Chapter 8: Power and Politics

power = capacity that A has to influence the behaviour of B, so that B acts in accordance w/ A's wishes

- if someone is dependent on another → there is *potential* for power

dependency = B's relationship to A when A possesses sth that B needs

- the more B depends on A, the more power A has

▌6 BASES OF POWER (How does one get power?)

Coercive Power	= *power that is based on fear* - react out of fear of –ve results that might occur if fail to comply - treat of physical sanctions (e.g. pain), frustration thru restriction of movement, controlling by force of basic physiological/safety needs - most often used, most difficult to control - dismiss, suspend, demote someone; assign unpleasant work activities, etc.
	The person can make things difficult for ppl, and you want to avoid getting him angry.
Reward Power	= *power that achieves compliance based on ability to distribute rewards valuable to others* - go along w/ wishes/directives of another if doing so produces +ve benefits - does not have to be manager - money, favourable performance appraisal, promotion, interesting work, friendly colleagues, important info, preferred work shifts/sales territories
	The person is able to give special benefits/rewards to ppl, and you find it advantageous to trade favours w/ him.
Legitimate Power	= *power that a person receives as a result of his position in the formal hierarchy of an org* - broader than power to coerce - include acceptance by members of org of authority of a position - principal, bank president, teacher
	The person has the right, considering his position and your job responsibilities, to expect you to comply w/ legitimate requests.
Expert Power	= *influence based on expertise, special skills, knowledge* - relies on trust that all relevant info is given out honestly & completely - the more info shared, the less expert power a person has *thus some ppl try to protect their power by withholding info - doctors, computer specialists, tax accountants
	The person has the experience & knowledge to earn your respect, and you defer to his judgment in some matters.
Referent Power	= *influence based on possession by an individual of desirable resources / personal traits* - admiration of another & desire to be like that person (charisma) - teachers, coaches, celebrities (in advertisements)
	You like the person and enjoy doing things for him.

Information Power	*= power that comes from access to & control over info* - managers (access to privileged sales, cost, profit, etc. and use this info to control/shape others' behaviour) - departments that possess info critical to company's performance (e.g. legal department, for lawsuit)
	The person has data/knowledge that you need.

Evaluating Bases of Power (how ppl respond)

- Commitment:
  person is enthusiastic about the request and shows initiative & persistence in carrying it out
- Compliance:
  person goes along w/ request grudgingly, puts in min. effort, takes lil initiative in carrying it out
- Resistance:
  person is opposed to request and tries to avoid it w/ tactics (e.g. refusing, stalling, arguing)

- Coercive power → resistance, dec. satisfc'n, inc. mistrust
- Reward power → compliance if rewards are consistent w/ what others value
- Legitimate power → compliance, but does NOT inc. commitment (NO inspiration)
- Expert & Referent: most likely lead to commitment
- managers use Coercive, Reward, Legitimate most often (which are least effective)
- effective leaders use Referent & Expert
- deadline pressure inc. reliance on expert & info power

Resistance → Compliance → Commitment

BASES OF LEADER POWER	*Most likely employee response*
Coercive	
Reward	
Legitimate	
Expert	
Referent	

▌DEPENDENCY: THE KEY TO POWER (How does dependency affect power?)

The General Dependency Postulate

The greater B's dependency on A, the greater the power A has over B

- dependency: inversely proportional to alternative sources of supply
- if sth is plentiful, possession of it will not inc. power
- the more options you have, the less power you place in hands of others

What Creates Dependency?

Importance	- the thing(s) you control must be perceived as important (which is situational) - e.g. budget of an org, knowledge of technology
Scarcity	- possession of scarce resources makes others dependent on you - if refuse to show others how to do a job or share info → inc. importance - some occupations have more power b/c they're in high demand and scarce
Non-substitutability	- the fewer substitutes for a resource, the more power from control of resource

▌INFLUENCE TACTICS (What tactics can be used to increase power?)

Rational Persuasion	using facts & data to make a logical / rational presentation of ideas
Inspirational Appeals	appealing to values, ideals, goals when making a request
Consultation	getting others involved to support one's objectives
Ingratiation	using flattery, creating goodwill, being friendly prior to making a request
Personal Appeals	appealing to loyalty & friendship when asking for sth
Exchange	offering favours / benefits in exchange for support
Coalition Tactics	getting support of other ppl to provide backing when making a request
Pressure	using demands, threats, reminders to get someone to do sth
Legitimizing Tactics	claiming authority/right to make request, or showing that it supports org.goals/policies

- *Rational persuasion:* more likely used by "managing upward"
  *also uses *Coalition tactics* and *Pressure*
- *Pressure & Ingratiation:* most likely used by "managing downward"

▌EMPOWERMENT: GIVING POWER TO EMPLOYEES

empowerment = freedom & ability of employees to make decisions & commitments

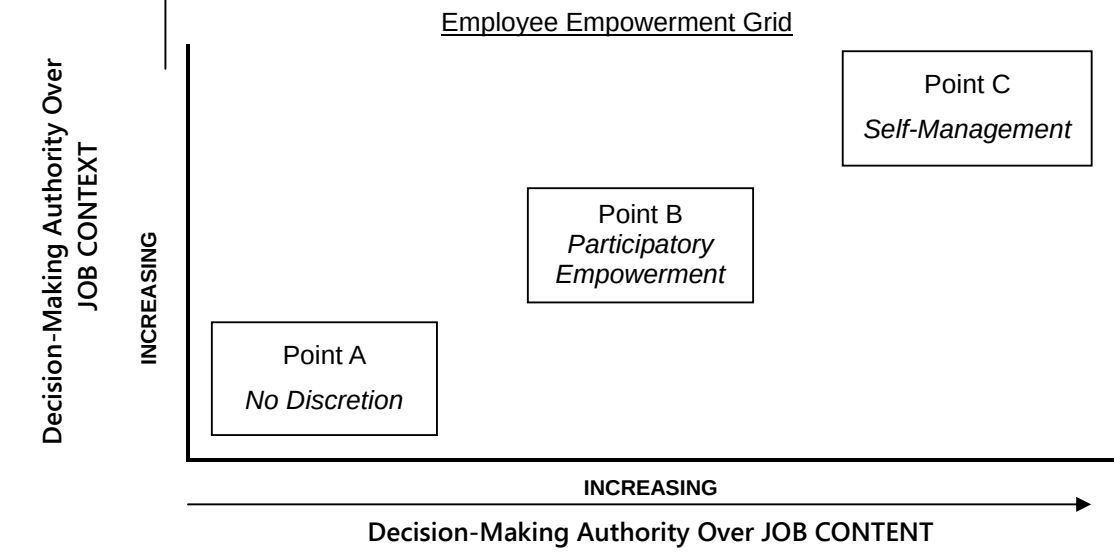
- managers disagree over definition:
  "delegating decision making within set of clear boundaries" / "process of risk taking & personal growth"
- not all org's are actually implementing it (lip service, not actually giving employees authority to carry out decisions)
- has caused much cynicism in many workplaces
- some managers unwilling to empower employees *if high: less stress
- impact on employees depends on personality, job factors, growth-need strengths (JCM)
  e.g. can make employees ill if they do not have the confidence to handle their responsibilities
  → therefore, choose carefully who to empower

Degrees of Empowerment determined by…

job content = tasks & procedures necessary for carrying out a particular job

job context = reason for job & setting in which it is done; reflects org. mission, objectives, setting, culture, structure, reward systems

Point A: **No Discretion**	- typical assembly line job - highly routine & repetitive - employee assigned to task, given no discretion, monitored by supervisor - no power → job dissatisfc'n - "rule mentality" → operate strictly by the rules, no initiative → less productive
Point B: **Participatory Empowerment**	- situation of autonomous work groups that are given some decision-making authority over job content & context - higher job satisfc'n & higher productivity
Point C: **Self-Management**	- employees have total decision-making power for job content & context - requires faith on the part of management that the employee will carry out the goals & mission of org effectively - generally reserved for top management; sometimes granted to high-level salesppl - very rewarding for those who hold it



4 Conditions Need to be Met for Employee Empowerment:

1. There must be clear def. of values & mission of company.
2. Company must help employees acquire relevant skills.
3. Employees need to be supported in decision-making, and not criticized when they try to do sth extraordinary.
4. Employees need to be recognized for their efforts.

Characteristics of Empowered Ppl

- sense of <u>self-determination</u> (they're free to choose how to do their work; not micromanaged)
- sense of <u>meaning</u> (feel that their work is important to them; care about what they're doing)
- sense of <u>competence</u> (are confident about their ability to do their work well; know they can perform)
- sense of <u>impact</u> (believe they can have influence on their work unit; others listen to their ideas)

Effects of Empowerment

- empowerment → greater productivity
- hierarchical societies → less favour empowerment (e.g. India)
- some managers do not want empowered employees (power taken away)
- some employees do not want to be empowered & resist empowerment

ABUSE OF POWER: HARASSMENT IN THE WORKPLACE

Workplace Bullying

- can happen across levels of org or among co-workers
- overtime w/o pay, excessive work performance, feeling intimidated
- recent research: 40% had experienced 1 or more forms of bullying weekly in past 6 months
  10% experienced bullying at much greater level: 5 or more a week

Sexual Harassment

= unwelcome behaviour of sexual nature in workplace that –vely affects work environment or leads to adverse job-related consequences for the employee

- there is disagreement as to what specifically constitutes sexual harassment
- unwanted physical touching, recurring requests for dates when person already showed no interest, coercive threats that a person will lose her job if she refuses sexual proposition
- unwanted looks/comments, off-colour jokes, sexual artifacts (e.g. nude calendars), sexual innuendo, ”being friendly” vs. “harassment”

POLITICS: POWER IN ACTION (Why do ppl engage in politics?)

political behaviour = activities that are outside one’s formal role and influence (or attempt to) distribution of advantages & disadvantages within the org

- Legitimate: normal, everyday behaviour
  Illegitimate: extreme political behaviours that violate implied rules of the game
- use one’s bases of power
- efforts to influence goals, criteria, processes used for decision making
- withholding key info from decision makers spreading rumors
  leaking confidential info about org to media exchanging favours w/ others for mutual benefit
  lobbying on behalf of / against particular individual or decision alternative

Reality of Politics – Why must politics exist?

- org’s are made up of groups & individuals who have differing values, goals, interests
- resources in org are limited → competition
- performance outcomes are not completely clear & objective → politicking, use influence to spin facts

RESEARCH: - modest politicking skills / unwilling to play politics game → -ve outcomes

- perceptions of org. politics are –vely related to job satisfc'n & tend to inc. job anxiety & stress
  (b/c person losing ground to others who are active politickers, or personal pressures)
- politics leads to self-reported declines in employee performance (dec. performance levels)

Types of Political Activity

Attacking & Blaming Others	used when trying to avoid responsibility for failure
Using Information	withholding / distorting info, particularly to hide –ve info
Managing Impressions	bring +ve attention to one's self / take credit for +ve accomplishments of others
Building Support for Ideas	making sure that others will support one's ideas before they are presented
Praising Others	making important ppl feel good
Building Coalitions	joining w/ other ppl to create a powerful group
Associating with Influential People	building support networks
Creating Obligations	doing favours for others so they will owe you favours later

*defend one's position: attacking & blaming; enhance one's image: building support, managing impressions

Impression Management

= process by which individuals attempt to control the impression others form of them

- being +vely perceived can yield many advantages *(e.g. favourable evaluations, rapid promotion)*
- BUT ppl do NOT always convey false impressions
- RESEARCH:
  - more likely to be used by high self-monitors than low self-monitors
    *skilled at reading situations, moulding appearances & behaviour to fit situation
  - engaged in more often by telecommuters (need to keep supervisor more informed about their activities since they're physically absent)
  - +vely associated w/ job-interview success, better performance evaluations, chosen to be leader
    *BUT may be =vely evaluated on business competence
  - works more strongly w/ subjective measures of performance

Making Office Politics Work

org. politics → less org. commitment + lower job satisfc'n + dec. job performance + higher anxiety level + higher turnover rate

- *Nobody wins unless everybody wins* (Acknowledge others' interests; Build support for your ideas across org; Ideas are harder to counteract when they're best for org as a whole & will help others)
- *Don't just ask for opinions—change them* (Find out what ppl think, change their opinions so they can see what you want to do, including even those you don't know well or might not agree w/ you)
- *Everyone expects to be paid back* (Build good relationships w/ colleagues; Support them; Show appreciation for what they do → Build foundation of support for your own ideas)
- *Success can create opposition* (Success may be "win-lose" strategy, which induces opposition)