

Elizabeth parker (a) case analysis essay sample



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Elizabeth Parker seeks a job as undersecretary of government agency. Once she gets it, she needs to integrate into the organization and accomplish something useful.

Issues & Solutions

How to get the job. She spends four months getting her friends to lobby for her - network triangulation technique. The job clearly falls within her networks range of operation.

How to integrate into department & gain status. A. She spends 3 weeks systematically and strategically (every day a different dress) visiting whole department, chatting with secretaries and interviewing directors. B. She selects a central project to do that will involve her in the whole department and will accomplish something significant for the department. Not just a project that would be fun, but one that (a) was relevant to the needs of the department, (b) could be expected to yield great benefits if successful, (c) she had skill in, and (d) would be helped by her contacts.

Get the project she wanted. She used the trick of getting a 'no' on nine other projects, obligating the boss to throw her a bone. She also used network triangulation method - getting Scott Walters to go to bat for her.

How to accomplish the project. A. Non-threatening personal style plus willingness to do administrative work plus avoiding pulling rank that she did not have. Stealth approach is appropriate for newbie. Note that Walters could have been a problem - her non-competitiveness may have been key here. B. She makes use of her network ties, such as friendship with internal

affairs guy. C. She used numerical analysis to project gains due to increasing budget. D. Used comparisons with other states to provide evidence supporting her analysis. E. Claims based on logical analysis of the problems, such as collections being behind and northern region buying from other states. F. She effectively created a role of researcher which hadn't existed before. So it didn't threaten anybody.

Key Lessons

- Power is the ability to get things done, and getting things done gets you power
- She was highly dependent on all others for what she did. Could not have forced them.
- Choose big, high risk / high reward projects whose successful completion will mean more power (increasing revenues is always popular)
- Although she was a stranger to the agency, she was embedded in a larger network that was relevant to her job and could provide help and information
- Careers are accretions of reputation, favors, dependencies
- Cultivate friends in high places
- Non-competitive persona is helpful in overcoming resistance
- Uses indirect power as Kotter calls it. Network triangulation.

Other Lessons

- People can't say no to every request, so ask for the moon before you ask for what you want

Discussion Questions

- She was very much aware of her gender. In what ways did gender play a part?