

# Research paper on power and politics

[Business](#), [Management](#)



## **Executive Summary**

Gaining Power and influence through organizational politics has been a big issue over the years for the managerial theory and practice. The success of those in the workplace who know the art of organizational politics has made this concept a mystery and interesting subject for others and they want to learn and master this as an art. The management is involved in politics not only in profit oriented organisations but also in public sector or non profit organizations. The People working in a corporate office employ different types of strategies to attain different career benefits. Different activities and tasks are completed in the offices and each task must follow specific procedures; getting the understanding of the basic tasks of office is also a part of organizational politics. There is always a relationship between the co-workers in an office. Understanding the accomplishment of different tasks requires building good relations with the colleagues. These relationships are key factors and can make or break the career of an employee in the long run. The organizational politics is present in almost all the corporate companies and the employees use it as a weapon to attain monetary as well as influential benefits. Organizational politics is a continuous game and it is being played at all levels in an organization, it is inevitable for all the employees and those who try to avoid it or do not like to participate in this game have to face the music. Each and every game is played according to some rules and regulation and same is the case with organizational politics since it also has definite rules and boundaries. However these rules may vary from firm to firm or even within an organization.

## **Introduction**

Power is an essential element in the operations of an organization.

Organizational communication is based on a given relevance and its construct of defined operational framework is examined in the context of its functional discourse. The change in the rules is obvious due to the nature of the work in different companies but some of the rules are universal and are necessarily adapted by all the firms and organizations. Ethics is important for these rules and each and every player in this game is expected to play the game ethically and fairly as much as possible. In large organizations with hundreds and thousands employees working in the same environment the competition is intense but any employee is not allowed to use unfair means to get success at the others stake because fowl play is not allowed (Cole, 1999).

Undoubtedly and in this context, there are many personals who do not like these activities and consider them cheap but they should keep in mind that the favouritism is a reality that exists in the realm of office life. An employee can use the power within the context of an organization to his benefit and effectively make progress in the future while those employees who do not know how to make effective use of power would suffer considerable losses as far as their career opportunities are concerned (Beagrie, 2004). Although the merit is an important factor to consider while taking decisions related to organizational promotions, it is not the sole criteria. The most influential factors are the favours which one has to pay back to an employee whom he has been doing to the manager in these years or they can also be used to reward an employee (Rozakis and Rozakis, 1998).

Organizational politics consists of many factors and it was always hidden in the form of indirect verbal, non verbal and documented communication (Mclaurin, Little and Taylor, 1998). The employees in the organization irrespective of gender are involved in the organizational politics. There is a marked difference in the communication style of male and female employees (Tannen, 1995). The importance of the organizational politics has increased manifold with the passage of time and it requires future employees, the students, to have complete knowledge of this phenomenon so that they can adjust to the situation quickly when they enter into the practical life (Green, 2007).

The male and female employees have different perceptions for the rules of this game and if we know the difference exactly, we can use this knowledge to create a very professional atmosphere in the organization. A survey was conducted to know that how many students and the employees both male and female know the basic rules of organizational politics. The research revealed that the male students are well aware of these rules whereas the girl students were found somewhat ignorant about them. The female and male employees were found well aware of all the game prevailing in the offices and they had perfect knowledge of the basic rules of this game (Green, 2007).

Defining organizational politics become difficult when we find that there is a vast breach between the understanding of this concept and utilizing it in the real world game. Some employee consider it an essential part of practical life while other hate it. Aristotle called man a social and political animal and we see all types of the political animals in the offices working in co-ordination

with each other and maintaining an environment of competition all the time. They vary in size and shape but are the integral part of almost all the organizations. Where there is a political animal in an office there is organizational politics and there is no exception to this rule (Gatti, 2011). The positive side of this phenomenon is the competitiveness in the company but there are many negatives associated with this concept as far as the morale of the employee is concerned. It is organizational politics that prompts the management to make unfair and unjust decisions regarding the promotions and other monetarily beneficial decisions to those whom they owe some favour. Consider a situation in which a less efficient employee gets the big promotions and economic incentives and those who are more deserving and skilled are ignored. Those who have more skills and experiences than the one who receives the extra large increase in salary or promotion get the impression that the decision is a result of the background organizational politics. The word organizational politics itself gives the meaning of a conspiracy, a hidden deal, and the secret between two or more employees, a rumour or a back door idea that can cause harm to other employees. Due to these meanings the word is considered a negative phenomenon altogether and most of the organizations consider it a bane for the efficiency of their employees (Gatti, 2011).

All the employees want to highlight their performance and efforts they put into the work to get better results for promotions and other achievements (Kuzmitz, 2002). There are different ways that employees adapt to make their organizational politics more and more effective. Employees use visual cues for their self promotion such as displaying their certificates, trophies

and any other distinctions to impress the other employees who visit their offices commonly. The employees who are not interested in the organizational politics and consider it immoral are not considered the team players and they are not often considered for the promotion due to this fact (Fast Company's Five Rules, 2003).

Some of the tactics of the employees to promote themselves include activities like sending congratulation cards to other employees. Some of them do so by making them readily available for all the staff and some do so by providing their visiting card to everyone who comes to their office (Dugan, 2001). The employees who are looking for the best self promotional technique should consider documenting all the distinctions they have got and it will help him to present his case for promotion more accurately. The employee should make honest and the truth telling a second nature and should always make decisions according to the truth situations (Cole, 1999).

### **Communication, employees and organizational politics**

Employees are certainly affected by the environment and activities of the persons working with them. There is great debate about the effects of the organizational politics whether they are positive or negative for an organization. It is a part of office life but there are ways and means to control this phenomenon. In simplest words we can say that the organizational politics means that the employees want to control their career and want to be in the driving seat by making different moves and using different techniques. It starts from the gossiping in real sense, but the aspects are changed drastically when the same gossip is utilized by certain employees for their benefits in the organization. The differentiation between the gossips

and the politics is not easy to make but you can sense it when it is used for the self promotion rather than a social activity, it enters into the realm of organizational politics from the realm of social life. Many employees make use of gossiping as organizational politics tool and achieve their financial and career goals (Gatti, 2011).

A manager should have a thorough understanding of the organizational politics as it is necessary to exactly know the effects of management decisions about the employees. This knowledge also helps the managers to make policies to avoid the negative effects of organizational politics on the employees as well as the overall performance of the organization (Ferris and King, 1991). The politics is present in all fields of life and office it is also an irrefutable reality that the organizational politics prevails in all organizations or it is a fact that cannot be denied (Gandz and Murray, 1980). Behaviour of workers is mostly political at workplaces. This is a reality that has been given importance and has been proved by personal experience, sketchy evidence of many decades has proved and supported this fact (Ferris and Kacmar, 1992). One of the simplest ways in which organizational politics can be described is that it is the use of power relations and the tactics that can influence other workers in organizations by some workers. This is usually done to get personal benefits in the working environment such as the promotions or pay increase (Pfeffer, 1992).

## **Conclusion**

Organization politics and relevant aspects of communication in this perspective, gain importance in the management literature in early 70's due to increasing political behaviour of employees at workplaces. The amount of

the text available at this issue has been continuously increasing since that time. Most of the researches have focused on two dimensions of this phenomenon, one is the use of organizational politics to set and achieve different goals by the organizations and the management and the second dimension which has been covered mostly is the nature and types of organizational politics as a relation between employees working at the same place. It's basically behaviour and it shows the way a worker is perceived in the organization due to his or her conduct with the other workers.

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