



Nursing Management Congress Conference
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 Session 222
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Finding the Path to Success:

Navigating Organizational Politics




SESSION OVERVIEW


OBJECTIVES

- » Define **organizational politics**
- » Discuss the **universal rules** of organizational politics
- » Frame **successful navigation** of organizational politics into 4 steps






What are Organizational Politics?





The use of power and social networking to achieve objectives to advance the organization or individuals within it





Art Petty's Leadership Caffeine
Management Excellence
(Petty, 2011)

Universal Rules for Organizational Politics

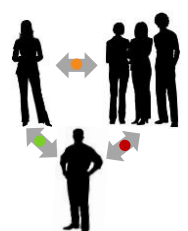
1. Ignoring organizational politics comes at your own risk
2. Engaging in organizational politics comes at your own risk
3. ALL organizations have politics
4. You will need to get over # 3



1 Assess Political Skills

Enhance Political Strengths

Navigating Organizational Politics



Are You a Candidate for Political Suicide?

Political Suicide Assessment

- Immediate attention is needed for any area where "yes" or "maybe" has been checked
- Clarify personal goals and focus on the future
- Concentrate on things within personal span of control
- Determine if current position/organization is the right fit

(Mintzberg, 2005)

Political Skill

Who has decision making power?

Identify the **informal decision-making processes** that occur outside the standard hierarchy.

Read the Agendas of Powerful People

Formal Power
 Informal Power
Emerging Power

FROM INFLUENCED TO THE INFLUENCER

Fundamental Political Skills

1. Astuteness
2. Effectiveness
3. Networking
4. Sincerity

(Jermier, 2012)

Political Skill

Astuteness

This is the foundation for **becoming a great politician** and being able to read others, your organization and yourself.

- Interpret signals of people around you
- Understand how your organization works
- Know your own objectives
- LIVE IN THE PRESENT

Frame your political astuteness into skills

Interpersonal Skills
 Reading People/Situations
 Build Alignment/Alliances

(Jermier, 2012)

Political Skill

Effectiveness

After understanding what is going on and setting objectives, you must be **skilled in executing** your plans for success.

Know tactics and tactical combinations

Know where to direct your efforts

Know when to act; timing is everything

(James, 2013)

Have great ideas and know how execute them

Identify resources
Have a plan for the plan
Demonstrate Results

Political Skill

Networking

Carefully nurture relationships **within and beyond your organization** to build your reputation.

Be a collector of influential people

Know who you can support and who can support you

Who you *know* and who you *meet* are two different things

(James, 2013)

Press the right buttons and oil your wheels

Leverage connections
Expand your network
Build external networks

Political Skill

Showing Sincerity

If your colleagues lose faith in your **honesty and integrity**, it will be very difficult to progress.

Who you really are and who you come across to be should be a close fit

At certain times, it will be necessary for inner and outer self to be different to successfully manage your image

- Be genuine while managing differences

(James, 2013)

When someone shows you who they are, believe them the first time.
— Maya Angelou

Have Integrity
Maintain Commitments
Be Genuine



Manage Perceptions

Boost Your Leverage

Navigating Organizational Politics

Manage Perceptions

Perception Principle

We all have goals and **people with power** must support them if we are to be successful.

Outstanding performance may only have political value when the right people know about it

Find ways to increase awareness of what you're doing to people who need to know it

(Mintzberg, 2000)

Do not strive mightily to become a Martyr

No Whining
No Complaining

Manage Perceptions

Learn From Successful People

Assess what is important to the **most visible and aggressive climbers** and you gain incredible insight to the political environment. (Petty, 2011)

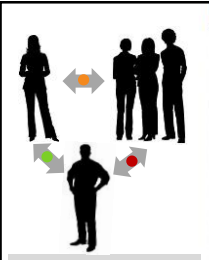
Whether a fast-track exists or not, some people move faster than others

Work and cultivate an understanding of what's important in terms of support, visibility, information and involvement

(Petty, 2011)

Know fast-trackers and what is important to them

Engage in Political Discourse from an Informed Perspective



Political Power Assessment

- What can be done to increase low scores?
- What can be learned from the role model?
- Would the role model be agreeable to becoming a coach or mentor?
- What changes can be made to be perceived positively by the "Power Elite"?

(Mintzberg, 2005, p. 153-154)

Manage Perceptions

The Power of Results

A guaranteed leverage booster comes from **delivering results** which reflect positively upon your organization.

Take advantage of opportunities to collaborate on projects where you can utilize your strengths

Make your projects or areas of oversight shine with successful results

Utilize opportunities to get your results in front of key decision-makers

(Mintzberg, 2005)

I produce results that provide a clear benefit to my organization

Definitely	3
Somewhat	2
Not Really	1

Manage Perceptions

The Power of Knowledge

Be viewed as a source of information and valuable resource by **developing impressive expertise** in your position.

Know what you are talking about and have information available to support it

Become a specialist in your body of work

Be knowledgeable about information others may need or do not know about

(Mintzberg, 2005)

I possess information that is quite useful to my organization

Definitely	3
Somewhat	2
Not Really	1

Manage Perceptions

The Power of Attitude

Boost your leverage simply by being someone with whom **others consistently want to work**

Consistently be friendly, helpful and cooperative

Address concerns in a calm and professional manner

Provide appropriate reactions to adversity including when you feel cheated, overlooked or underappreciated

(Mintzberg, 2005)

I am viewed by almost everyone as helpful and cooperative.

Definitely	3
Somewhat	2
Not Really	1

Manage Perceptions

The Power of Empathy

Be a sympathetic ear for people to talk to and a **safe person** in whom others feel comfortable confiding.

Gain a great deal of information about what is going on in your organization

Maintain the confidence of information that is shared by others

Sharing secrets is a quick way to break trust with everyone

(Mintzberg, 2005)

People often come to me for help with their problems or concerns

Definitely	3
Somewhat	2
Not Really	1

Manage Perceptions

The Power of Networks

Winners considerably increase leverage **by maintaining helpful connections** with as many people as possible

Relationship power is available to everyone in an unlimited supply

The more connections made inside and outside your organization, the more leverage you have

Political intelligence involves building as many positive relationship as possible

(Mintzberg, 2005)

I know many people throughout my organization I can call on for assistance

Definitely	3
Somewhat	2
Not Really	1

7

Manage Perceptions

The Power of Inclusion

Winners take steps to **enhance teamwork across the organization**, not just in their own area of operation

Involve others in your decision making, activities and projects to increase support and produce optimum outcomes

Step away from people similar to yourself – this can create functional or departmental silos

(McIntyre, 2005)

I typically try to include other people in my decisions or projects

Definitely	3
Somewhat	2
Not Really	1

Manage Perceptions

The Power of Detachment

Develop a reputation as an **unbiased and thoughtful observer** to have people seek you out for consultation and collaboration

Feel passionate about your work, but know that too much passion can be dysfunctional

Do not be defensive or inflexible

Do not overreact to critiques or constructive suggestions and use the information to improve

(McIntyre, 2005)

I am known as someone who can view situations objectively

Definitely	3
Somewhat	2
Not Really	1

How Much Leverage Do You Possess?

Leverage Assessment

- 18-21 – You possess a great deal of leverage and have great political capital
- 11-17 – If you choose to do so, you have great opportunities to increase your leverage
- 7-10 – You are in political danger and have very little political leverage

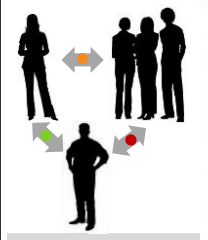
(McIntyre, 2005, p. 50-51)



Networking

Build Healthy Relationships

Navigating Organizational Politics



Creating Artificial Barriers to Networking

Network Inhibiting Behaviors

- **Clustering** – grouping with people of the same demographic (age, gender, race, nationality, etc.)
- **Layering** – grouping with people of the same job class (executive-executive, manager-manager, professional-professional)
- **Occupational Tunnel Vision** – Ignoring everything and everyone outside your own department or job function

(Mintzberg, 2000)

Networking

Identify People You Need to Know

The **most important allies** are those who can assist you in reaching your goals

Decide where you want to go and who can help you get there

Achieving project goals
Career Advancement
Promotions

(Mintzberg, 2000)

Networking

Seek Out Opportunities to Interact

Find ways to **connect with people** who can add to your network and enhance your work

Make appointments to discuss their work or your work and collaboration opportunities

Actively participate in professional organizations and associations

Engage and interaction with people at seminars, workshops and conferences

(Mohnsrye, 2005)

Networking

Work to Attract People

Work to **be seen as a bright spot** in the day of other people, not the lowest point

If people avoid you when they see you coming, network building will be difficult

Display qualities you see in others you most appreciate at work – competent, helpful, friendly, cheerful, interesting, pleasant

(Mohnsrye, 2005)

Networking

Strive for Predictability

Colleagues want to **deal with the same person** every time they interact with you

Be consistent in the way you present yourself to others

Manage your response to internal stressors, feelings and moods so they are not evident to others

Strive to not be seen as someone with Jekyll and Hyde personalities and wild mood swings

(Mohnsrye, 2005)

Networking

Leave Your Comfort Zone

Step **outside your safe and familiar zone** to improve connections and increasing learning opportunities

Overcome fears of the unknown and working with others unfamiliar to you

Take risks and make an effort to collaborate and work above and below you in the hierarchy

Consider having meetings with others to discuss how their profession or functions supports yours and determine mutual collaboration opportunities

(Muhlyre, 2005)

Networking

Look for Personal Links

Find links to **personalize a relationship** and establish opportunities for future communication and interaction

Learn to notice what people are talking about and jump into the conversation

Personal topics can include kids, pets, where people are from, hobbies and interests, travel destinations

Avoid conversations about politics and religion! If you must, have clear evidence the other party shares your views

(Muhlyre, 2005)

Networking

Help Your Colleagues

Offering to help others **builds bridges and strengthens your relationships** within your network

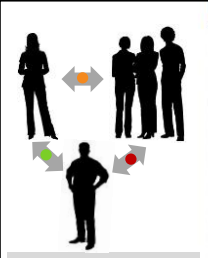
Pitch in when you see others are overloaded

Share useful information with others

Maintain a cooperative approach and have a willingness to make compromises

Let others help you to reciprocate – this helps you not come across as the bad kind of perfect

(Muhlyre, 2005)



Chameleon Assessment

A Word of Caution: Chameleons!

- Under 26 – Non-Chameleon
- 24-39 – Medium Chameleon
 - Strive to be in this range
 - Adaptable to situations and circumstances
- 40-65 – Constant Chameleon

(James, 2013, p. 176-177)

Networking

Constant Chameleons

Mirroring of **other's mannerism and speech patterns** back to the people with whom an interaction occurs

- Strategically cultivate public appearances**
- Close attention to social surroundings**
- Endless adaptation to fit environment**
- Carefully squirrel away information**

(James, 2013)

What kind of chameleon are you? ----

Non-chameleon
Medium chameleon
Constant chameleon



4 Personal Politics

Make The Right Moves

Navigating Organizational Politics

Believe in Yourself and Your Work

Insecurities can lead to **self-doubt compensatory mechanisms** that are politically destructive

If you don't believe in yourself, why should anyone else?

Find a friend, mentor or therapist who can help build your confidence and discover your strengths

Find a sense of purpose in your work and connect it to the success of your organization

(Machtyre, 2005)

Do the Best Job You Can

It may be surprising to know that **most people are not** striving to be high achievers

Self-starters are appreciated by those in the upper levels of hierarchy

Give your all to your work and make your outcomes shine

Put in the extra time and effort it takes to meet goals

(Machtyre, 2005)

Maintain Commitments

Being **undependable** is the perfect way to completely **blow your career**

Missing deadlines, scheduling errors, neglecting to provide information or forgetting to submit work are all dangerous moves

One of the nicest and most *politically beneficial* compliments you can receive is to hear you are dependable

(Machtyre, 2005)

Be a Pleasant Person / Have True Respect

If you do not truly **believe someone has worth**, it will be obvious to them and others

Find value in every person with whom you interact

Sustaining a successful career is almost impossible if no one wants to interact with you

Be a rewarding experience for others – they will steer clear of punishing experiences

(Mintzberg, 2005)

Do Not Expect Therapist Co-Workers

Pay an **actual therapist** to help you work out your personal problems and lifelong struggles

Do not share information that is more than most people want to know about

Look to see if people are *politely waiting* for you to stop talking

Colleagues will avoid you and warn others to do the same

(Mintzberg, 2005)

Self-Promotion

Walk **the fine line** between appropriately discussing accomplishments and being an annoying braggart

Do you feel habitually compelled to display superior knowledge?

Do you feel the need to top your co-workers stories and experiences?

Respect boundaries and do not insert yourself into projects without an invitation

Do not be seen as a predator or a show off

(Mintzberg, 2005)

Personal Politics

Maintain Appropriate Responses to Adversity

Discuss problems, identify shared goals, explore solutions and identify action steps while **acting like an adult**

Discuss concerns with the person involved and do not involve others

There is nothing to be gained from being offensive to another person, even if you feel they deserve it

Retaliation lowers your level of professionalism and will not provide for desired outcomes

(McIntyre, 2000)

Personal Politics

Be Honest and Ethical, ALWAYS

If colleagues find they **cannot trust you**, you will quickly lose credibility and develop a bad reputation

"Never advance your own interests by harming the business or hurting other people."
– Dr. Marie McIntyre

"To educate a man in mind and not in morals is to educate a menace to society."
– Theodore Roosevelt

Beware Social Media

Dangers of Social Media

Know your organization's policies for use of social media and **follow them**

Do not post anything about work, co-workers or vent frustrations in a public forum

Carefully think about hidden undertones of social media posts

Not everyone needs to know your business, who you are with or where you are going!



Summary

- Assess and Enhance Political Skill
- Manage Perceptions to Boost Leverage
- Network and Build Relationships
- Manage Personal Politics

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Comments...

Questions?

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