

# Questions 2



1. Power has three facets: actual power, potential power, and potential for power. Discuss the implications of the three facets for all employees of an organization.

The implication of the three facets of power on employees is diverse and somewhat segmented. Actual power is that which is used or implemented through hierarchy or process. The actual power implication on the employee is straightforward; the boss or supervisor has real power over performance, discipline, and advancement. The peer has an equal amount of power all other employees of that level, and the subordinates have a lesser degree of power. In terms of potential power, which is power that is available but not applied, employees often see this most commonly in the form of office or workplace politics. It is the question of what could be done IF something else was to precipitate the exercise of power. Potential for power is arguably the most impactful on employees. If a specific individual determines that there is no further potential for advancement (power), i. e., they are topped out at their current level with a particular company, they are not likely to show initiative or even necessarily dedication to the position. Conversely, if there is a potential for gaining power, most employees are incentivized to do whatever is necessary to realize that potential.

2. Discuss positive and negative examples from your own work experience regarding political power bases in organizations. Also, address areas regarding the use of decision-making or the lack of it in organizations.

I have seen both the positive and the negative side of political power in companies for whom I have worked. In one situation, the power of the company was solidly consolidated in the director/managers, with one being offsite and never around, and the other two working together. All department

heads and supervisors reported to one of the two executives who always discussed everything and preserved a solid front. The employees at the lower levels had a low morale, as there was really nothing to aspire to in terms of promotion beyond the current place and as a result, there was a high turnover. At another place, there was a bit of an organic structure where the boss sought input from everybody. There was no doubt who the boss was—she owned the company—but everyone had a feeling of potential power when it came to important concepts because her management style was inclusive and non-threatening.

3. Discuss what you learned about attorneys contributions to the criminal justice system by visiting the website (<http://www.abanet.org/>) American Bar Association.

Attorneys contribute a lot to the criminal justice system; if fact, were it not for attorneys the argument could be made that there would be no system. In the American criminal justice system (adversarial), two parties are represented by an attorney. The “ people,” normally an Attorney General, Federal Prosecutor, or other government employee, are aggressively represented with evidence, testimony, and other elements to achieve the high criminal conviction standard known as “ beyond a reasonable doubt.” For the other side, the accused, a defense attorney mounts a vigorous defense were s/he also uses evidence, testimony, and other elements to convince a judge or jury of either the client’s outright innocence or the reasonable doubt that the accused committed the crime.

A second contribution that attorneys make is called “ public defender” or “ pro bono” work. In this situation, many attorneys will donate their time to represent criminal clients who cannot afford an attorney. Public defenders

are generally employees who work for the state (although they usually don't make much money), and pro bono lawyers are generally selected from a pool of attorneys who are members of the local bar association. Attorneys who want to give their time will indicate their availability and the bar association will provide the court a pool of names to be selected as the need arises. Once chosen by the court for the representation, the attorney works just as vigorously for the individual as though s/he were being paid.