healthy communication in the work place by being aware of the barriers that hinder communication, as well as consciously employing strategies that promote authentic communication.

Five Barriers to Healthy Communication

1. **FOCUSING ON A PERSONAL AGENDA** – When we spend our listening time formulating our next response, we cannot be fully attentive to what the speaker is saying.
2. **EXPERIENCING INFORMATION OVERLOAD** – Too much stimulation or information can make it very difficult to listen with full attention. Try to focus on the relevant information and the central points that are being conveyed.
3. **CRITICIZING THE SPEAKER** – Do not be distracted by critical evaluations of the speaker. Focus on what they are saying—the message—rather than the messenger.
4. **GETTING DISTRACTED BY EMOTIONAL NOISE** – We react emotionally to certain words, concepts, and ideas, and to a myriad of other cues from speakers (appearance, non-verbal cues). Make a conscious effort to quiet your own emotional reactions so that you can listen properly.

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5. **EXPERIENCING PHYSICAL DIFFICULTY** – Feeling physically unwell or experiencing pain can make it very difficult to listen effectively. You may wish to communicate that this is not a good time and reschedule the discussion. Otherwise, you may just need to concentrate even more on the task of listening.

Five Strategies for Authentic Communication



1. **STOP** – Focus on the other person, their thoughts, and feelings. Consciously focus on quieting your own internal commentary and step away from your own concerns to think about those of the speaker. Give your full attention to the speaker.
2. **LOOK** – Pay attention to non-verbal messages without letting yourself be distracted. Notice body language and non-verbal cues to allow for a richer understanding of the speaker's point. However, avoid getting distracted from the verbal message.
3. **LISTEN** – Listen for the essence of the speaker's thoughts: details, major ideas, and their meanings. Seek an overall understanding of what the speaker is trying to communicate, rather than reacting to the individual words or terms that the speaker uses.
4. **BE EMPATHETIC** – Imagine how you would feel in their circumstances. You need not be drawn into all of their problems or issues, as long as you acknowledge what they are experiencing.
5. **ASK QUESTIONS** – Use questions to clarify your understanding and to demonstrate interest in what is being said.

Healthy Leader/Follower Interaction

Leadership and followership are inseparable. One simply cannot exist without the other. Therefore, both are equally important to the success of any organization. The more we understand the interrelatedness of these two concepts, the more we are able to understand the dynamics of power in organizations and how both leaders and followers can share that power in ways that benefit the organization. If the interaction between leaders and followers is to be healthy and productive, both the leader and the follower must embrace their responsibilities in making the relationship work. The following lists identify key responsibilities for leaders and followers.

Responsibilities of the Leader

- Have genuine concern and respect for other people.
- Be ethical, loyal, and virtuous.
- Be committed to creating healthy relationships between leaders and followers.
- Clearly communicate expectations and give candid, timely feedback.
- Model values.

Responsibilities of the Follower:

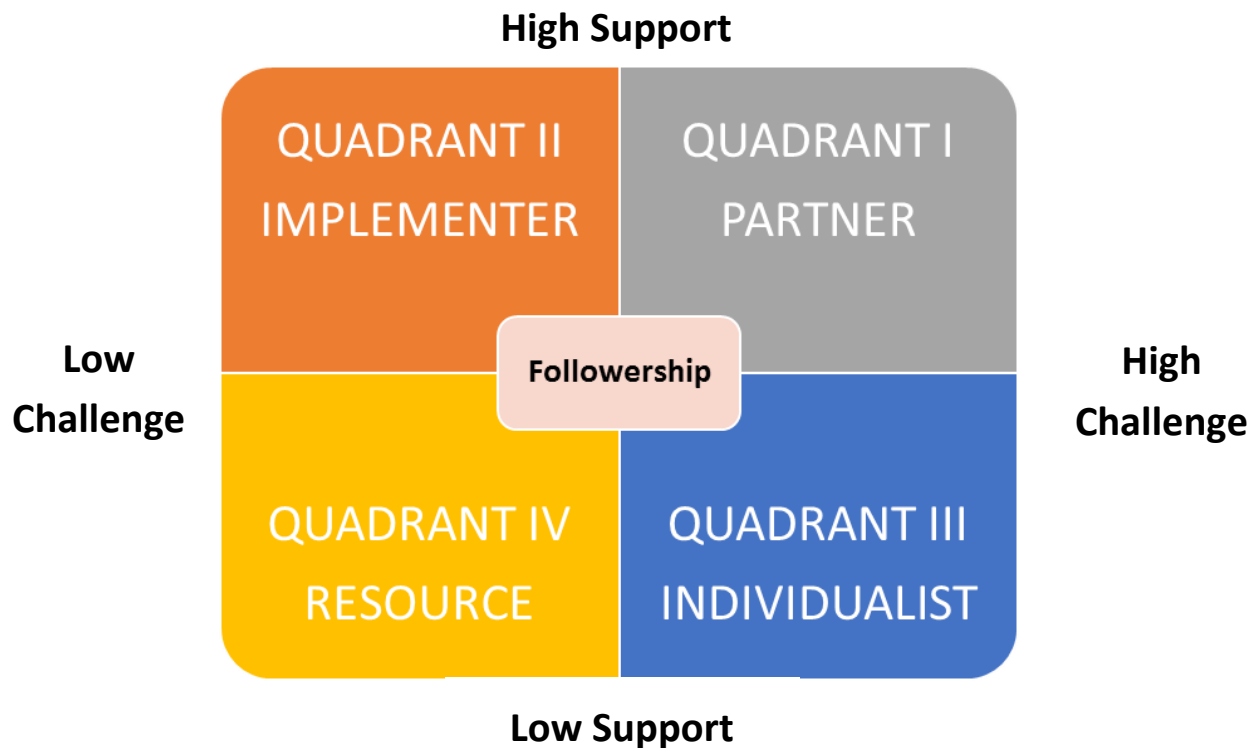
- Be ethical, loyal, and virtuous.
- Voice differences of opinions and offer suggestions in constructive ways.
- Maintain a positive attitude, even in difficult circumstances.
- Be a team player.
- Be teachable.

The Courageous Followership Model

Much of what scholars and practitioners of organizational leadership have written focuses heavily on the leadership side of organizations. However, as has been established, effective leadership and effective followership are equally important in the operation of healthy, effective organizations.

Ira Chaleff highlights this point well in his book *The Courageous Follower: Standing Up to and for Our Leaders*. His basic premise is that a follower who demonstrates courage in the workplace can be an enormous asset to a leader. In his “Courageous Followership Model” he pinpoints five dimensions in which that courage can be demonstrated. The following section provides a concise description of Chaleff’s work.

COURAGEOUS FOLLOWERSHIP MODEL



The Courageous Followership Model Description

The Courageous Followership Model has TWO critical dimensions:

- 1) The degree of support a follower gives a leader; and,
- 2) The degree to which the follower is willing to challenge the leader’s behavior or policies if these are endangering the organization’s purpose or undermining its values.

The possible combination of these two dimensions produce FOUR quadrants that can depict the posture that followers tend to assume in relation to their leaders: 1) The Partner; 2) The Implementer; 3) The Individualist; and 4) The Resource.

Quadrant I – The Partner

The follower operating from the Partner Quadrant gives vigorous support to a leader but is also willing to question the leader's behavior or policies. The Partner Followership style is then characterized by high support and high challenge to leadership.

Quadrant II – The Implementer

Leaders can count heavily on followers who operate from this profile to do what is needed to get the job done and not require much oversight or explanation. However, if the leader begins to go down a wrong path, Implementers are not the kind of followers who are likely to tell the leader so, or if they do, they are not likely to pursue the matter if the leader rebuffs their attempts. Therefore the Implementer Followership style is characterized by high support of leadership and low challenge to leadership.

Growth for those tending to this style of followership lies in the direction of being willing to challenge a leader's problematic actions or policies and learning to do so effectively and productively.

Quadrant III – The Individualist

Surrounding every leader there are one or two individuals whose deference is quite low and who do not hesitate to tell the leader, or anyone else in the group, exactly what they think of his or her actions or policies. These are potentially important people to have in the group as they balance the tendency of the rest of the group to go along with what seems acceptable while harboring reservations.

However, these individuals do not display equal energy in supporting the leader's initiatives as a result they marginalize themselves. Their criticisms become predictable and tiresome and the leader finds ways to shut them out.

Growth for the Individualist Followership Style lies in the direction of increasing their actual and visible support for the leader's initiatives that forward the common purpose.

Quadrant IV – The Resource

These are the people who do an honest day's work for a day's pay but won't go beyond the minimum expected of them. Their support and challenge of the leader is low. There may be legitimate reasons for this, such as other outside obligations or commitments.

Growth for The Resource Followership Style is to give more priority to their participation in the group or organization and raise their support for the leader so that if and when the time arises they can credibly challenge policies and behaviors that need correction.

Summary of the Courageous Followership Model

In general, for the Resource or Individualist the growth direction is giving the leader more support. For the Implementer it is pushing beyond their comfort zone to vocalize questions or discomfort they are harboring about a leader's plans or actions. And finally, for the Partner, growth may be in either direction, continually working to serve the organization and leader better while being more willing to be an important source of candor for the leader.

It may be useful to identify your core

tendency or natural position in relation to authority at this point in your personal development because this will allow you to chart a growth path for yourself. Not only can this level of self-awareness make you a more courageous follower but can also inform your leadership style as you relate to those who follow you. Good leaders with courageous followers produce healthy teams. Healthy teams are foundational to healthy organizations.



Healthy Teams

Healthy, productive leader-follower interactions are the foundation of healthy, productive teams. As discussed, effective leadership can only occur in the context of relationship between the leader and his/her follower(s). The dynamics of positive leader-follower interaction must be based on genuine relationship founded on genuine love and concern, mutual trust, and authentic communication. Both leaders and followers are mutually accountable to one another to contribute and nurture healthy interactions. When this is done well it helps to create an environment where individuals can work together effectively in teams and thrive. When this is not done well it leads to poor working relationships that make it impossible to produce healthy effective teams.

Characteristics of Dysfunctional Teams

Patrick Lencioni, gets to the root causes of team failure in his book the *Five Dysfunctions of Team: A Leadership Fable*. Lencioni outlines five key characteristics that describe dysfunctional teams:

- 1) **Absence of trust** – When team members do not trust one another, they will attempt to conceal their weaknesses and mistakes from one another. They hesitate to ask for help or provide constructive feedback. They jump to conclusions about the intentions and aptitudes of others without attempting to clarify them and they fail to recognize and tap into one another's skills and experiences.
- 2) **Fear of conflict** – When team members fear conflict they ignore controversial topics that are critical to team success. They fail to tap into all the opinions and perspectives of team members. And time and energy is wasted with posturing and interpersonal risk management.
- 3) **Failure to Commit** – Dysfunctional teams fail to commit to the work of the team. This leads to ambiguity among team members about direction and priorities. It also encourages second-guessing among team members, which leads to wasted time as issues are revisited and discussed again and again.

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- 4) **Avoidance of Accountability** – Teams that avoid accountability create resentment among team members who have different standards of performance. This encourages mediocrity and fosters an environment where deadlines and key deliverables are constantly missed.
 - 5) **Lack of Focus on Results** – Dysfunctional teams are not focused on results. This lack of focus encourages team members to focus on their own careers and individual goals. This lack of attention is detrimental to the organization and leads to stagnation and failure to grow.

The goal of healthy organizations is to foster environments where teams can thrive and produce great results for the organization. In stark contrast to the characteristics of dysfunctional teams, are the following eight characteristics of team excellence.

Characteristics of Team Excellence

There are eight characteristics associated with team excellence:

- 1) **Clear elevating goal** – Team goals must be very clear so that one can tell whether the performance objective has been realized. The goal must involve or motivate so that members believe that it is worthwhile and important.
- 2) **Results-driven structure** – Teams need to find the best structure to accomplish their goals. Appropriate structures enable groups to meet their needs while accomplishing team goals.
- 3) **Competent team members** – Groups should be composed of the right number and mix of members to accomplish all the tasks of the group. As a whole, the individual team members need to possess the sufficient information, training, and technical competence to accomplish team goals. Team members must also be open, supportive, and action oriented.
- 4) **Unified Commitment** – Excellent teams have developed a sense of unity and identification. Involving members in all aspects of the process develops this level of team spirit.

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- 5) ***Collaborative Climate*** – A collaborative climate is one in which members can stay problem focused, listen to and understand one another, feel free to take risks, and be willing to compensate for one another.
 - 6) ***Standards of Excellence*** – Team members' performance should be regulated so that actions can be coordinated and tasks completed.
 - 7) ***External Support and Recognition*** – Teams must be given the resources to do their jobs, recognition for team accomplishments, and rewards for team performance.
 - 8) ***Principled Leadership*** – Leadership is the central driver of team effectiveness.

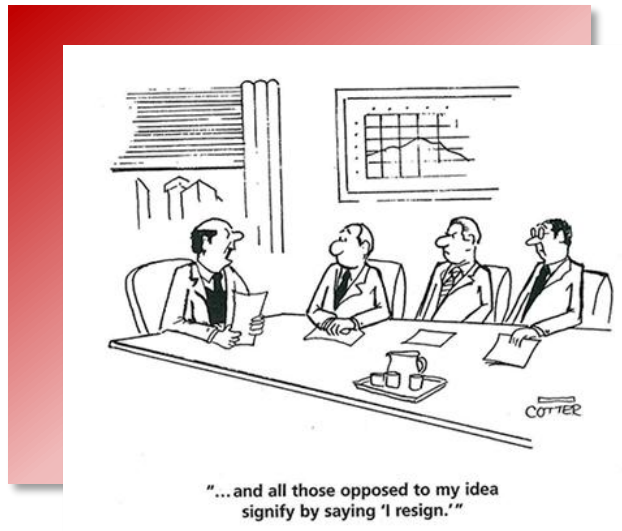
It is useful for organizational leaders to honestly assess how functional or dysfunctional their teams operate and make necessary changes. What a leader refuses to confront can never be improved. Likewise, it is beneficial to assess how teams in the organization measure up as it relates to team excellence. Excellent teams are the work force of excellent organizations.

REFLECTION

1. What do you believe is your followership style?
 - a. In what ways do you need to grow as a follower to become more effective in your organization?
 - b. Do you recognize any of the other followership styles in your co-workers?
2. Have you ever been part of a dysfunctional team?
 - a. If yes, what were its dysfunctions?
 - b. How did it make you feel?
3. If you are currently working as a member of a team in your organization, does your team display any of the characteristics of excellent teams?
 - a. If so, which ones?
4. In what areas do you believe your team needs to improve?
5. What do you believe you can do to foster excellence in on your team?

UNDERSTANDING POWER AND HOW TO LEVERAGE IT AT WORK

Concepts of Power in Organizations



When some people hear the word “power” certain thoughts and images immediately come to mind. In some of those instances the thought of attaining power evokes negative images of deception, manipulation, force, and coercion. But power need not be thought of as any of these things. Woodrow Wilson said, “Power consists in one’s capacity to link his will with the purpose of others to lead by reason and

a gift of cooperation.” When power is used in healthy, productive ways it produces positive results. So, what is power and why is its effective use in organizations so important?

What is Power?

A simple definition of power is that “power is the capacity or potential to influence others.” (Northouse, 2007) Thus, “the concept of power is related to leadership because it is part of the influence process.” (Northouse, 2007) Power directly relates to a leader’s ability to influence change. Without the effective use of power, things just cannot get done. “People have power when they have the ability to affect others’ beliefs, attitudes and courses of action.” (Northouse, 2007) Leaders need it because it is the energy to make things happen. This is why understanding power and how to leverage it in an organizational context is so important. Power is the resource that leaders draw upon to make an impact in their organizations and the force behind getting things done. Without power, leaders and their organizations are rendered ineffective. It is important for leaders in organizations to have a sense of the power they possess and to know what bases or types of power are available to them. Too often, because

people are not aware of their power, power is greatly underutilized and not only is the person less effective but the entire organization suffers because of it.

The Five Types of Power

There are essentially five bases or types of power in organizations, upon which people can draw: Referent Power, Expert Power, Legitimate Power, Reward Power, and Coercive Power.

Referent Power

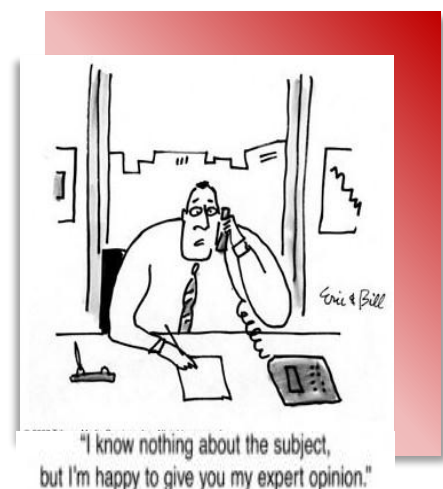


Referent power is based on followers' perceptions of the leader's character and their identification with and liking for the leader. Leaders gain referent power when others trust them and respect them for how they handle situations. Thus, trust and respect are two key concepts inherent in referent power. Leaders gain respect from others when they lead by example and treat people with genuine concern. For example, "the Human Resource Associate who is known for ensuring employees are treated fairly and coming to the rescue of those who are not would be viewed

as having referent power." (Abudi, 2011) Likewise, the school-teacher who is adored by her students would also have referent power. (Northouse, 2007) Leaders who use referent power are not only respected, but well liked.

Expert Power

Expert power is based on followers' perceptions of the leader's competence. Followers seek out a leader who has expert power because they believe that leader is highly knowledgeable in a particular area or because they are able to do something with such skill that others admire and respect their level of expertise and ability. "For example, the Project Manager who is an expert



at solving particularly challenging problems to ensure a project stays on track” has expert power. (Abudi, 2011) When employees respect a person’s expertise, they often seek guidance from that individual and are more willing to following the advice and direction given.

Legitimate Power

Legitimate power is derived from one’s formal rank, status, or title in an organization. For example, judges and police officers have legitimate power in our society based solely on their positions of authority. In organizations, “legitimate power comes when employees in the organization recognize the authority of the individual.” (Abudi, 2011) Therefore, not only is the formal leadership position itself important in legitimate power but also the perception that followers have of that position. If the follower or employee perceives that the person holding a particular position can exert some measure of control over them, then that person is perceived to have legitimate power. One of the disadvantages of legitimate power is that it does not provide a guarantee of the kind of loyalty or respect that is inherent in referent and expert power. Employees follow because they must.

Reward Power

Reward power is “derived from having the capacity to provide rewards to others.” (Northouse, 2007) It is similar to legitimate power because typically the power to provide incentives or rewards is based on one’s legitimate position in the organization. “A supervisor who gives rewards to employees who work hard,” (Northouse, 2007) is an example of exercising reward power.



Coercive Power

Coercive power is the opposite side of reward power and is “derived from having the capacity to penalize or punish others.” (Northouse, 2007) Coercive power is related to and supports legitimate power because it takes corrective or punitive action that reinforces the weight of legitimate

power. “Subordinates agree to a manager's wishes to avoid the consequences of noncompliance, consequences such as being written up, losing out on promotions, being given undesirable assignments or being fired.” (Johnson, 2015) While coercive power may seem more negative than other types of power there are times when it can be used to achieve desired results in the workplace, such as giving an employee a written reprimand to address habitual lateness.

The Two Sources of Power in Organizations

The two major sources of power in organizations are “position power” and “personal power.” All five types of power generate from either of these sources.

Two Sources of Power

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Position Power<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Related to Assigned Leadership– Tied to your official position in the organization– Followers will usually comply because they believe they must– Includes legitimate, reward and coercive power | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Personal Power<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Related to Emergent Leadership– Influence comes from being seen by followers as likeable and knowledgeable– Followers will usually comply because they like and respect you– Includes referent and expert power |
|--|---|



Main Essentials for Mid-Level Executives

Position Power

“Position power is the power a person derives from a particular office or rank in a formal organizational system. It is the influence capacity a leader derives from having higher status than the followers.” (Northouse, 2007) Position power usually comes with an assigned leadership role and includes legitimate, reward, and coercive power as its primary bases of power. There are six ways to examine power in organizations to determine from which source it originates: 1) examining the nature of the power; 2) examining the flow of the power; 3) examining how power is reflected on the organizational chart; 4) examining the level of

leadership required to have access to a particular source of power; 5) examining the legitimacy of the power; and, 6) examining how the power is accessed by the person or individual using it.

Position power is hierarchal in nature; it is the formal right given to a leader to make decisions or to command. This power flows downwards in the organization from superiors to subordinates. Therefore, position power relationships can be clearly shown in organizational charts. Position power depends on the level of leadership. The higher the level of leadership the higher the position power will be and vice-versa. Position power is always official in nature and is therefore considered legitimate. It is given to a position or post; the leader gets the position power only when he or she holds the actual position.

Personal Power

Personal power is the influence capacity a leader derives from being seen by followers as likeable and knowledgeable. Personal power can be observed when followers view the leader as competent and considerate. In these instances, power is ascribed to the leader based on how they are seen in their relationships with the followers. (Northouse, 2007) Personal power is related to emergent leadership and includes referent and expert power.

Personal power is the personal ability to influence others or events and therefore is not based in hierarchy. It can flow in any direction: upwards, downwards, or horizontally. As such, personal power relationships cannot be shown on organizational charts. Unlike position power, personal power does not depend on the level of leadership. It can exist at any level of leadership. In fact, even a lower-level leader or worker can use personal power to influence the behavior of a higher-level leader. Personal power need not be official or legitimate. It resides (lives) in the person who uses it. Both position power and personal power are useful in organizations and can be increased by employing the following strategies.

Strategies for Increasing Leadership Power

A person can increase their leadership power in an organization in four basic ways. The first way to increase your leadership power is by increasing your authority.

Increase Your Authority

Having authority means that you are responsible and accountable for achieving something with the freedom to accomplish it. The position that you hold in your organization gives you access to position power, which is the primary source of your authority. Authority comes with resources and the ability to decide how they will be used. Use the authority and resources that you currently possess by wisely and strategically leveraging reward, coercive, and legitimate power.

Since others can delegate authority, don't be afraid to ask those in your leadership hierarchy to give you more authority, when appropriate, even if only on a temporary basis. For example, if necessary or appropriate, you could ask for a temporary increase in authority to help solve a specific problem or lead a team to scope out new opportunities. Executive leaders need problem solvers; volunteer even if it is outside your normal duties. In this case, the resource you will use is your own time and commitment. Just make sure you maintain a healthy balance in your life so you can deliver on expectations.

Increase Your Knowledge, Skills and Expertise

When you have knowledge, people seek your opinion. People listen to you and defer to you as an expert. Sharing your expertise elicits feelings of respect and reciprocity. As it relates to organizational change, become the subject matter expert about the change itself. Seek to increase your knowledge on issues and topics relevant to the success of your organization. Develop your skills in areas that your company values. Let others know what expertise you possess. Don't give advice beyond your scope of knowledge but do share your expertise freely, keeping in mind that the more you share, the more everyone gains. Make sure you understand your organization's culture and know its traditions and history.

Increase Your Relationships

You gain power in organizations through your relationships. The more people trust you the more power they are willing to give you; this is true for both those who have authority over you and for those over whom you have authority. Your relationships with those who have authority over you can increase your power because those people can now use their power on your behalf. Likewise, positive relationships with your peers or those over whom you have authority can lead to greater organizational productivity and job satisfaction.

You gain influence through your relationships by building a network every chance you get. For example, attend company events and show genuine interest in the people you meet. Find a mentor and make connections with both the formal and informal leadership in your organization. Another key way of increasing your power through relationships is to build strong relationships with your employees, your peers, and even your boss. What follows are some specific recommendations on how to strengthen these relationships.

Gain the support of your employees by:

- Helping them work to their potential
- Acknowledging them publicly and praising their accomplishments
- Developing an atmosphere of openness and honesty
- Asking for their input on issues about which they are knowledgeable or that directly affect them
- Finding out what resources they need to do their jobs and try your best to provide them

Build stronger relationships with your peers by:

- Getting to know your peers as people
- Finding out what they need from you and do what you can to deliver
- Trying to work on projects that require you to interact directly and positively with peers
- Encouraging your staff to collaborate with other departments

Building a stronger relationship with your boss

The most obvious person from whom you need support is your boss. To win your boss's support:

- Learn his or her working style, strengths, weaknesses, and goals.
- Help your boss solve pressing problems.
- Reconcile any conflicts between your preferred working styles.
- Keep your boss well informed to avoid unpleasant surprises.

Increase Your Confidence and Courage

While power is ultimately something given to you by others, you are the one who chooses to use the power you have been given. As a mid-level executive you more than likely already possess both Position Power and Personal Power. You can earn more of both by using what you have more effectively. You need confidence to know that you have power and courage to use it. No one else can use your leadership power for you. If you don't fully leverage it, then it is a wasted resource.

REFLECTION

1. Are you as powerful as you could be at work? Why? Or Why not?
2. Which source of power will you try to increase: Position Power or Personal Power?
Or will you try to increase both?
3. What strategies will you use to leverage your power at work?

CONCLUSION – THE EMPOWERED LEADER

Becoming conscious of the power resources that you currently have can help you turn up the volume on particular assets/attributes you possess, which encourages people to be influenced by you. Understanding the power you possess is also the first step to empowerment.

Empowered employees are absolutely essential to sustaining healthy, productive organizations because empowered leaders have the ability to influence action that produces positive results for the organization. Therefore, it is essential to have empowered leaders at all levels of the organization. Three key questions to consider are: 1) What is empowerment? 2) What are the characteristics of an empowered leader? 3) How does empowerment occur in organizations?

What is Empowerment?

Employees must learn to take initiative, be creative, and accept responsibility for their actions. In order for this to happen, they need to be empowered. Empowerment is the process of an individual enabling himself to take action to control work and decision-making in autonomous ways. A primary reason why people do not experience the level of empowerment they need to be more effective in their organizations is that they are waiting for someone to empower them. Empowerment comes from the individual. It is not something that executive or senior leadership does to employees, but rather a mindset that employees have about their role in the organization. Efforts that assume an empowered employee is a passive recipient of a brilliant empowerment program are doomed to fail.

What are the characteristics of an empowered leader?

An empowered leader is one who feels confident in his or her abilities and is capable of having a positive impact. An empowered leader has a mindset that says, “I can make a difference.” They have a strong self-image and believe in the strength of their leadership. “Leading in strength always comes from a strong self-image.” (Miller, 1995) An empowered leader is fully aware of his or her strengths as well as their value and worth as a leader and is willing to bring that value to their organization. “Empowered leaders continually work to create strong, efficient, highly effective workforces that operate in an environment of trust, respect and

acceptance.” (Hut, 2012)

Empowered leaders are initiators; they do not take a passive leadership stance. When leaders wait to be empowered no one wins; not the organization because it is unable to benefit from the full value of what the leader brings to the table and not the leader because he or she is not able to fully exercise their leadership gifts, which leads to frustration and discontentment. An empowered leader takes actions and acts in self-fulfilling ways that benefit both themselves and the organization.

How does empowerment occur in organizations?

There are two sides to employee empowerment: 1) The Employee’s Side and 2) The Organization’s Side. Both sides have responsibilities for empowerment to flourish.

The Employee Side of Empowerment

First and foremost, employees must choose to be empowered. They must see themselves as having freedom and discretion. They must feel personally connected to the organization, confident about their abilities, and capable of having an impact on the system in which they are imbedded. Empowered people empower themselves.

The Organization’s Role in Empowerment

Organizations can increase the likelihood of this happening by creating a context that is more empowering. For example, they can remove barriers that hinder empowerment. Three major barriers that hinder empowerment are:

1. A Bureaucratic Culture – In which multiple layers of hierarchy impede change; maintain the status quo through a strong tradition of top-down directives, and obscure a clear, credible vision for the future.
2. Multi-level Conflict – Where conflict between functions results from a structure that creates strong division between departments and leads to conflict among peers, pitting people against each other, and contributing to a hostile work environment.
3. Personal Time Constraints – Where the employee’s workload is so heavy that there is less and less time available for family life and other extra-work activities. These

stressful conditions make it difficult for employees to consider initiating anything new, and thus undermine empowerment and innovation.

Additionally, the following four organizational characteristics facilitate employee empowerment:

1. Clear Vision and Challenge

- Highly empowered people feel that they understand the senior leadership's vision and strategic direction for the organization. Given this understanding, employees will more likely feel they can act autonomously in their work rather than wait for permission and direction from the top.
- The vision must also challenge employees, stretching their capability to improve themselves and the organization.
- It is the job of senior leadership to convey a clear vision and challenge to employees.

2. Openness and teamwork

- For people to feel empowered, they must feel they are part of an organizational culture that emphasizes the value of the organization's human assets.
- Participation in decision making and problem solving as part of a team are essential.
- It is the job of senior leadership to facilitate an environment where openness and teamwork can thrive.

3. Discipline and Control

- Highly empowered people report that their organizations provide clear goals, clear lines of authority, and clear task responsibilities.
- It is the job of the senior leadership to provide this level of clarity.

4. Support and a Sense of Security

- In order to feel that the system really wants empowered employees, individuals need a sense of social support from their boss's, peers, and subordinates.
- If this support is missing or weak, employees will worry about seeking permission before acting rather than asking for forgiveness in case they make mistakes.

REFLECTION

1. If a sense of a clear strategic vision is a characteristic of an empowering environment, am I continuously working to clarify the sense of strategic direction for the people that I lead?

(a) Yes or No? _____

(b) What will I do to continuously improve in this area?

2. If openness and teamwork are characteristics of an empowering environment, am I continuously striving for participation and involvement in my own organization?

(a) Yes or No? _____

(b) What will I do to continuously improve in this area?

3. If discipline and control are characteristics of an empowering environment, am I continuously working to clarify expectations regarding the goals, tasks, and lines of authority in my organization?

(a) Yes or No? _____

(b) What will I do to continuously improve in this area?

4. If support and security are characteristics of an empowering environment, am I continuously working to resolve the conflicts among the people that I lead?

(a) Yes or No? _____

(b) What will I do to continuously improve in this area?

APPENDIX

SELF ASSESSMENT – HOW POWERFUL AM I AT WORK?

Rate yourself:

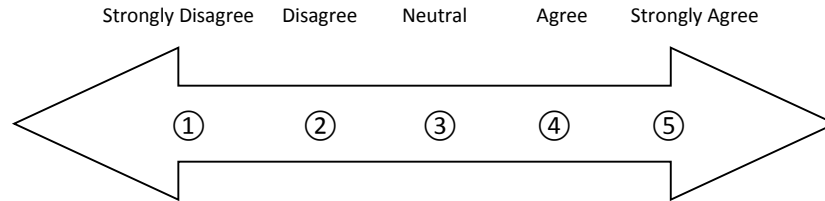


Why did you give yourself this rating?

SELF –ASSESSMENT POWER PREFERENCE PROFILE

Instructions

First, carefully read each descriptive statement, thinking of how you prefer to influence others. Mark the number that most closely represents how you feel. Use the following numbers for your answers.



To influence others, I would prefer to:

Score

- | | |
|---|-------|
| 1. Increase their pay level | [] |
| 2. Make them feel valued | [] |
| 3. Give undesirable job assignments | [] |
| 4. Make them feel like I approve of them | [] |
| 5. Make them feel that they have commitments to meet | [] |
| 6. Make them feel personally accepted | [] |
| 7. Make them feel important | [] |
| 8. Give them good technical suggestions | [] |
| 9. Make the work difficult for them | [] |
| 10. Share my experience and/or training | [] |
| 11. Make things unpleasant here | [] |
| 12. Make being at work distasteful | [] |
| 13. Influence their getting a pay increase | [] |
| 14. Make them feel like they should satisfy their job requirements | [] |
| 15. Provide them with sound job-related advice | [] |
| 16. Provide them with special benefits | [] |
| 17. Influence their getting a promotion | [] |
| 18. Give them the feeling that they have responsibilities to fulfill | [] |
| 19. Provide them with needed technical knowledge | [] |
| 20. Make them recognize that they have tasks to accomplish ¹ | [] |

¹ Source: Modified version of T. R Hinkin and C.A. Schriesheim, "Development and Application of New Scales to Measure the French and Raven (1959) Bases of Social Power. "Journal of Applied Psychology, Vol. 74, 1989, 561-67.

Scoring - Power Preference Profile

Using the structure below, insert your scores from the 20 questions and proceed as follows:

Reward power – sum of your responses to items 1, 13, 16, and 17 and divide by 4.

Coercive power – sum of your responses to items 3, 9, 11, and 12 and divide by 4.

Legitimate power – sum of your responses to questions 5, 14, 18, and 20 and divide by 4.

Referent power – sum of your responses to questions 2, 4, 6, and 7 and divide by 4.

Expert power – sum of your responses to questions 8, 10, 15, and 19 and divide by 4.

	Reward	Coercive	Legitimate	Referent	Expert
	1___	3___	5___	2___	8___
	13___	9___	14___	4___	10___
	16___	11___	18___	6___	15___
	17___	12___	20___	7___	19___
Total	___	___	___	___	___
Divide by 4	___	___	___	___	___

Interpretation

A high score (4 and greater) on any of the five dimensions of power implies that you prefer to influence others by employing that particular form of power. A low score (2 or less) implies that you prefer not to employ this particular form of power to influence others. This represents your power profile. Your overall power position is not reflected by the simple sum of the power derived from each of the five sources. Instead, some combinations of power are synergistic in nature—they are greater than the simple sum of their parts. For example, referent power tends to magnify the impact of other power sources because these other influence attempts are coming from a “respected” person. Reward power often increases the impact of referent power, because people generally tend to like those who give them things that they desire. Some power combinations tend to produce the opposite of synergistic effects, such that the total is less than the sum of the parts. Power dilution frequently accompanies the use of (or threatened use of) coercive power.

SELF –ASSESSMENT - CURRENT POWER BASE ANALYSIS

For each type of power listed below, assess and describe how much you presently possess.
Use the following scale to assign a score:

0 = none

1 = a minimal amount

2 = a moderate amount

3 = a lot

1. FORMAL POWER

Personal Score: _____

List examples of formal power you possess:

2. REWARD POWER

Personal Score: _____

List examples of reward power you possess:

3. COERCIVE POWER

Personal Score: _____

List examples of coercive power you possess:

4. EXPERT POWER

Personal Score: _____

List examples of expert power you possess:

5. REFERENT POWER

Personal Score: _____

List examples of referent power you possess:

Scoring:

Add up each of the scores listed above.

Total score: _____

0-5 Means your power base is weak. You need to consciously work on enhancing your power base!

6-9 Means your power base is average. Work on ways to use it effectively.

10-15 Means your power base is extremely strong. Be careful not to overuse or abuse it!

SELF –ASSESSMENT – MY INFLUENCE INTERVIEW SURVEY

Looking at the power resources that you currently have can help you to turn up the volume on particular assets/attributes you possess, which encourages people to be influenced by you. To discover your own portfolio of power, consider the following questions listed below. Pair up with a team member and ask each other the following questions. Sometimes hearing your own answers as you discuss them aloud can be enlightening.

- Why do people do what you want them to do?

- What is it about you that wins people over to your ideas?

- When you are being successful, what is it that you do which gains cooperation from others?

- What connections do you have that people value?

- Is there something about your manner that sways people?

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