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**ОРГАНИЗАЦИОННОЕ ПОВЕДЕНИЕ  
на английском языке**

**ЮНИТА 6**

**ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR  
UNIT 6**

**LEADERSHIP AND POWER**

**МОСКВА 1999**

## **ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR**

**Unit 1.** Foundations of Organizational Behavior.

**Unit 2.** Organizational Behavior and Culture.

**Unit 3.** Perception. Perception and Individual Decision Making.

**Unit 4.** Basic Motivation Concepts. Communication: A Process View.

**Unit 5.** Foundations of Group Behavior. Communication and Group Decision Making.

**Unit 6.** Leadership and Power.

### **UNIT 6**

#### **Leadership and Power**

This unit is dedicated to so important subject as organizational behavior. It consists of methodological section ( test-training, role-play, situations for discussion ) and file of materials for study.

*For the students of the Modern University for the Humanities*

Юнита соответствует профессиональной образовательной программе № 2

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## ТЕМАТИЧЕСКИЙ ПЛАН

Leadership. Transition of leadership theories. Trait theories. Behavioral theories. Contingency theories. Leader-Participation Model. The most recent approaches to leadership.

Power and politics. A definition of power. Contrasting leadership and power. Dependency: The Key to Power. Power Tactics. Power in groups: Coalitions. Politics: Power in Action.

# **ЛИТЕРАТУРА**

## **Базовый учебник**

- \*1. Robbins S. Organizational Behavior. Prentice Hall. Any edition.

## **Дополнительная литература**

2. Carley H. Dodd. Dynamics of Intercultural Communication, Wm. C. Brown Publishers; Third edition.

3. Taylor Anita, Meyer Arthur C., Roseguant Teresa, Samples B. Thomas. Communicating, Prentice Hall; Sixth edition.

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Примечание. Знаком (\*) отмечены работы, на основе которых составлен научный обзор.

# I. LEADERSHIP

## 1. WHAT IS LEADERSHIP?

Few terms in OB inspire less agreement on definition than *leadership*. As one expert put it, “there are almost as many definitions of leadership as there are persons who have attempted to define the concept.

While almost everyone seems to agree that leadership involves an influence process, differences tend to center around whether leadership must be noncoercive (as opposed to using authority, rewards, and punishments to exert influence over followers) and whether it is distinct from management. The latter issue has been a particularly heated topic of debate in recent years, with most experts arguing that leadership and management are different.

For instance, Abraham Zaleznik of the Harvard Business School argues that leaders and managers are very different kinds of people. They differ in motivation, personal history, and how they think and act. Zaleznik says that managers tend to adopt impersonal, if not passive, attitudes toward goals, whereas leaders take a personal and active attitude toward goals. Managers tend to view work as an enabling process involving some combination of people and ideas interacting to establish strategies and make decisions. Leaders work from high-risk positions—indeed, they are often temperamentally disposed to seek out risk and danger, especially when opportunity and reward appear high. Managers prefer to work with people; they avoid solitary activity because it makes them anxious. They relate to people according to the role they play in a sequence of events or in a decision-making process. Leaders, who are concerned with ideas, relate to people in more intuitive and empathic ways.

John Kotter, a colleague of Zaleznik at Harvard, also argues that leadership is different from management, but for different reasons. Management, he proposes, is about coping with complexity. Good management brings about order and consistency by drawing up formal plans, designing rigid organization structures, and monitoring results against the plans. Leadership, in contrast, is about coping with change. Leaders establish direction by developing a vision of the future, then they align people by communicating this vision and inspiring them to overcome hurdles. Kotter sees both strong leadership and strong management as necessary for optimum organizational effectiveness. But he believes that most organizations are underled and overmanaged. He claims we need to focus more on developing leadership in organizations because the people in charge today are

too concerned with keeping things on time and on budget and with doing what was done yesterday, only doing it five percent better.

So where do we stand? We will use a broad definition of leadership — one that can encompass all the current approaches to the subject. Thus, we define **leadership** as the ability to influence a group toward the achievement of goals. The source of this influence may be formal, such as that provided by the possession of managerial rank in an organization. Since management positions come with some degree of formally designated authority, a person may assume a leadership role simply because of the position he or she holds in the organization. But not all leaders are managers; nor, for that matter, are all managers leaders. Just because an organization provides its managers with certain formal rights is no assurance that they will be able to lead effectively. We find that nonsanctioned leadership—that is, the ability to influence that arises outside the formal structure of the organization—is as important or more important than formal influence. In other words, leaders can emerge from within a group as well as by formal appointment to lead a group.

## **2. TRANSITION IN LEADERSHIP THEORIES**

The leadership literature is voluminous, and much of it is confusing and contradictory. In order to make our way through this “forest,” we shall consider four approaches to explaining what makes an effective leader. The first sought to find universal personality traits that leaders had to some greater degree than nonleaders. The second tried to explain leadership in terms of the behavior that a person engaged in. Both approaches have been described as “false starts,” based on their erroneous and oversimplified conception of leadership. The third looked to contingency models to explain the inadequacies of previous leadership theories in reconciling and bringing together the diversity of research findings. Most recently, attention has returned to traits, but from a different perspective. Researchers are now attempting to identify the set of traits that people implicitly refer to when they characterize someone as a leader. This line of thinking proposes that leadership is as much style — projecting the appearance of being a leader — as it is substance. In this section, we shall present the contributions and limitations of each of these four approaches and conclude by attempting to ascertain the value of the leadership literature in explaining and predicting behavior.

## **3. TRAIT THEORIES**

If we were to describe a leader based on the general connotations presented in today’s media, we might list qualities such as intelligence,



charisma, decisiveness, enthusiasm, strength, bravery, integrity, self-confidence, and so on—possibly eliciting the conclusion that effective leaders must be one part Boy Scout and two parts Jesus Christ. The search for characteristics such as those listed that would differentiate leaders from nonleaders occupied the early psychologists who studied leadership as they attempted to develop **trait theories**.

Is it possible to isolate one or more personality, social, physical, or intellectual characteristics in individuals we generally acknowledge as leaders—Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Jr., Joan of Arc, Winston Churchill, General Douglas MacArthur, John F. Kennedy, Lee Iacocca, Ted Turner, Nelson Mandela, Margaret Thatcher—that nonleaders do not possess? We may agree that these people meet our definition of a leader, but they are individuals with utterly different characteristics. If the concept of traits is to be proved valid, there must be specific characteristics that all leaders possess.

Research efforts at isolating these traits resulted in a number of dead ends. For instance, a review of twenty different studies identified nearly eighty leadership traits, but only five of these traits were common to four or more of the investigations. If the search was intended to identify a set of traits that would always differentiate leaders from followers and effective from ineffective leaders, the search obviously failed. Perhaps it was a bit optimistic to believe that there could be consistent and unique traits that would apply across the board to all effective leaders, no matter whether they were in charge of the Hell's Angels, the Mormon Tabernacle Choir, General Electric, the CIA, the Ku Klux Klan, or Harvard University.

If, however, the search was intended to identify traits that were consistently associated with leadership, the results can be interpreted in a more impressive light. For example, six traits on which leaders tend to differ from nonleaders are ambition and energy, the desire to lead, honesty and integrity, self-confidence, intelligence, and job-relevant knowledge. Additionally, recent research provides strong evidence that people who are high self-monitors—that is, are highly flexible in adjusting their behavior in different situations—are much more likely to emerge as leaders in groups than low self-monitors. But, overall, the correlations between specific traits and leadership have generally been in the range of +0.25 to +0.35" — interesting results, but not earth-shattering!

These results are based on more than seventy years of trait research. The modest correlations achieved, coupled with the inherent limitations of the trait approach — it overlooks the needs of followers, generally fails to clarify the relative importance of various traits, doesn't separate cause from effect (for example, are leaders self-confident or does success as a leader build self-confidence?), and ignores situational factors — naturally leads researchers in other directions. Although there has been some resurgent interest in traits during the past decade, a major movement away from traits began as early as

the 1940s. Leadership research from the late 1940s through the mid-1960s emphasized the preferred behavioral styles that leaders demonstrated.

## 4. BEHAVIORAL THEORIES

The inability to strike “gold” in the trait mines led researchers to look at the **behaviors** that specific leaders exhibited. They wondered if there was something unique in the way that effective leaders behave. For example, do they tend to be more democratic than autocratic?

It was hoped that not only would the behavioral approach provide more definitive answers about the nature of leadership but, if successful, would also have practical implications quite different from those of the trait approach. If trait research had been successful, it would have provided a basis for *selecting* the “right” person to assume formal positions in groups and organizations requiring leadership. In contrast, if behavioral studies were to turn up critical behavioral determinants of leadership, we could *train* people to be leaders. The difference between trait and behavioral theories, in terms of application, lies in their underlying assumptions. If trait theories were valid, then leadership is basically inborn: You either have it or you don't. On the other hand, if there were specific behaviors that identified leaders, then we could teach leadership — we could design programs that implanted these behavioral patterns in individuals who desired to be effective leaders. This was surely a more exciting avenue, for it meant that the supply of leaders could be expanded. If training worked, we could have an infinite supply of effective leaders.

There were a number of studies that looked at behavioral styles. We shall briefly review the most popular: the Ohio State group and the University of Michigan group. Then we shall see how the concepts that these studies developed could be used to create a grid for looking at and appraising leadership styles.

### 4.1. Ohio State Studies

The most comprehensive and replicated of the behavioral theories resulted from research that began at Ohio State University in the late 1940s. These researchers sought to identify independent dimensions of leader behavior. Beginning with over a thousand dimensions, they eventually narrowed the list into two categories that substantially accounted for most of the leadership behavior described by subordinates. They called these two dimensions *initiating structure* and *consideration*.

**Initiating structure** refers to the extent to which a leader is likely to define and structure his or her role and those of subordinates in the search for

goal attainment. It includes behavior that attempts to organize work, work relationships, and goals. The leader characterized as high in initiating structure could be described in terms such as “assigns group members to particular tasks,” “expects workers to maintain definite standards of performance,” and “emphasizes the meeting of deadlines.”

**Consideration** is described as the extent to which a person is likely to have job relationships that are characterized by mutual trust, respect for subordinates' ideas, and regard for their feelings. He or she shows concern for followers' comfort, well-being, status, and satisfaction. A leader high in consideration could be described as one who helps subordinates with personal problems, is friendly and approachable, and treats all subordinates as equals.

Extensive research, based on these definitions, found that leaders high in initiating structure and consideration (a “high-high” leader) tended to achieve high subordinate performance and satisfaction more frequently than those who rated low on either consideration, initiating structure, or both. However, the “high-high” style did not always result in positive consequences. For example, leader behavior characterized as high on initiating structure led to greater rates of grievances, absenteeism, and turnover and lower levels of job satisfaction for workers performing routine tasks. Other studies found that high consideration was negatively related to performance ratings of the leader by his or her superior. In conclusion, the Ohio State studies suggested that the “high-high” style generally resulted in positive outcomes, but enough exceptions were found to indicate that situational factors needed to be integrated into the theory.

## 4.2. University of Michigan Studies

Leadership studies undertaken at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center, at about the same time as those being done at Ohio State, had similar research objectives: to locate behavioral characteristics of leaders that appeared to be related to measures of performance effectiveness.

The Michigan group also came up with two dimensions of leadership behavior that they labeled **employee-oriented** and **production-oriented**. Leaders who were employee-oriented were described as emphasizing interpersonal relations; they took a personal interest in the needs of their subordinates and accepted individual differences among members. The production-oriented leaders, in contrast, tended to emphasize the technical or task aspects of the job — their main concern was in accomplishing their group's tasks, and the group members were a means to that end.

The conclusions arrived at by the Michigan researchers strongly favored the leaders who were employee-oriented in their behavior. Employee-oriented leaders were associated with higher group productivity and higher job

satisfaction. Production-oriented leaders tended to be associated with low group productivity and lower job satisfaction.

### 4.3. The Managerial Grid

A graphic portrayal of a two-dimensional view of leadership style was developed by Blake and Mouton. They proposed a **Managerial Grid** based on the styles of “concern for people” and “concern for production,” which essentially represent the Ohio State dimensions of consideration and initiating structure or the Michigan dimensions of employee-oriented and production-oriented.

The grid has nine possible positions along each axis, creating eighty-one different positions in which the leader's style may fall. The grid does not show results produced but, rather, the dominating factors in a leader's thinking in regard to getting results.

Based on the findings of Blake and Mouton, managers were found to perform best under a 9,9 style, as contrasted, for example, with a 9,1 (authority type) or 1,9 (country club type) style. Unfortunately, the grid offers a better framework for conceptualizing leadership style than for presenting any tangible new information in clarifying the leadership quandary, since there is little substantive evidence to support the conclusion that a 9,9 style most effective in all situations.

### 4.4. Summary of Behavioral Theories

We have described the most popular and important of the attempts to explain leadership in terms of the behavior exhibited by the leader. There were other efforts, but they faced the same problem that confronted the Ohio State and Michigan findings. They had very little success in identifying consistent relationships between patterns of leadership behavior and group performance. General statements could not be made because results varied over different ranges of circumstances. What was missing was consideration of the *situational* factors that influence success or failure. For example, it seems unlikely that Jesse Jackson would have been a great leader of black causes at the turn of the century, yet he is in the 1990s. Would Ralph Nader have risen to lead a consumer activist group had he been born in 1834 rather than 1934, or in Costa Rica rather than Connecticut? It seems quite unlikely, yet the behavioral approaches we have described could not clarify these situational factors.

## 5. CONTINGENCY THEORIES

It became increasingly clear to those who were studying the leadership phenomenon that the predicting of leadership success was more complex than isolating a few traits or preferable behaviors. The failure to obtain consistent results led to a focus on situational influences. The relationship between leadership style and effectiveness suggested that under condition a, style x would be appropriate, while style y would be more suitable for condition b, and style z for condition c. But what were the conditions a, b, c, and so forth? It was one thing to say that leadership effectiveness was dependent on the situation and another to be able to isolate those situational conditions.

There has been no shortage of studies attempting to isolate critical situational factors that affect leadership effectiveness. For instance, popular moderating variables used in the development of contingency theories include the degree of structure in the task being performed, the quality of leader-member relations, the leader's position power, subordinates' role clarity, group norms, information availability, subordinate acceptance of leader's decisions, and subordinate maturity.

Several approaches to isolating key situational variables have proven more successful than others and, as a result, have gained wider recognition. We shall consider five of these: the Fiedler model, Hersey and Blanchard's situational theory, leader-member exchange theory, and the path-goal and leader-participation models.

### 5.1. Fiedler Model

The first comprehensive contingency model for leadership was developed by Fred Fiedler. The **Fiedler contingency model** proposes that effective group performance depends upon the proper match between the leader's style of interacting with his or her subordinates and the degree to which the situation gives control and influence to the leader. Fiedler developed an instrument, which he called the least preferred co-worker (LPC) questionnaire, that purports to measure whether a person is task- or relationship-oriented. Further, he isolated three situational criteria—leader-member relations, task structure, and position power—that he believes can be manipulated so as to create the proper match with the behavioral orientation of the leader. In a sense, the Fiedler model is an outgrowth of trait theory, since the LPC questionnaire is a simple psychological test. However, Fiedler goes significantly beyond trait and behavioral approaches by attempting to isolate situations, relating his personality measure to his situational classification, and then predicting leadership effectiveness as a function of the two.

This description of the Fiedler model is somewhat abstract. Let us now look at the model more closely.

**IDENTIFYING LEADERSHIP STYLE** Fiedler believes a key factor in leadership success is the individual's basic leadership style. So he begins by trying to find out what that basic style is. Fiedler created the LPC questionnaire for this purpose. It contains sixteen contrasting adjectives (such as pleasant-unpleasant, efficient-inefficient, open-guarded, supportive-hostile). The questionnaire then asks the respondents, to think of all the co-workers they have ever had and to describe the one person they *least enjoyed* working with by rating him or her on a scale of 1 to 8 for each of the sixteen sets of contrasting adjectives. Fiedler believes that based on the respondents' answers to this LPC questionnaire, he can determine their basic leadership style. If the least preferred co-worker is described in relatively positive terms (a high LPC score), then the respondent is primarily interested in good personal relations with this co-worker. That is, if you essentially describe the person you are least able to work with in favorable terms, Fiedler would label you relationship-oriented. In contrast, if the least preferred co-worker is seen in relatively unfavorable terms (a low LPC score), the respondent is primarily interested in productivity and thus would be labeled task-oriented. About sixteen percent of respondents score in the middle range. Such individuals cannot be classified as either relationship- or task-oriented and thus fall outside the theory's predictions. The rest of our discussion, therefore, relates to the eighty-four percent who score in either the high or low range of the LPC.

Fiedler assumes that an individual's leadership style is fixed. As we'll show in a moment, this is important because it means that if a situation requires a task-oriented leader and the person in that leadership position is relationship-oriented, either the situation has to be modified or the leader removed and replaced if optimum effectiveness is to be achieved. Fiedler argues that leadership style is innate to a person—you can't change your style to fit changing situations!

**DEFINING THE SITUATION** After an individual's basic leadership style has been assessed through the LPC, it is necessary to match the leader with the situation. Fiedler has identified three contingency dimensions that, he argues, define the key situational factors that determine leadership effectiveness. These are **leader-member relations**, **task structure**, and **position power**. They are defined as follows:

1. *Leader-member relations*: The degree of confidence, trust, and respect subordinates have in their leader

2. *Task structure*: The degree to which the job assignments are procedurized (that is, structured or unstructured)

3. *Position power*: The degree of influence a leader has over power variables such as hiring, firing, discipline, promotions, and salary increases

So the next step in the Fiedler model is to evaluate the situation in terms of these three contingency variables. Leader—member relations are

either good or poor, task structure is either high or low, and position power is either strong or weak.

Fiedler states the better the leader-member relations, the more highly structured the job, and the stronger the position power, the more control or influence the leader has. For example, a very favorable situation (where the leader would have a great deal of control) might involve a payroll manager who is well respected and whose subordinates have confidence in her (good leader-member relations), where the activities to be done—such as wage computation, check writing, report filing—are specific and clear (high task structure), and the job provides considerable freedom for her to reward and punish her subordinates (strong position power). On the other hand, an unfavorable situation might be the disliked chairman of a voluntary United Way fundraising team. In this job, the leader has very little control. Altogether, by mixing the three contingency variables, there are potentially eight different situations or categories in which a leader could find him or herself.

**MATCHING LEADERS AND SITUATIONS** With knowledge of an individual's LPC and an assessment of the three contingency variables, the Fiedler model proposes matching them up to achieve maximum leadership effectiveness. Based on Fiedler's study of over twelve hundred groups, in which he compared relationship- versus task-oriented leadership styles in each of the eight situational categories, he concluded that task-oriented leaders tend to perform better in situations that were *very favorable* to them and in situations that were *very unfavorable*. So Fiedler would predict that when faced with a category I, II, III, VII, or VIII situation, task-oriented leaders perform better. Relationship-oriented leaders, however, perform better in moderately favorable situations — categories IV through VI.

Given Fiedler's findings, how would you apply them? You would seek to match leaders and situations. Individuals' LPC scores would determine the type of situation for which they were best suited. That "situation" would be defined by evaluating the three contingency factors of leader-member relations, task structure, and position power. But remember that Fiedler views an individual's leadership style as being fixed. Therefore, there are really only two ways in which to improve leader effectiveness.

First, you can change the leader to fit the situation — as in a baseball game, a manager can reach into his bullpen and put in a right-handed pitcher or a left-handed pitcher, depending on the situational characteristics of the batter. So, for example, if a group situation rates as highly unfavorable but is currently led by a relationship-oriented manager, the group's performance could be improved by replacing that manager with one who is task-oriented. The second alternative would be to change the situation to fit the leader. That could be done by restructuring tasks or increasing or decreasing the power that the leader has to control factors such as salary increases, promotions, and disciplinary actions. To illustrate, assume a task-oriented leader is in a

category IV situation. If this leader could increase his or her position power, then the leader would be operating in category III and the leader-situation match would be compatible for high group performance.

**EVALUATION** One should not surmise that Fiedler has closed all the gaps and put to rest all the questions underlying leadership effectiveness. Research finds that the Fiedler model predicts all except category II when laboratory studies are reviewed; however, when field studies are analyzed, the model produces supportive evidence for only categories II, V, VII, and VIII. So we have conflicting results depending on the type of studies used.

On the whole, reviews of the major studies undertaken to test the overall validity of the Fiedler model lead to a generally positive conclusion. That is, there is considerable evidence to support the model. But additional variables are probably needed if an improved model is to fill in some of the remaining gaps. Moreover, there are problems with the LPC and the practical use of the model that need to be addressed. For instance, the logic underlying the LPC is not well understood and studies have shown that respondents' LPC scores are not stable. Also, the contingency variables are complex and difficult for practitioners to assess. It's often difficult in practice to determine how good the leader—member relations are, how structured the task is and how much position power the leader has.

Our conclusion is that Fiedler has clearly made an important contribution toward understanding leadership effectiveness. His model has been the object of much controversy and probably will continue to be. Field studies fall short of providing full support and the model could benefit by including additional contingency variables. But Fiedler's work continues to be a dominant input in the development of a contingency explanation of leadership effectiveness.

**COGNITIVE RESOURCE THEORY: AN UPDATE ON FIEDLER'S CONTINGENCY MODEL** Recently, Fiedler and an associate, Joe Garcia, reconceptualized the former's original theory to deal with "some serious oversights that need to be addressed." Specifically, they are concerned with trying to explain the process by which a leader obtains effective group performance. They call this reconceptualization **cognitive resource theory**.

They begin by making two assumptions. First, intelligent and competent leaders formulate more effective plans, decisions, and action strategies than less intelligent and competent leaders. Second, leaders communicate their plans, decisions, and strategies through directive behavior. Fiedler and Garcia then show how stress and cognitive resources such as experience, tenure, and intelligence act as important influences on leadership effectiveness.

The essence of the new theory can be boiled down to three predictions: (1) directive behavior results in good performance only if linked with high intelligence in a supportive, nonstressful leadership environment; (2) in highly



stressful situations, there is a positive relationship between job experience and performance; and (3) the intellectual abilities of leaders correlate with group performance in situations that the leader perceives as nonstressful.

Fiedler and Garcia admit that their data supporting cognitive resource theory are far from overwhelming. And a recent outside evaluation of the theory with Air Force enlisted personnel was not especially supportive. Clearly, more research is needed. Yet, given the impact of Fiedler's original contingency model of leadership on organizational behavior, the new theory's link to this earlier model, and the new theory's introduction of the leader's cognitive abilities as an important influence on leadership effectiveness, cognitive resource theory should not be dismissed out of hand.

## 5.2. Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Theory

One of the most widely practiced leadership models is Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard's **situational leadership theory**. It has been used as a major training device at such Fortune 500 companies as Bank America, Caterpillar, IBM, Mobil Oil, and Xerox; it has also been widely accepted in all the military services. Although the theory has not undergone extensive evaluation to test its validity, we include it here because of its wide acceptance and its strong intuitive appeal. Additionally, in defense of the theory, it's too early at this point in its development to dismiss it out of hand merely because researchers have not chosen to evaluate it more thoroughly.

Situational leadership is a contingency theory that focuses on the followers. Successful leadership is achieved by selecting the right leadership style, which Hersey and Blanchard argue is contingent on the level of the followers' maturity. Before we proceed, we should clarify two points: Why focus on the followers? What is meant by the term *maturity*?

The emphasis on the followers in leadership effectiveness reflects the reality that it is they who accept or reject the leader. Regardless of what the leader does, effectiveness depends on the actions of his or her followers. This is an important dimension that has been overlooked or underemphasized in most leadership theories.

The term **maturity**, as defined by Hersey and Blanchard, is the ability and willingness of people to take responsibility for directing their own behavior. It has two components: job maturity and psychological maturity. The first encompasses one's knowledge and skills. Individuals who are high in job maturity have the knowledge, ability, and experience to perform their job tasks without direction from others. Psychological maturity relates to the willingness or motivation to do something. Individuals high in psychological maturity don't need much external encouragement; they are already intrinsically motivated.

Situational leadership uses the same two leadership dimensions that Fiedler identified: task and relationship behaviors. However, Hersey and

Blanchard go a step farther by considering each as either high or low and then combining them into four specific leadership styles: telling, selling, participating, and delegating. They are described as follows:

*Telling* (high task – low relationship). The leader defines roles and tells people what, how, when, and where to do various tasks. It emphasizes directive behavior.

*Selling* (high task – high relationship). The leader provides both directive behavior and supportive behavior.

*Participating* (low task – high relationship). The leader and follower share in decision making, with the main role of the leader being facilitating and communicating.

*Delegating* (low task – low relationship). The leader provides little direction or support.

The final component in Hersey and Blanchard's theory is defining four stages of maturity:

M1. People are both unable and unwilling to take responsibility to do something. They are neither competent nor confident.

M2. People are unable but willing to do the necessary job tasks. They are motivated but currently lack the appropriate skills.

M3. People are able but unwilling to do what the leader wants.

M4. People are both able and willing to do what is asked of them.

As followers reach high levels of maturity, the leader responds by not only continuing to decrease control over activities, but also by continuing to decrease relationship behavior as well. At stage M1, followers need clear and specific directions. At stage M2, both high-task and high-relationship behavior is needed. The high-task behavior compensates for the followers' lack of ability, and the high-relationship behavior tries to get the followers psychologically to "buy into" the leader's desires. M3 creates motivational problems that are best solved by a supportive, nondirective, participative style. Finally, at stage M4, the leader doesn't have to do much because followers are both willing and able to take responsibility.

The astute reader might have noticed the high similarity between Hersey and Blanchard's four leadership styles and the four extreme "corners" in the Managerial Grid. The telling style equates to the 9,1 leader; selling equals 9,9; participating is equivalent to 1,9; and delegating is the same as the 1,1 leader. Is situational leadership, then, merely the Managerial Grid with one major difference—the replacement of the 9,9 ("one style for all occasions") contention with the recommendation that the "right" style should align with the maturity of the followers? Hersey and Blanchard say "No!" They argue that the grid emphasizes *concern* for production and people, which are attitudinal dimensions. Situational leadership, in contrast, emphasizes task and relationship *behavior*. In spite of Hersey and Blanchard's claim, this is a pretty minute differentiation. Understanding of the situational leadership theory is

probably enhanced by considering it as a fairly direct adaptation of the grid framework to reflect four stages of follower maturity.

Finally, we come to the critical question: Is there evidence to support situational leadership theory? As noted earlier, the theory has received little attention from researchers, but on the basis of the research to date, conclusions must be guarded. Some researchers provide partial support for the theory, while others find no support for its assumptions. As a result, any enthusiastic endorsement should be cautioned against.

### 5.3. Leader-Member Exchange Theory

For the most part, the leadership theories we've covered to this point have largely assumed that leaders treat all their subordinates in the same manner. But think about your experiences in groups. Did you notice that leaders often act very differently toward different subordinates? Did the leader tend to have favorites who made up his or her "in" group? If you answered "Yes" to both these questions, you're acknowledging what George Graen and his associates have observed, which creates the foundation for their leader-member exchange theory (recently renamed from the vertical dyad linkage theory).

The **leader-member exchange (LMX) theory** argues that because of time pressures, leaders establish a special relationship with a small group of their subordinates. These individuals make up the in-group—they are trusted, get a disproportionate amount of the leader's attention, and are more likely to receive special privileges. Other subordinates fall into the outgroup. They get less of the leader's time, fewer of the preferred rewards that the leader controls, and have superior-subordinate relations based on formal authority interactions.

The theory proposes that early in the history of the interaction between a leader and a given subordinate, the leader implicitly categorizes the subordinate as an "in" or an "out" and that relationship is relatively stable over time. Just precisely how the leader chooses who falls into each category is unclear, but there is evidence that leaders tend to choose in-group members because they have personal characteristics (for example, age, sex, personality) that are compatible with the leader and/or a higher level of competence than out-group members. LMX theory predicts that subordinates with in-group status will have higher performance ratings, less turnover, and greater satisfaction with their superior.

Research to test LMX theory has been generally supportive. More specifically, the theory and research surrounding it provide substantive evidence that leaders do differentiate among subordinates, that these disparities are far from random, and that in-group and out-group status are related to employee performance and satisfaction.

## 5.4. Path-Goal Theory

Currently, one of the most respected approaches to leadership is the path-goal theory. Developed by Robert House, path-goal theory is a contingency model of leadership that extracts key elements from the Ohio State leadership research on initiating structure and consideration and the expectance theory of motivation.

The essence of the theory is that it's the leader's job to assist his or her followers in attaining their goals and to provide the necessary direction and/or support to ensure that their goals are compatible with the overall objectives of the group or organization. The term “path-goal” is derived from the belief that effective leaders clarify the path to help their followers get from where they are to the achievement of their work goals and make the journey along the path easier by reducing roadblocks and pitfalls.

According to **path-goal theory**, a leader's behavior is *acceptable* to subordinates to the degree that it is viewed by them as an immediate source of satisfaction or as a means of future satisfaction. A leader's behavior is motivational to the degree that it (1) makes subordinate need satisfaction contingent on effective performance and (2) provides the coaching, guidance support, and rewards that are necessary for effective performance. House identified four leadership behaviors. The *directive leader* lets subordinates know what is expected of them, schedules work to be done, and gives specific guidance as to how to accomplish tasks. This closely parallels the Ohio State dimension of initiating structure. The *supportive leader* is friendly and shows concern for the needs of subordinates. This is essentially synonymous with the Ohio State dimension of consideration. The *participative leader* consults with subordinates and uses their suggestions before making a decision. The *achievement-oriented leader* sets challenging goals and expects subordinates to perform at their highest level. In contrast to Fiedler's view of a leader's behavior, House assumes that leaders are flexible. Path-goal theory implies that the same leader can display any or all of these behaviors depending on the situation.

Path-goal theory proposes two classes of situational or contingency variables that moderate the leadership behavior-outcome relationship — those in the *environment* that are outside the control of the subordinate (task structure, the formal authority system, and the work group) and those that are part of the personal characteristics of the *subordinate* (locus of control, experience, and perceived ability). Environmental factors determine the type of leader behavior required as a complement if subordinate outcomes are to be maximized, while personal characteristics of the subordinate determine how the environment and leader behavior are interpreted. So the theory proposes that leader behavior will be ineffective when it is redundant with sources of environmental structure or incongruent with subordinate characteristics.

The following are some examples of hypotheses that have evolved out of path-goal theory:

- Directive leadership leads to greater satisfaction when tasks are ambiguous or stressful than when they are highly structured and well laid out.
- Supportive leadership results in high employee performance and satisfaction when subordinates are performing structured tasks.
- Directive leadership is likely to be perceived as redundant among subordinates with high perceived ability or with considerable experience.
- The more clear and bureaucratic the formal authority relationships, the more leaders should exhibit supportive behavior and de-emphasize directive behavior.
- Directive leadership will lead to higher employee satisfaction when there is substantive conflict within a work group.
- Subordinates with an internal locus of control (those who believe they control their own destiny) will be more satisfied with a participative style.
- Subordinates with an external locus of control will be more satisfied with a directive style.
- Achievement-oriented leadership will increase subordinates expectancies that effort will lead to high performance when tasks are ambiguously structured.

Research to validate hypotheses such as these is generally encouraging. The evidence supports the logic underlying the theory. That is, employee performance and satisfaction are likely to be positively influenced when the leader compensates for things lacking in either the employee or the work setting. However, the leader who spends time explaining tasks when those tasks are already clear or when the employee has the ability and experience to handle them without interference is likely to be ineffective because the employee will see such directive behavior as redundant or even insulting.

What does the future hold for path-goal theory? Its framework has been tested and appears to have moderate to high empirical support. We can, however, expect to see more research focused on refining and extending the theory by incorporating additional moderating variables.

## 5.5. Leader-Participation Model

Back in 1973, Victor Vroom and Phillip Yetton developed a **leader-participation model** that related leadership behavior and participation to decision making. Recognizing that task structures have varying demands for routine and nonroutine activities, these researchers argued that leader behavior must adjust to reflect the task structure. Vroom and Yetton's model was normative—it provided a sequential set of rules that should be followed for determining the form and amount of participation desirable in decision

making, as dictated by different types of situations. The model was a complex decision tree incorporating seven contingencies (whose relevance could be identified by making “Yes” or “No” choices) and five alternative leadership styles.

More recent work by Vroom and Arthur Jago has resulted in a revision of this model. The new model retains the same five alternative leadership styles but expands the contingency variables to twelve, ten of which are answered along a five-point scale. Table 1 lists the twelve variables.

The model assumes that any of five behaviors may be feasible in a given situation — Autocratic I (AI), Autocratic II (AII), Consultative I (CI), Consultative II (CII), and Group II (GII):

- AI. You solve the problem or make a decision yourself using information available to you at that time.

- AII. You obtain the necessary information from subordinates and then decide on the solution to the problem yourself. You may or may not tell subordinates what the problem is when getting the information from them. The role played by your subordinates in making the decision is clearly one of providing the necessary information to you rather than generating or evaluating alternative solutions.

- CI. You share the problem with relevant subordinates individually, getting their ideas and suggestions without bringing them together as a group. Then you make the decision, which may or may not reflect your subordinates’ influence.

- CII. You share the problem with your subordinates as a group, collectively obtaining their ideas and suggestions. Then you make the decision that may or may not reflect your subordinates’ influence.

- GII. You share the problem with your subordinates as a group. Together you generate and evaluate alternatives and attempt to reach an agreement (consensus) on a solution.

Vroom and Jago have developed a computer program that cuts through the complexity of the new model. But managers can still use decision trees to select their leader style if there are no “shades of gray” (that is, when the status of a variable is clearcut so that a “Yes” or “No” response will be accurate), there are no critically severe time constraints, and subordinates are not geographically dispersed.

TABLE 1. Contingency Variables in the Revised Leader-Participation Model

QR: Quality Requirement				
How important is the technical quality of this decision?				
1	2	3	4	5
No	Low	Average	High	Critical
Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance

CR: Commitment Requirement				
How important is subordinate commitment to the decision?				
1	2	3	4	5
No	Low	Average	High	Critical
Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance

LI: Leader Information				
Do you have sufficient information to make a high-quality decision?				
1	2	3	4	5
No	Probably	Maybe	Probably	Yes
	No		Yes	

ST: Problem Structure				
Is the problem well structured?				
1	2	3	4	5
No	Probably	Maybe	Probably	Yes
	No		Yes	

CP: Commitment Probability				
If you were to make the decision by yourself, is it reasonably certain that your subordinates would be committed to the decision?				
1	2	3	4	5
No	Probably	Maybe	Probably	Yes
	No		Yes	

GC: Goal Congruence				
Do subordinates share the organizational goals to be attained in solving this problem?				
1	2	3	4	5
No	Probably	Maybe	Probably	Yes
	No		Yes	

### SC: Subordinate Conflict

Is conflict among subordinates over preferred solutions likely?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Probably No	Maybe	Probably Yes	Yes

### SI: Subordinate Information

Do subordinates have sufficient information to make a high-quality decision?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Probably No	Maybe	Probably Yes	Yes

### TC: Time Constraint

Does a critically severe time constraint limit your ability to involve subordinates?

1	5
No	Yes

### GD: Geographical Dispersion

Are the costs involved in bringing together geographically dispersed subordinates prohibitive?

1	5
No	Yes

### MT: Motivation-Time

How important is it to you to minimize the time it takes to make the decision?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Low	Average	High	Critical

### MD: Motivation-Development

How important is it to you to maximize the opportunities for subordinate development?

1	2	3	4	5
No	Low	Average	High	Critical
Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance	Importance

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Research testing of the original leader-participation model was very encouraging. Because the revised model is new, its validity still needs to be assessed. But the new model is a direct extension of the 1973 version and it's also consistent with our current knowledge of the benefits and costs of



participation. So, at this time, we have every reason to believe that the revised model provides an excellent guide to help managers choose the most appropriate leadership style in different situations.

Two last points before we move on. First, the revised leader-participation model is very sophisticated and complex, which makes it impossible to describe in detail in a basic OB textbook. But the variables identified in Table 1 provide you with some solid insights about which contingency variables you need to consider when choosing your leadership style.

Second, the leader-participation model confirms that leadership research should be directed at the situation rather than the person. It probably makes more sense to talk about autocratic and participative *situations* than about autocratic and participative *leaders*. As did House in his path-goal theory, Vroom, Yetton, and Jago argue against the notion that leader behavior is inflexible. The leader-participation model assumes that the leader can adjust his or her style to different situations.

The fact is that the individual is adjusted to the coat, rather than vice versa. In terms of leadership, we can think of “coat” as analogous to “situation.” If an individual’s leadership style range is very narrow, as Fiedler proposes, we are required to place that individual into the appropriate-size situation if he or she is to lead successfully. But there is another possibility: If House and Vroom-Yetton-Jago are right, the individual leader has to assess the situation that is available and adjust his or her style accordingly. Whether we should adjust the situation to fit the person or fix the person to fit the situation is an important issue. The answer is probably that it depends on the leader—specifically, on whether that person rates high or low on self-monitoring. As we know, individuals differ in their behavioral flexibility. Some people show considerable ability to adjust their behavior to external, situational factors; they are adaptable. Others, however, exhibit high levels of consistency regardless of the situation. High self-monitors are generally able to adjust their leadership style to suit changing situations.

## 5.6. Sometimes Leadership Is Irrelevant!

In keeping with the contingency spirit, we want to conclude this section by offering this notion: the belief that some leadership style *will always* be effective *regardless* of the situation may not be true. Leadership may not always be important. Data from numerous studies collectively demonstrate that, in many situations, whatever behaviors leaders exhibit are irrelevant. Certain individual, job, and organizational variables can act as *substitutes* for leadership or *neutralize* the leader’s effect to influence his or her subordinates.

Neutralizers make it impossible for leader behavior to make any difference to subordinate outcomes. They negate the leader’s influence.

Substitutes, on the other hand, make a leader's influence not only impossible but also unnecessary. They act as a replacement for the leader's influence. For instance, characteristics of subordinates such as their experience, training, "professional" orientation, or need for independence can neutralize the effect of leadership. These characteristics can replace the need for a leader's support or ability to create structure and reduce task ambiguity. Jobs that are inherently unambiguous and routine or that are intrinsically satisfying may place fewer demands on the leadership variable. Organizational characteristics like explicit formalized goals, rigid rules and procedures, and cohesive work groups can replace formal leadership.

This recent recognition that leaders don't always have an impact on subordinate outcomes should not be that surprising. After all, we have introduced a number of independent variables—attitudes, personality, ability, and group norms, to name but a few—that have been documented as having an impact on employee performance and satisfaction. Yet supporters of the leadership concept have tended to place an undue burden on this variable for explaining and predicting behavior. It is too simplistic to consider subordinates as guided to goal accomplishments solely by the behavior of their leader. It is important, therefore, to recognize explicitly that leadership is merely another independent variable in our overall OB model. In some situations, it may contribute a lot to explaining employee productivity, absence, turnover, and satisfaction, but in other situations, it may contribute little toward that end.

## **5.7. Looking for Common Ground: What Does It All Mean?**

The topic of leadership certainly doesn't lack for theories. But from an overview perspective, what does it all mean? Let's try to identify commonalities among the leadership theories and attempt to determine what, if any, practical value the theories hold for application to organizations.

Careful examination discloses that the concepts of "task" and "people" — often expressed in more elaborate terms that hold substantially the same meaning — permeate most of the theories. The task dimension is called just that by Fiedler, but it goes by the name of "initiating structure" for the Ohio State group, "directive leadership" by path-goal supporters, "production orientation" by the Michigan researchers, and "concern for production" by Blake and Mouton. The people dimension gets similar treatment, going under such aliases as "consideration," "employee-oriented," "supportive," or "relationship-oriented" leadership. It seems clear that leadership behavior can be reduced to two dimensions — task and people — but researchers continue to differ as to whether the orientations are two ends of a single continuum (you could be high on one or the other but not both) or two independent dimensions (you could be high or low on both).

Although one well-known scholar argues that virtually every theory has

also “wrestled with the question of how much a leader should share power with subordinates in decision making,” there is far less support for this contention. The situational leadership theory and the leader-participation model address this issue, but the task-people dichotomy appears to be far more encompassing.

Leadership theorists don’t agree on the issue of whether a leader’s style is fixed or flexible. For example, Fiedler takes the former position, while Vroom, Yetton, and Jago argue for the latter. As previously noted, our position is that both are probably right—it depends on the leader’s personality. High self-monitors are more likely to adjust their leadership style to changing situations than are low self-monitors. So the need to adjust the situation to the leader in order to improve the leader-situation match seems to be necessary only with low self-monitoring individuals.

How should we interpret the findings presented so far in this section? Some traits have proved, over time, to be modest predictors of leadership effectiveness. But knowing that a manager possesses intelligence, ambition, self-confidence, or the like would by no means assure us that his or her subordinates would be productive and satisfied employees. The ability of these traits to predict leadership success is just not that strong.

The early task-people approaches (such as the Ohio State, Michigan and Managerial Grid theories) also offer us little substance. The strongest statement one can make based on these theories is that leaders who rate high in people orientation should end up with satisfied employees. The research is too mixed to make predictions regarding employee productivity or the effect of a task orientation on productivity and satisfaction.

Controlled laboratory studies designed to test the Fiedler contingency model, in aggregate, have generally supported the theory. But field studies provide more limited support. We suggest that when category II, V, VII, and VIII situations exist, the utilization of the LPC instrument to assess whether there is a leader-situation match and the use of that information to predict employee productivity and satisfaction outcomes seem warranted.

Hersey and Blanchard’s situational leadership theory is straightforward, intuitively appealing, and important for its explicit recognition that the subordinate’s ability and motivation are critical to the leader’s success. Yet, in spite of its wide acceptance by practitioners, the mixed empirical support renders the theory, at least at this time, more speculative than substantive.

Leader-member exchange theory looks at leadership from a different angle. It focuses on in-groups and out-groups. Given the impressive evidence that in-group employees have higher performance and satisfaction than out-group members, the theory provides valuable insight for predicting leader effect as long as we know whether an employee is an “in” or an “out.”

Studies testing the original Vroom-Yetton version of the leader-participation model were supportive. Given that the revised Vroom-Jago

version is a sophisticated extension of the original model, we should expect it to be even better. But the complexity of the model is a major limitation to its usage. With five styles and twelve contingency variables, it is difficult to use as a day-to-day guide for practicing managers. Still, leadership and decision making are complex issues requiring a complex process. To hope for some easy but valid model may be wishful thinking. The important conclusion here seems to be that where we find leaders who follow the model, we should expect also to find productive and satisfied employees.

Finally, the path-goal model provides a framework for explaining and predicting leadership effectiveness that has developed a solid, empirical foundation. It recognizes that a leader's success depends on adjusting his or her style to the environment the leader is placed in, as well as to the individual characteristics of followers. In a limited way, path-goal theory validates contingency variables in other leadership theories. For example, its emphasis on task structure is consistent with the Fiedler contingency model and Vroom and Jago's leader-participation model (remember their question: Is the problem well structured?). Path-goal theory's recognition of individual characteristics is also consistent with Hersey and Blanchard's focus on the experience and ability of followers.

## **6. THE MOST RECENT APPROACHES TO LEADERSHIP**

We conclude our review of leadership by presenting three more recent approaches to the subject. These are an attribution theory of leadership, charismatic leadership, and transactional versus transformational leadership. If there is one theme to the approaches in this section, it is that they all deemphasize theoretical complexity and look at leadership more the way the average "person on the street" views the subject.

### **6.1. Attribution Theory of Leadership**

Attribution theory deals with people trying to make sense out of cause-effect relationships. When something happens, they want to attribute it to something. In the context of leadership, attribution theory says that leadership is merely an attribution that people make about other individuals. Using the attribution framework, researchers have found that people characterize leaders as having such traits as intelligence, outgoing personality, strong verbal skills, aggressiveness, understanding, and industriousness. Similarly, the high-high leader (high on both initiating structure and consideration) has been found to be consistent with attributions of what makes a good leader. That is, regardless of the situation, a high-high leadership style tends to be perceived as best. At the organizational level, the attribution framework

accounts for the conditions under which people use leadership to explain organizational outcomes. Those conditions are *extremes* in organizational performance. When an organization has either extremely negative or extremely positive performance, people are prone to make leadership attributions to explain the performance. This helps to account for the vulnerability of CEOs when their organizations suffer a major financial setback, regardless of whether they had much to do with it. It also accounts for why these CEOs tend to be given credit for extremely positive financial results—again, regardless of how much or how little they contributed.

One of the more interesting themes in the *attribution theory of leadership* literature is the perception that effective leaders are generally considered consistent or unwavering in their decisions. That is, one of the explanations for why Lee Iacocca and Ronald Reagan (during his first term as President) were perceived as leaders was that both were fully committed, steadfast, and consistent in the decisions they made and the goals they set. Evidence indicates that a “heroic” leader is perceived as being someone who takes up a difficult or unpopular cause and, through determination and persistence, ultimately succeeds.

## 6.2. Charismatic Leadership Theory

**Charismatic leadership** theory is an extension of attribution theory. It says that followers make attributions of heroic or extraordinary leadership abilities when they observe certain behaviors. Studies on charismatic leadership have, for the most part, been directed at identifying those behaviors that differentiate charismatic leaders—the Jesse Jacksons, Ted Turners, and John F. Kennedys of the world—from their noncharismatic counterparts.

Several authors have attempted to identify personal characteristics of the charismatic leader. Robert House (of path-goal fame) has identified three: extremely high confidence, dominance, and strong convictions in his or her beliefs. Warren Bennis, after studying ninety of the most effective and successful leaders in the United States, found that they had four common competencies: They had a compelling vision or sense of purpose; they could communicate that vision in clear terms that their followers could readily identify with; they demonstrated consistency and focus in the pursuit of their vision; and they knew their own strengths and capitalized on them. The most recent and comprehensive analysis, however, has been completed by Conger and Kanungo at McGill University. Among their conclusions, they propose that charismatic leaders have an idealized goal that they want to achieve, a strong personal commitment to their goal, are perceived as unconventional, are assertive and self-confident, and are perceived as agents of radical change rather than managers of the status quo. Table 2 summarizes the key

characteristics that appear to differentiate charismatic leaders from noncharismatic ones.

**TABLE 2. Key Characteristics of Charismatic Leaders**

1. *Self-confidence.* They have complete confidence in their judgment and ability.
2. *A vision.* This is an idealized goal that proposes a future better than the status quo. The greater the disparity between this idealized goal and the status quo, the more likely that followers will attribute extraordinary vision to the leader.
3. *Ability to articulate the vision.* They are able to clarify and state the vision in terms that are understandable to others. This articulation demonstrates an understanding of the followers needs and, hence, acts as a motivating force.
4. *Strong convictions about the vision.* Charismatic leaders are perceived as being strongly committed, and willing to take on high personal risk, incur high costs, and engage in self-sacrifice to achieve their vision.
5. *Behavior that is out of the ordinary.* Those with charisma engage in behavior that is perceived as being novel, unconventional, and counter to norms. When successful, these behaviors evoke surprise and admiration in followers.
6. *Perceived as being a change agent.* Charismatic leaders are perceived as agents of radical change rather than as caretakers of the status quo.
7. *Environment sensitivity.* These leaders are able to make realistic assessments of the environmental constraints and resources needed to bring about change.

What can we say about the charismatic leader's effect on his or her followers? There is an increasing body of research that shows impressive correlations between charismatic leadership and high performance and satisfaction among followers. People working for charismatic leaders are motivated to exert extra work effort and, because they like their leader, express greater satisfaction.

If charisma is desirable, can people learn to be charismatic leaders? Or are charismatic leaders born with their qualities? While a small minority still think charisma cannot be learned, most experts believe that individuals can be trained to exhibit charismatic behaviors and can thus enjoy the benefits that accrue to being labeled "a charismatic leader." For example, researchers have succeeded in actually scripting undergraduate business students to "play" charismatic. The students were taught to articulate an overarching goal, communicate high performance expectations, exhibit confidence in the ability of subordinates to meet these expectations, and empathize with the needs of

their subordinates; they learned to project a powerful, confident, and dynamic presence; and they practiced using a captivating and engaging voice tone. To further capture the dynamics and energy of charisma, the leaders were trained to evoke charismatic nonverbal characteristics: They alternated between pacing and sitting on the edges of their desks, leaned toward the subordinate, maintained direct eye contact, and had a relaxed posture and animated facial expressions. These researchers found that these students could **learn** how to project charisma. Moreover, subordinates of these leaders had higher task performance, task adjustment, and adjustment to the leader and to the group than did subordinates who worked under groups led by noncharismatic leaders.

One last word on this topic: Charismatic leadership may not always be needed to achieve high levels of employee performance. It may be most appropriate when the follower's task has an ideological component. This may explain why, when charismatic leaders surface, it is more likely to be in politics, religion, wartime, or when a business firm is introducing a radically new product or facing a life-threatening crisis. Such conditions tend to involve ideological concerns. Franklin D. Roosevelt offered a vision to get Americans out of the Great Depression. General MacArthur was unyielding in promoting his strategy for defeating the Japanese in World War II. Steve Jobs achieved unwavering loyalty and commitment from the technical staff he oversaw at Apple Computer during the late 1970s and early 1980s by articulating a vision of personal computers that would dramatically change the way people lived. Charismatic leaders, in fact, may become a liability to an organization once the crisis and need for dramatic change subside. Why? Because then the charismatic leader's overwhelming self-confidence often becomes a liability. He or she is unable to listen to others, becomes uncomfortable when challenged by aggressive subordinates, and begins to hold an unjustifiable belief in his or her "rightness" on issues.

### 6.3. Transactional vs. Transformational Leadership

The final stream of research well touch on is the recent interest in differentiating transformational leaders from transactional leaders. As you'll see, because transformational leaders are also charismatic, there is some overlap between this topic and our previous discussion of charismatic leadership.

Most of the leadership theories presented in this section — for instance, the Ohio State studies, Fiedler's model, path-goal theory, and the leader-participation model — have concerned **transactional leaders**. These kinds of leaders guide or motivate their followers in the direction of established goals by clarifying role and task requirements. But there is another type of leader who inspires followers to transcend their own self-interests for the good of the organization, and who is capable of having a profound and extraordinary

effect on his or her followers. These are **transformational leaders** like Leslie Wexner of The Limited retail chain and Jack Welch at General Electric. They pay attention to the concerns and developmental needs of individual followers; they change followers' awareness of issues by helping them to look at old problems in new ways; and they are able to excite, arouse, and inspire followers to put out extra effort to achieve ground goals. Table 3 briefly identifies and defines the four characteristics that differentiate these two types of leaders.

**TABLE 3. Characteristics of Transactional and Transformational Leaders**

### **Transactional Leader**

*Contingent Reward:* Contracts exchange of rewards for effort, promises rewards for good performance, recognizes accomplishments.

*Management by Exception (active):* Watches and searches for deviations from rules and standards, takes corrective action.

*Management by Exception (passive):* Intervenes only if standards are not met.

*Laissez-Faire:* Abdicates responsibilities, avoids making decisions.

### **Transformational Leader**

*Charisma:* Provides vision and sense of mission, instills pride, gains respect and trust.

*Inspiration:* Communicates high expectations, uses symbols to focus efforts, expresses important purposes in simple ways.

*Intellectual Stimulation:* Promotes intelligence, rationality, and careful problem solving.

*Individualized Consideration:* Gives personal attention, treats each employee individually coaches, advises.

Transactional and transformational leadership should not, however viewed as opposing approaches to getting things done. Transformational leadership is built on top of transactional leadership — it produces levels of subordinate effort and performance that go beyond what would occur with transactional approach alone. Moreover, transformational leadership is more than charisma. The purely charismatic leader may want followers to adopt the charismatic's world view and go no further; the transformational leader will attempt to instill in followers the ability to question not own established views but eventually those established by the leader.

The evidence supporting the superiority of transformational leadership over the transactional variety is overwhelmingly impressive. For instance, a



number of studies with U.S., Canadian, and German military officers found at every level, that transformational leaders were evaluated as more effective than their transactional counterparts. Managers at Federal Express who were rated by their followers as exhibiting more transformational leadership were evaluated by their immediate supervisors as higher performing and more promotable. In summary, the overall evidence indicates the transformational leadership is more strongly correlated than transactional leadership with lower turnover rates, higher productivity, and higher employee satisfaction.

## **7. IMPLICATION FOR PERFORMANCE AND SATISFACTION**

Leadership plays a central part in understanding group behavior, for as the leader who usually provides the direction toward goal attainment. Therefore, a more accurate predictive capability should be valuable improving group performance.

In this section, we described a transition in approaches to the study of leadership—from the simple trait orientation to increasingly complex and sophisticated transactional models, such as path-goal and leader-participation models. With the increase in complexity has also come an increase in our ability to explain and predict behavior.

A major breakthrough in our understanding of leadership came when we recognized the need to include situational factors. Recent efforts have moved beyond mere recognition toward specific attempts to isolate these situational variables. We can expect further progress to be made with leadership models, but in the last decade, we have taken several large steps—large enough that we now can make moderately effective predictions as to who can best lead a group and explain under what conditions a given approach (such as task-oriented or people-oriented) is likely to lead to high performance and satisfaction.

In addition, the study of leadership has expanded to include more heroic and visionary approaches to leadership. As we learn more about the personal characteristics that followers attribute to charismatic and transformational leaders, and about the conditions that facilitate their emergence, we should be better able to predict when followers will exhibit extraordinary commitment and loyalty to their leaders and to those leaders' goals.

## II. POWER AND POLITICS

*You can get much farther with a kind word  
and a gun than you can with a kind word alone.*

A. CAPONE

The song lyric goes: “You don’t pull on Superman’s cape, you don’t spit in the wind, you don’t pull the mask off the old Lone Ranger, and you don’t mess around with Jim.” In the movie industry, that last line could be rewritten to “... and you don’t mess around with Steven.” The Steven we’re talking about here is Spielberg.

Steven Spielberg is unquestionably the most powerful film maker in Hollywood. That power comes from his string of megahits. Five of his films are among the highest-grossing movies in Hollywood’s history — *E.T. The Extraterrestrial*, *Jaws*, *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, *Back to the Future*, and *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. In all, his films have sold more than \$4 billion worth of tickets worldwide. As the president of Columbia Pictures put it, “Who’s going to argue with his track record?”

Spielberg’s power in his industry is truly awesome. He can pick the projects he wants—and can choose from among any of the major studios to make them. According to the chairman of Walt Disney Studios, “Steven operates very uniquely in Hollywood, really as a sovereign state.” Says the chairman of Warner Bros.: “I’d take anything the man does.”

While Spielberg, because he is an independent producer, is free to shop his projects around, Universal Pictures tried to get on his good side in 1984 by spending \$6 million to build a sprawling complex for his Amblin Entertainment operations on the Universal lot. However, it didn’t do much good. Spielberg made only one film at Universal during the 1980s. Why? He didn’t like Universal’s presidents during that period. Universal’s current president knows the importance of keeping Spielberg happy: “One of the most important things I can do in this job is make sure that Steven wants to work with us.”

Power has been described as the last dirty word. It is easier for most of us to talk about money or even sex than it is to talk about power. People who have it deny it, people who want it try not to appear to be seeking it, and those who are good at getting it are secretive about how they got it.

Twenty years ago, we knew little about power. That’s no longer true. In recent years we’ve gained considerable insights into the topic. We can now offer some fairly solid suggestions, for example, about what one should do if one wants to have power in a group or organization. In this section, we’ll demonstrate that the acquisition and distribution of power is a natural process in any group or organization. Power determines the goals to be sought and how resources will be distributed. These, in turn, have important implications for member performance and satisfaction.

## 1. A DEFINITION OF POWER

**Power** refers to a capacity that A has to influence the behavior of B, so that B does something he or she would not otherwise do. This definition implies (1) a *potential* that need not be actualized to be effective, (2) a *dependency* relationship, and (3) the assumption that B has some *discretion* over his or her own behavior. Let's look at each of these points more closely.

Power may exist but not be used. It is, therefore, a capacity or potential. One can have power but not impose it.

Probably the most important aspect of power is that it is a function of **dependency**. The greater B's dependence on A, the greater is A's power in the relationship. Dependence, in turn, is based on alternatives that B perceives and the importance that B places on the alternative(s) that A controls. A person can have power over you only if he or she controls something you desire. If you want a college degree and have to pass a certain course to get it, and your current instructor is the only faculty member in the college who teaches that course, he or she has power over you. Your alternatives are highly limited and you place a high degree of importance on obtaining a passing grade. Similarly, if you're attending college on funds totally provided by your parents, you probably recognize the power that they hold over you. You are dependent on them for financial support. But once you're out of school, have a job, and are making a solid income, your parents' power is reduced significantly. Who among us, though, has not known or heard of the rich relative who is able to control a large number of family members merely through the implicit or explicit threat of "writing them out of the will"?

For A to get B to do something he or she otherwise would not do means that B must have the discretion to make choices. At the extreme, if B's job behavior is so programmed that he is allowed no room to make choices, he obviously is constrained in his ability to do something other than what he is doing. For instance, job descriptions, group norms, and organizational rules and regulations, as well as community laws and standards, constrain people's choices. As a nurse, you may be dependent on your supervisor for continued employment. But, in spite of this dependence, you're unlikely to comply with her request to perform heart surgery on a patient or steal several thousand dollars from petty cash. Your job description and laws against stealing constrain your ability to make these choices.

## 2. CONTRASTING LEADERSHIP AND POWER

A careful comparison of our description of power with our description of leadership in the previous section should bring the recognition that the two concepts are closely, intertwined. Leaders use power as a means of attaining

group goals. Leaders achieve goals, and power is a means of facilitating their achievement.

What differences are there between the two terms? One difference relates to goal compatibility. Power does not require goal compatibility, merely dependence. Leadership, on the other hand, requires some congruence between the goals of the leader and the led. A second difference relates to the direction of influence. Leadership focuses on the downward influence on one's subordinates. It minimizes the importance of lateral and upward influence patterns. Power does not. Still another difference deals with research emphasis. Leadership research, for the most part, emphasizes style. It seeks answers to such questions as: How supportive should a leader be? How much decision making should be shared with subordinates? In contrast, the research on power has tended to encompass a broader area and focus on tactics for gaining compliance. It has gone beyond the individual as exerciser because power can be used by groups as well as by individuals to control other individuals or groups.

### 3. BASES AND SOURCES OF POWER

Where does power come from? What is it that gives an individual or a group influence over others? The early answer to these questions was a five-category classification scheme identified by French and Raven. They proposed that there were five bases or sources of power that they termed coercive, reward, expert, legitimate, and referent power. Coercive power depends on fear; reward power derives from the ability to distribute anything of value (typically money, favorable performance appraisals, interesting work assignments, friendly colleagues, and preferred work shifts or sales territories); expert power refers to influence that derives from special skills or knowledge; legitimate power is based on the formal rights one receives as a result of holding an authoritative position or role in an organization; and **referent power** develops out of others' admiration for a person and their desire to model their behavior and attitudes after that person. While French and Raven's classification scheme provided an extensive repertoire of possible bases of power, their categories created ambiguity because they confused bases of power with sources of power. The result was much overlapping. We can improve our understanding of the power concept by separating bases and sources so as to develop clearer and more independent categories.

**Bases of power** refers to what the powerholder has that gives him or her power. Assuming that you're the powerholder, your bases are what you control that enables you to manipulate the behavior of others. There are four power bases—coercive power, reward power, persuasive power, and knowledge power. We'll expand on each in a moment.

How are **sources of power** different from bases of power? The answer is that sources tell us where the powerholder gets his or her power base. That is, sources refer to how you come to control your base of power. There are four sources—the position you hold, your personal characteristics, your expertise, and the opportunity you have to receive and obstruct information: Each of these will also be discussed in a moment.

Let us now consider the four bases of power.

### 3.1. Bases of Power

*COERCIVE POWER* The **coercive** base depends on fear. One reacts to this power out of fear of the negative ramifications that might result if one fails to comply. It rests on the application, or the threat of application, of physical sanctions such as infliction of pain, deformity, or death; the generation of frustration through restriction of movement; or the controlling through force of basic physiological or safety needs.

In the 1930s, when John Dillinger went into a bank, held a gun to the teller's head, and asked for the money, he was incredibly successful at getting compliance with his request. His power base? Coercive. A loaded gun gives its holder power because others are fearful that they will lose something that they hold dear—their lives.

Of all the bases of power available to man, the power to hurt others is possibly most often used, most often condemned, and most difficult to control... the state relies on its military and legal resources to intimidate nations, or even its own citizens. Businesses rely upon the control of economic resources. Schools and universities rely upon their right to deny students formal education, while the church threatens individuals with loss of grace. At the personal level, individuals exercise coercive power through a reliance upon physical strength, verbal facility, or the ability to grant or withhold emotional support from others. These bases provide the individual with the means to physically harm, bully, humiliate, or deny love to others.

At the organization level, A has coercive power over B if A can dismiss, suspend, or demote B, assuming that B values his or her job. Similarly, if A can assign B work activities that B finds unpleasant or treat B in a manner that B finds embarrassing, A possesses coercive power over B.

*REWARD POWER* The opposite of coercive power is the **power to reward**. People comply with the wishes of another because it will result in positive benefits; therefore, one who can distribute rewards that others view as valuable will have power over them. Our definition of rewards is here limited to only material rewards. This would include salaries and wages, commissions, fringe benefits, and the like.

*PERSUASIVE POWER* **Persuasive power** rests on the allocation and manipulation of symbolic rewards. If you can decide who is hired, manipulate

the mass media, control the allocation of status symbols, or influence a group's norms, you have persuasive power. For instance, when a teacher uses the class climate to control a deviant student, or when a union steward arouses the members to use their informal power to bring a deviant member into line, you are observing the use of persuasive power.

**KNOWLEDGE POWER** **Knowledge**, or access to information, is the final base of power. We can say that when an individual in a group or organization controls unique information, and when that information is needed to make a decision, that individual has knowledge-based power.

To summarize, the bases of power refer to what the powerholder controls that enables him or her to manipulate the behavior of others. The coercive base of power is the control of punishment, the reward base is the control of material rewards, the persuasive base is the control of symbolic rewards, and the knowledge base is the control of information. Table 3 offers some common symbols that would suggest that a manager has developed strong power bases.

**TABLE 3. Common Symbols of a Manager's Power**

To what extent a manager can

• Intercede favorably on behalf of someone in trouble with the organization

- Get a desirable placement for a talented subordinate
- Get approval for expenditures beyond the budget
- Get above-average salary increases for subordinates
- Get items on the agenda at policy meetings
- Get fast access to top decision makers
- Get regular, frequent access to top decision makers
- Get early information about decisions and policy shifts

### **3.2. Sources of Power**

**POSITION POWER** In formal groups and organizations, probably the most frequent access to one or more of the power bases is one's structural position. A teacher's position includes significant control over symbols, a secretary frequently is privy to important information, and the head coach of a football team has substantial coercive resources at his disposal. All of these bases of power are achieved as a result of the formal position each holds within his or her structural hierarchy.

**PERSONAL POWER** Personality traits appear within the topic of power when we acknowledge the fact that one's **personal** characteristics can be a source of power. If you are articulate, domineering, physically imposing, or charismatic, you hold personal characteristics that may be used to get others to do what you want.

*EXPERT POWER* Expertise is a means by which the powerholder comes to control specialized information (rather than the control itself, which we have discussed as the knowledge base of power). Those who have expertise in terms of specialized information can use it to manipulate others. Expertise is one of the most powerful sources of influence, especially in a technologically-oriented society. As jobs become more specialized, we become increasingly dependent on “experts” to achieve goals. So, while it is generally acknowledged that physicians have expertise and hence **expert power** – when your doctor talks, you listen—you should also recognize that computer specialists, tax accountants, solar engineers, industrial psychologists, and other specialists are able to wield power as a result of their expertise.

*OPPORTUNITY POWER* Finally, being in the right place at the right time can give one the **opportunity** to exert power. One need not hold a formal position in a group or organization to have access to information that is important to others or to be able to exert coercive influence. An example of how one can use an opportunity to create a power base is the story of the former United States President Lyndon Johnson when he was a student at Southwestern Texas State Teachers College. He had a job as special assistant to the college president’s personal secretary.

As special assistant, Johnson’s assigned job was simply to carry messages from the president to the department heads and occasionally to other faculty members. Johnson saw that the rather limited function of messenger had possibilities for expansion; for example, encouraging recipients of the messages to transmit their own communications through him. He occupied a desk in the president’s outer office, where he took it upon himself to announce the arrival of visitors. These added services evolved from a helpful convenience into an aspect of the normal process of presidential business. The messenger had become an appointments secretary, and, in time, faculty members came to think of Johnson as a funnel to the president. Using a technique which was later to serve him in achieving mastery over the Congress, Johnson turned a rather insubstantial service into a process through which power was exercised.

Johnson eventually broadened his informal duties to include handling the president’s political correspondence, preparing his reports for state agencies, and even regularly accompanying him on his trips to the state capital—the president eventually relying on his young apprentice for political counsel. Certainly this represents an example of someone using an opportunity to redefine his job and to give himself power.

### 3.3. Summary

The foundation to understanding power begins by identifying where power comes from (sources) and, given that one has the means to exert

influence, what it is that one manipulates (bases). Sources are the means. Individuals can use their position in the structure, rely on personal characteristics, develop expertise, or take advantage of opportunities to control information. Control of one or more of these sources allows the powerholder to manipulate the behavior of others via coercion, reward, persuasion, or knowledge bases. To reiterate, sources are *where* you get power. Bases are *what* you manipulate. Those who seek power must develop a source of power. Then, and only then, can they acquire a power base.

## **4. DEPENDENCY: THE KEY TO POWER**

Earlier in this section it was said that probably the most important aspect of power is that it is a function of dependence. We'll show how an understanding of dependency is central to furthering your understanding of power itself.

### **4.1. The General Dependency Postulate**

Let's begin with a general postulate: *The greater B's dependency on A, the greater the power A has over B.* When you possess anything that others require but that you alone control, you make them dependent upon you and, therefore, you gain power over them. Dependency, then, is inversely proportional to the alternative sources of supply. If something is plentiful, possession of it will not increase your power. If everyone is intelligent, intelligence gives no special advantage. Similarly, among the super-rich, money is no longer power. But, as the old saying goes, "In the land of the blind, the one-eyed man is king!" If you can create a monopoly by controlling information, prestige, or anything that others crave, they become dependent on you. Conversely, the more that you can expand your options, the less power you place in the hands of others. This explains, for example, why most organizations develop multiple suppliers rather than give their business to only one. It also explains why so many of us aspire to financial independence. Financial independence reduces the power that others can have over us.

Joyce Fields provides an example of the role that dependency plays in a work group or organization. In 1975, she took a job with the Times Mirror Company in its Los Angeles headquarters. Fields moved quickly up the organization ladder, eventually becoming treasurer of the company. Among her many accomplishments at Times Mirror has been setting up a full-scale commercial-paper borrowing program from scratch and negotiating \$1 billion of new debt to finance the company's media purchases. In 1988, Fields' husband was offered a promotion to chief financial officer at Paramount Communications in New York City. The job was too good to pass up, so the



couple decided to pack up and move to Manhattan. However, Times Mirror didn't want to lose Fields to a New York company. So, in a tribute to her importance, top management at Times Mirror moved the company's entire treasury operations across the country to New York.

## 4.2. What Creates Dependency?

Dependency is increased when the resource you control is important, scarce, and nonsubstitutable.

**IMPORTANCE** If nobody wants what you've got, it's not going to create dependency. To create dependency, therefore, the thing(s) you control must be perceived as being important. It's been found, for instance, that organizations actively seek to avoid uncertainty. We should, therefore, expect that those individuals or groups who can absorb an organization's uncertainty will be perceived as controlling an important resource. For instance, a study of industrial organizations found that the marketing departments in these firms were consistently rated as the most powerful. It was concluded by the researcher that the most critical uncertainty facing these firms was selling their products. This might suggest that during a labor strike, the organization's negotiating representatives have increased power, or that engineers, as a group, would be more powerful at Apple Computer than at Procter & Gamble. These inferences appear to be generally valid. Labor negotiators do become more powerful within the personnel area and the organization as a whole during periods of labor strife. An organization such as Apple Computer, which is heavily technologically oriented, is highly dependent on its engineers to maintain its products' technical advantages and quality. And, at Apple, engineers are clearly a powerful group. At Procter & Gamble, marketing is the name of the game, and marketers are the most powerful occupational group. These examples support not only the view that the ability to reduce uncertainty increases a group's importance and, hence, its power but also that what's important is situational. It varies between organizations and undoubtedly also varies over time within any given organization.

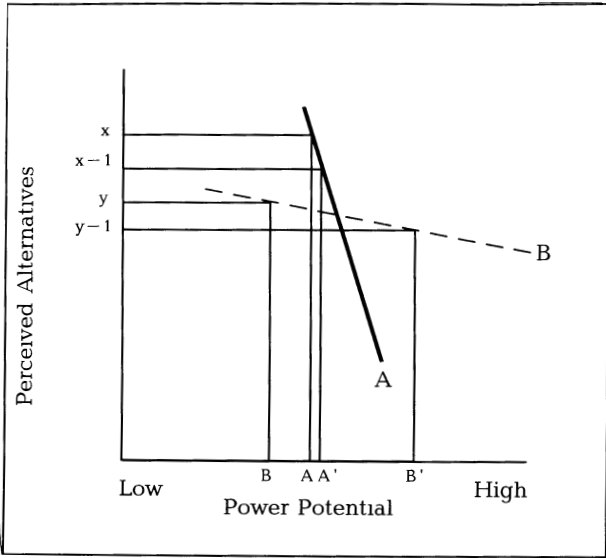
**SCARCITY** As noted previously, if something is plentiful, possession of it will not increase your power. A resource needs to be perceived as scarce to create dependency.

This can help to explain how low-ranking members in an organization who have important knowledge not available to high-ranking members gain power over the high-ranking members. Possession of a scarce resource — in this case, important knowledge — makes the high-ranking member dependent on the low-ranking member. This also helps to make sense out of behaviors of low-ranking members that otherwise might seem illogical, such as destroying the procedure manuals that describe how a job is done, refusing to train people in their jobs or even to show others exactly what they do, creating

specialized language and terminology that inhibits others from understanding their jobs, or operating in secrecy so an activity will appear more complex and difficult than it really is.

The scarcity-dependency relationship can further be seen in the power of occupational categories. Individuals in occupations in which the supply of Figure 1 Elasticity of Power personnel is low relative to demand can negotiate compensation and benefit packages far more attractive than can those in occupations where there is an abundance of candidates. College administrators have no problem today finding English instructors. The market for accounting teachers, in contrast, is extremely tight, with the demand high and the supply limited. The result is that the bargaining power of accounting faculty allows them to negotiate higher salaries, lower teaching loads, and other benefits.

Figure 1. Elasticity of Power



***NONSUBSTITUTABILITY*** The more that a resource has no viable substitutes, the more power that control over that resource provides. This is illustrated in a concept we'll call the **elasticity of power**.

In economics, considerable attention is focused on the elasticity of demand, which is defined as the relative responsiveness of quantity demanded to change in price. This concept can be modified to explain the strength of power.

Elasticity of power is defined as the relative responsiveness of power to change in available alternatives. One's ability to influence others is viewed as

being dependent on how these others perceive their alternatives. As shown in Figure 1, assume that there are two individuals. Mr. A's power elasticity curve is relatively inelastic. This would describe, for example, an employee who believed that he had a large number of employment opportunities outside his current organization. Fear of being fired would have only a moderate impact on Mr. A, for he perceives that he has a number of other alternatives. Mr. A's boss finds that threatening A with termination has only a minimal impact on influencing his behavior. A reduction in alternatives (from X to X-1) only increases the power of A's boss slightly (A' to A''). However, Mr. B's curve is relatively elastic. He sees few other job opportunities. His age, education, present salary, or lack of contacts may severely limit his ability to find a job somewhere else. As a result, Mr. B is dependent on his present organization and boss. If B loses his job (Y to Y1), he may face prolonged unemployment, and it shows itself in the increased power of B's boss. As long as B perceives his options as limited and B's boss holds the power to terminate his employment, B's boss will hold considerable power over him. In such a situation, it is obviously important for B to get his boss to believe that his options are considerably greater than they really are. If this is not achieved, B places his fate in the hands of his boss and makes himself captive to almost any demands the boss devises.

Higher education provides an excellent example of how this elasticity concept operates. In universities where there are strong pressures for the faculty to publish, we can say that a department head's power over a faculty member is inversely related to that member's publication record. The more recognition the faculty member receives through publication, the more mobile he or she is. That is, since other universities want faculty who are highly published and visible, there is an increased demand for his or her services. Although the concept of tenure can act to alter this relationship by restricting the department head's alternatives, those faculty members with little or no publications have the least mobility and are subject to the greatest influence from their superiors.

### **4.3. Power Tactics**

This section is a logical extension of our previous discussions. We've reviewed *where* power comes from and *what* it is that powerholders manipulate. Now, we go the final step — to power tactics. Tactics tell us *how* to manipulate the bases. The following discussion will show you how employees translate their power bases into specific actions.

One of the few elements of power that has gone beyond anecdotal evidence or armchair speculation is the topic of tactics. Recent research indicates that there are standardized ways by which powerholders attempt to get what they want.

When 165 managers were asked to write essays describing an incident in which they influenced their bosses, co-workers, or subordinates, a total of 370 power tactics grouped into fourteen categories were identified. These answers were condensed, rewritten into a fifty-eight-item questionnaire, and given to over 750 employees. These respondents were not only asked how they went about influencing others at work but also for the possible reasons for influencing the target person. The results, which are summarized here, give us considerable insight into power tactics — how managerial employees influence others and the conditions under which one tactic is chosen over another.

The findings identified seven tactical dimensions or strategies:

- *Reason*: Use of facts and data to make a logical or rational presentation of ideas
- *Friendliness*: Use of flattery, creation of goodwill, acting humble, and being friendly prior to making a request
- *Coalition*: Getting the support of other people in the organization to back up the request
- *Bargaining*: Use of negotiation through the exchange of benefits or favors
- *Assertiveness*: Use of a direct and forceful approach such as demanding compliance with requests, repeating reminders, ordering individuals to do what is asked, and pointing out that rules require compliance
- *Higher authority*: Gaining the support of higher levels in the organization to back up requests
- *Sanctions*: Use of organizationally derived rewards and punishments such as preventing or promising a salary increase, threatening to give an unsatisfactory performance evaluation, or withholding a promotion

The researchers found that employees do not rely on the seven tactics equally. However, as shown in Table 4, the most popular strategy was the use of reason, regardless of whether the influence was directed upward or downward. Additionally, the researchers uncovered four contingency variables that affect the selection of a power tactic: the manager's relative power, the manager's objectives for wanting to influence, the manager's expectation of the target person's willingness to comply, and the organization's culture.

A manager's relative power impacts the selection of tactics in two ways. First, managers who control resources that are valued by others, or who are perceived to be in positions of dominance, use a greater variety of tactics than do those with less power. Second, managers with power use assertiveness with greater frequency than do those with less power. Initially, we can expect that most managers will attempt to use simple requests and reason. Assertiveness is a backup strategy, used when the target of influence refuses or appears reluctant to comply with the request. Resistance leads to managers

using more directive strategies. Typically, they shift from using simple requests to insisting that their demands be met. But the manager with relatively little power is more likely to stop trying to influence others when he or she encounters resistance, because he or she perceives the costs associated with assertiveness as unacceptable.

**TABLE 4. Usage of Power Tactics: From Most to Least Popular**

	<b>When Managers Influenced Superiors*</b>	<b>When Managers Influenced Subordinates</b>
Most Popular	Reason	Reason
	Coalition	Assertiveness
	Friendliness	Friendliness
	Bargaining	Coalition
	Assertiveness	Bargaining
Least Popular	Higher authority	Higher authority
	Sanctions	

\*Sanctions is omitted in the scale that measures upward influence.

Managers vary their power tactics in relation to their objectives. When managers seek benefits from a superior, they tend to rely on kind words and the promotion of pleasant relationships; that is, they use friendliness. In comparison, managers attempting to persuade their superiors to accept new ideas usually rely on reason. This matching of tactics to objectives also holds true for downward influence. For example, managers use reason to sell ideas to subordinates and friendliness to obtain favors.

The manager’s expectations of success guide his or her choice of tactics. When past experience indicates a high probability of success, managers use simple requests to gain compliance. Where success is less predictable, managers are more tempted to use assertiveness and sanctions to achieve their objectives.

Finally, we know that cultures within organizations differ markedly— for example, some are warm, relaxed, and supportive; others are formal and conservative. The organizational culture in which a manager works, therefore, will have a significant bearing on defining which tactics are considered appropriate. Some cultures encourage the use of friendliness, some encourage reason, and still others rely on sanctions and assertiveness. So the organization itself will influence which subset of power tactics is viewed as acceptable for use by managers.

## 4.4. Power in Groups: Coalitions

Those “out of power” and seeking to be “in” will first try to increase their power individually. Why spread the spoils if one doesn’t have to? But if this proves ineffective, the alternative is to form a coalition. There is strength in numbers.

The natural way to gain influence is to become a powerholder. Therefore, those who want power will attempt to build a personal power base. But, in many instances, this may be difficult, risky, costly, or impossible. In such cases, efforts will be made to form a coalition of two or more “outs” who, by joining together, can combine their resources to increase rewards for themselves.

Historically, employees in organizations who were unsuccessful in bargaining on their own behalf with management resorted to labor unions to bargain for them. In recent years, even some managers have joined unions after finding it difficult to exert power individually to attain higher wages and greater job security.

What predictions can we make about coalition formation? First, coalitions in organizations often seek to maximize their size. In political science theory, coalitions move the other way—they try to minimize their size. They tend to be just large enough to exert the power necessary to achieve their objectives. But legislatures are different from organizations. Specifically, decision making in organizations does not end just with selection from among a set of alternatives. The decision must also be implemented. In organizations, the implementation of and commitment to the decision is at least as important as the decision itself. It’s necessary, therefore, for coalitions in organizations to seek a broad constituency to support the coalition’s objectives. This means expanding the coalition to encompass as many interests as possible. This coalition expansion to facilitate consensus building, of course, is more likely to occur in organizational cultures where cooperation, commitment, and shared decision making are highly valued. In autocratic and hierarchically controlled organizations, this search for maximizing the coalition’s size is less likely to be sought.

Another prediction about coalitions relates to the degree of interdependence within the organization. More coalitions will likely be created where there is a great deal of task and resource interdependence. In contrast, there will be less interdependence among subunits and less coalition formation activity where subunits are largely self-contained or resources are abundant.

Finally, coalition formation will be influenced by the actual tasks that workers do. The more routine the task of a group, the greater the likelihood that coalitions will form. The more that the work that people do is routine, the greater their substitutability for each other and, thus, the greater their

dependence. To offset this dependence, they can be expected to resort to a coalition. We see, therefore, that unions appeal more to low-skill and nonprofessional workers than to skilled and professional types. Of course, where the supply of skilled and professional employees is high relative to their demand or where organizations have standardized traditionally nonroutine jobs, we would expect even these incumbents to find unionization attractive.

## 5. POLITICS: POWER IN ACTION

When people get together in groups, power will be exerted. People want to carve out a niche from which to exert influence, to earn awards, and to advance their careers. When employees in organizations convert their power into action, we describe them as being engaged in politics. Those with good political skills have the ability to use their bases of power effectively.

### 5.1. Definition

There has been no shortage of definitions for organizational politics. Essentially, however, they have focused on the use of power to affect decision making in the organization or on behaviors by members that are self-serving and organizationally nonsanctioned. For our purposes, we shall define **political behavior** in organizations as **those activities that are not required as part of one's formal role in the organization, but that influence, or attempt to influence, the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organization.**

This definition encompasses key elements from what most people mean when they talk about organizational politics. Political behavior is *outside* one's specified job requirements. The behavior requires some attempt to use one's *power* bases. Additionally, our definition encompasses efforts to influence the goals, criteria, or processes used for *decision making* when we state that politics is concerned with "the distribution of advantages and disadvantages within the organization." Our definition is broad enough to include such varied political behaviors as withholding key information from decision makers, whistleblowing, spreading rumors, leaking confidential information about organizational activities to the media, exchanging favors with others in the organization for mutual benefit, and lobbying on behalf of or against particular individual or decision alternative.

A final comment relates to what has been referred to as the "legitimate-illegitimate" dimension in political behavior. **Legitimate political behavior** refers to normal everyday politics—complaining to your supervisor, bypassing the chain of command, forming coalitions, obstructing organizational policies or decisions through inaction or excessive adherence to rules, and developing

contacts outside the organization through one's professional activities. On the other hand, there are also **illegitimate** or extreme political behaviors that violate the implied "rules of the game." Those who pursue such activities are often described as individuals who "play hardball." Illegitimate activities include sabotage, whistleblowing, and symbolic protests such as wearing unorthodox dress or protest buttons, and groups of employees simultaneously calling in sick.

The vast majority of all organizational political actions are of the legitimate variety. The reasons are pragmatic: The extreme illegitimate forms of political behavior pose a very real risk of loss of organizational membership or extreme sanctions against those who use them and then fall short in having enough power to ensure that they work.

## 5.2. The Reality of Politics

Politics is a fact of life in organizations. People who ignore this fact of life do so at their own peril. But why, you may wonder, must politics exist? Isn't it possible for an organization to be politics-free? It's *possible*, but most unlikely.

Organizations are made up of individuals and groups with different values, goals, and interests. This sets up the potential for conflict over resources. Departmental budgets, space allocations, project responsibilities, and salary adjustments are just a few examples of the resources about whose allocation organizational members will disagree.

Resources in organizations are also limited, which often turns potential conflict into real conflict. If resources were abundant, then all the various constituencies within the organization could satisfy their goals. But because they are limited, not everyone's interests can be provided for. Further whether true or not, gains by one individual or group are often *perceived* as being at the expense of others within the organization. These forces create competition among members for the organization's limited resources.

Maybe the most important factor leading to politics within organizations is the realization that most of the "facts" that are used to allocate the limited resources are open to interpretation. What, for instance, is *good* performance? What's an *adequate* improvement? What constitutes an *unsatisfactory* job? The manager of any major league baseball team knows a .400 hitter is a high performer and a .125 hitter a poor performer. You don't need to be a baseball genius to know you should play your .400 hitter and send the .125 hitter back to the minors. But what if you have to choose between players who hit .280 and .290? Then other factors—less objective ones—come into play: fielding expertise, attitude, potential, ability to perform in the clutch, loyalty to the team, and so on. More managerial decisions resemble choosing between a .280 and a .290 hitter than deciding between a .125 hitter and a .400 hitter. It is



in this large and ambiguous middle ground of organizational life — where the facts don't speak for themselves — that politics flourish.

Finally, because most decisions have to be made in a climate of ambiguity — where facts are rarely fully objective, and thus are open to interpretation — people within organizations will use whatever influence they can to taint the facts to support their goals and interests. That, of course, creates the activities we call politicking.

So, to answer the earlier question — Isn't it possible for an organization to be politics-free? — we can say: Yes, if all members of that organization hold the same goals and interests; if organizational resources are not scarce; and if performance outcomes are completely clear and objective. But that doesn't describe the organizational world that most of us live in!

### **5.3. Factors Contributing to Political Behavior**

Not all groups or organizations are equally political. In some organizations, for instance, politicking is overt and rampant; while in others, politics plays a small role in influencing outcomes. Why is there this variation? Recent research and observation have identified a number of factors that appear to encourage political behavior. Some are individual characteristics, derived from the unique qualities of the people the organization employs; others are a result of the organization's culture or internal environment.

*INDIVIDUAL FACTORS* At the individual level, researchers have identified certain personality traits, needs, and other factors that are likely to be related to political behavior. In terms of traits, we find that employees who are high self-monitors, possess an internal locus of control, and have a high need for power are more likely to engage in political behavior.

The high self-monitor is more sensitive to social cues, exhibits higher levels of social conformity, and is more highly skilled in political behavior than the low self-monitor. Individuals with an internal locus of control, because they believe they can control their environment, are more prone to take a proactive stance and attempt to manipulate situations in their favor. And, not surprisingly, the Machiavellian personality—which is characterized by the will to manipulate and the desire for power—is comfortable using politics as a means to further his or her self-interest.

Additionally, an individual's investment in the organization, perceived alternatives, and expectations of success will influence the degree to which he or she will pursue illegitimate means of political action. The more that a person has invested in the organization in terms of expectations of increased future benefits, the more a person has to lose if forced out and the less likely he or she is to use illegitimate means. The more alternative job opportunities an individual has—due to a favorable job market or the possession of scarce skills or knowledge, a prominent reputation, or influential contacts outside the

organization—the more likely he or she is to risk illegitimate political actions. Last, if an individual has a low expectation of success in using illegitimate means, it is unlikely that he or she will attempt them. High expectations of success in the use of illegitimate means are most likely to be the province of both experienced and powerful individuals with polished political skills and inexperienced and naive employees who misjudge their chances.

**ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS** Political activity is probably more a function of the organization's characteristics than of individual difference variables. Why? Because many organizations have a large number of employees with the individual characteristics we listed, yet the extent of political behavior varies widely.

While we acknowledge the role that individual differences can play in fostering politicking, the evidence more strongly supports that certain situations and cultures promote politics. More specifically, when an organization's resources are declining or when the existing pattern of resources is changing, politics is more likely to surface. In addition, cultures characterized by low trust, role ambiguity, unclear performance evaluation systems, zero-sum reward allocation practices, democratic decision making, high pressures for performance, and self-serving senior managers will create breeding grounds for politicking.

When organizations cut back to improve efficiency, reductions in resources have to be made. Threatened with the loss of resources, people may engage in political actions to safeguard what they have. But any changes, especially those that imply significant reallocation of resources within the organization, are likely to stimulate conflict and increase politicking.

The less trust there is within the organization, the higher the level of political behavior and the more likely that the political behavior will be of the illegitimate kind. So high trust should suppress the level of political behavior in general and inhibit illegitimate actions in particular.

Role ambiguity means that the prescribed behaviors of the employee are not clear. There are fewer limits, therefore, to the scope and functions of the employee's political actions. Since political activities are defined as those not required as part of one's formal role, the greater the role ambiguity, the more one can engage in political activity with little chance of it being visible.

The practice of performance evaluation is far from a perfected science. The more that organizations use subjective criteria in the appraisal, emphasize a single outcome measure, or allow significant time to pass between the time of an action and its appraisal, the greater the likelihood that an employee can get away with politicking. Subjective performance criteria create ambiguity. The use of a single outcome measure encourages individuals to do whatever is necessary to "look good" on that measure, but often at the expense of performing well on other important parts of the job that are being appraised. The amount of time that elapses between an action and

its appraisal is also a relevant factor. The longer the time period, the more unlikely that the employee will be held accountable for his or her political behaviors.

The more that an organization's culture emphasizes the zero-sum or win-lose approach to reward allocations, the more employees will be motivated to engage in politicking. The zero-sum approach treats the reward "pie" as fixed so that any gain one person or group achieves has to come at the expense of another person or group. If I win, you must lose! If \$10,000 in annual raises is to be distributed among five employees, then any employee who gets more than \$2,000 takes money away from one or more of the others. Such a practice encourages making others look bad and increasing the visibility of what you do.

In the last twenty-five years, there has been a general move in North America toward making organizations less autocratic. While much of this trend has been more in theory than in practice, it is undoubtedly true that in many organizations, managers are being asked to behave more democratically. Managers are told that they should allow subordinates to advise them on decisions and that they should rely to a greater extent on group input into the decision process. Such moves toward democracy, however, are not necessarily desired by individual managers. Many managers sought their positions in order to have legitimate power so as to be able to make unilateral decisions. They fought hard and often paid high personal costs to achieve their influential positions. Sharing their power with others runs directly against their desires. The result is that managers may use the required committees, conferences, and group meetings in a superficial way—as arenas for maneuvering and manipulating.

The more pressure that employees feel to perform well, the more likely they are to engage in politicking. When people are held strictly accountable for outcomes, this puts great pressure on them to "look good." If a person perceives that his or her entire career is riding on next quarter's sales figures or next month's plant productivity report, there is motivation to do whatever is necessary to make sure the numbers come out favorably.

Finally, when employees see the people on top engaging in political behavior, especially when they do so successfully and are rewarded for it, a climate is created that supports politicking. Politicking by top management, in a sense, gives permission to those lower in the organization to play politics by implying that such behavior is acceptable.

## 5.4. Impression Management

We know that people have an ongoing interest in how others perceive and evaluate them. For example, North Americans spend billions of dollars on diets, health club memberships, cosmetics, and plastic surgery—all intended to make them more attractive to others. Being perceived positively by others should have benefits for people in organizations. It might, for instance, help them initially to get the jobs they want in an organization and, once hired, to get favorable evaluations, superior salary increases, and more rapid promotions. In a political context, it might help sway the distribution of advantages in their favor.

The process by which individuals attempt to control the impression others form of them is called **impression management**. It's a subject that only quite recently has gained the attention of OB researchers.

Is *everyone* concerned with impression management (IM)? No! Who, then, might we predict to engage in IM? No surprise here! It's our old friend, the high self-monitor. Low self-monitors tend to present images of themselves that are consistent with their personalities, regardless of the beneficial or detrimental effects for them. In contrast, high self-monitors are good at reading situations and molding their appearances and behavior to fit each situation.

Given that you want to control the impression others form of you, what techniques could you use? Table 5 summarizes some of the more popular IM techniques and provides an example of each.

Keep in mind that IM does not imply that the impressions people convey are necessarily false (although, of course, they sometimes are). Excuses and acclaiming, for instance, may be offered with sincerity. Referring to the examples used in Table 5, you can *actually* believe that ads contribute little to sales in your region or that you *are* the key to the tripling of your division's sales. But misrepresentation can have a high cost. If the image claimed is false, you may be discredited. If you "cry wolf" once too often, no one is likely to believe you when the wolf really comes. So the impression manager must be cautious not to be perceived as insincere or manipulative.

Are there *situations* where individuals are more likely to misrepresent themselves or more likely to get away with it? Yes—situations that are characterized by high uncertainty or ambiguity. These situations provide relatively little information for challenging a fraudulent claim and reduce the risks associated with misrepresentation.

Only a limited number of studies have been undertaken to test the effectiveness of IM techniques, and these have been essentially limited to determining whether IM behavior is related to job interview success. This makes a particularly relevant area of study since applicants are clearly attempting to present positive images of themselves and there are relatively

objective outcome measures (written assessments and typically a hire-don't hire recommendation).

The evidence is that IM behavior works. In one study, for instance interviewers felt that those applicants for a position as a customer-service representative who used IM techniques performed better in the interview and they seemed somewhat more inclined to hire these people. Moreover when the researchers considered applicants' credentials, they concluded that it was the IM techniques alone that influenced the interviewers. That is, it didn't seem to matter if applicants were well or poorly qualified. If they used IM techniques, they did better in the interview.

**TABLE 5. Impression Management (IM) Techniques**

**Conformity**

Agreeing with someone else's opinion in order to gain his or her approval.  
*Example:* A manager tells his boss, "You're absolutely right on your reorganization plan for the western regional office. I couldn't agree with you more."

---

**Excuses**

Explanations of a predicament-creating event aimed at minimizing the apparent severity of the predicament.  
*Example:* Sales manager to boss, "We failed to get the ad in the paper on time, but no one responds to those ads anyway."

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**Apologies**

Admitting responsibility for an undesirable event and simultaneously seeking to get a pardon for the action.  
*Example:* Employee to boss, "I'm sorry I made a mistake on the report. Please forgive me."

---

**Acclaiming**

Explanation of favorable events to maximize the desirable implications for oneself.  
*Example:* A salesperson informs a peer, "The sales in our division have nearly tripled since I was hired."

---

**Flattery**

Complimenting others about their virtues in an effort to make oneself appear perceptive and likable.  
*Example:* New sales trainee to peer, "You handled that client's complaint so tactfully!" I could never have handled that as well as you did."

---

## Favors

Doing something nice for someone to gain that person's approval.

*Example:* Salesperson to prospective client, "I've got two tickets to the theater tonight that I can't use. Take them. Consider it a thank-you for taking the time to talk with me."

---

## Association

Enhancing or protecting one's image by managing information about people and things with which one is associated.

*Example:* A job applicant says to an interviewer, "What a coincidence. Your boss and I were roommates in college."

---

Another employment interview study looked at whether certain IM techniques work better than others. The researchers compared applicants who used IM techniques that focused the conversation on themselves (called a *controlling style*) to applicants who used techniques that focused on the interviewer (referred to as a *submissive style*). The researchers hypothesized that applicants who used the controlling style would be more effective because of the implicit expectations inherent in employment interviews. We tend to expect job applicants to use self-enhancement, self-promotion and other active controlling techniques in an interview because they reflect self-confidence and initiative. The researchers predicted that these active controlling techniques would work better for applicants than submissive tactics like conforming their opinions to those of the interviewer and offering favors to the interviewer. The results confirmed the researchers' predictions. Those applicants who used the controlling style were rated higher by interviewers on factors such as motivation, enthusiasm, and even technical skills—and they received more job offers.

## 5.5. Defensive Behaviors

Organizational politics includes *protection* of self-interest as well as *promotion*. Individuals often engage in reactive and protective "defensive" behaviors to avoid action, blame, or change. This section discusses common varieties of **defensive behaviors**, classified by their objective.

**AVOIDING ACTION** Sometimes the best political strategy is to avoid action. That is, the best action is no action! However, role expectations typically dictate that one at least give the impression of doing something. Here are six popular ways to avoid action:

1. **Overconforming.** You strictly interpret your responsibility by saying things like, "The rules clearly state..." or "This is the way we've always done it." Rigid adherence to rules, policies, and precedents avoid the need to consider the nuances of a particular case.

2. *Passing the buck.* You transfer responsibility for the execution of a task or decision to someone else.

3. *Playing dumb.* This is a form of strategic helplessness. You avoid an unwanted task by falsely pleading ignorance or inability.

4. *Depersonalization.* You treat other people as objects or numbers, distancing yourself from problems and avoiding having to consider the idiosyncrasies of particular people or the impact of events on them. Hospital physicians often refer to patients by their room number or disease in order to avoid becoming too personally involved with them.

5. *Stretching and smoothing.* Stretching refers to prolonging a task so that you appear to be occupied—for example, you turn a two-week task into a four-month job. Smoothing refers to covering up fluctuations in effort or output. Both these practices are designed to make you appear continually busy and productive.

6. *Stalling.* This “foot-dragging” tactic requires you to appear more or less supportive publicly while doing little or nothing privately.

**AVOIDING BLAME** What can you do to avoid blame for actual or anticipated negative outcomes? You can try one of the following six tactics:

1. *Buffing.* This is a nice way to refer to “covering your butt.” It describes the practice of rigorously documenting activity to project an image of competence and thoroughness. “I can’t provide that information unless I get a formal written requisition from you,” is an example.

2. *Playing safe.* This encompasses tactics designed to evade situations that may reflect unfavorably on you. It includes taking on only projects with a high probability of success, having risky decisions approved by superiors, qualifying expressions of judgment, and taking neutral positions in conflicts.

3. *Justifying.* This tactic includes developing explanations that lessen your responsibility for a negative outcome and/or apologizing to demonstrate remorse.

4. *Scapegoating.* This is the classic effort to place the blame for a negative outcome on external factors that are not entirely blameworthy. “I would have had the paper in on time but my computer went down—and I lost everything—the day before the deadline.”

5. *Misrepresenting.* This tactic involves the manipulation of information by distortion, embellishment, deception, selective presentation, or obfuscation.

6. *Escalation of commitment.* One way to vindicate an initially poor decision and a failing course of action is to escalate support for the decision. By further increasing the commitment of resources to a previous course of action, you indicate that the previous decision was not wrong. When you “throw good money after bad,” you demonstrate confidence in past actions and consistency over time.

**AVOIDING CHANGE** Finally, there are two forms of defensiveness frequently used by people who feel personally threatened by change:

1. *Resisting change.* This is a catch-all name for a variety of behaviors, including some forms of overconforming, stalling, playing safe, and misrepresenting.

2. *Protecting turf.* This is defending your territory from encroachment by others. As one purchasing executive commented, "Tell the people in production that it's our job to talk with vendors, not theirs."

**EFFECTS OF DEFENSIVE BEHAVIOR** In the short run, extensive use of defensiveness may well promote an individual's self-interest. But in the long run, it more often than not becomes a liability. This is because defensive behavior frequently becomes chronic or even pathological over time. People who constantly rely on defensiveness find that, eventually, it is the only way they know how to behave. At that point, they lose the trust and support of their peers, bosses, subordinates, and clients. In moderation, however, defensive behavior can be an effective device for surviving and flourishing in an organization because it is often deliberately or unwittingly encouraged by management.

In terms of the organization, defensive behavior tends to reduce effectiveness. In the short run, defensiveness delays decisions, increases interpersonal and intergroup tensions, reduces risk-taking, makes attributions and evaluations unreliable, and restricts change efforts. In the long term, defensiveness leads to organizational rigidity and stagnation, detachment from the organization's environment, an organizational culture that is highly politicized, and low employee morale.

## **6. IMPLICATION FOR PERFORMANCE AND SATISFACTION**

Knowledge-based power is the most strongly and consistently related to effective performance. For example, in a study of five organizations, knowledge was the most effective base for getting others to perform as desired. Competence appears to offer wide appeal, and its use as a power base results in high performance by group members.

In contrast, position power does not appear to be related to performance differences. In spite of position being the most widely given reason for complying with a superior's wishes, it does not seem to lead to higher performance, though the findings are far from conclusive. Among blue-collar workers, one researcher found significantly positive relations between position power and four to six production measures. However, position power was not related to average earnings or performance against schedule. Another study could find no relationship between the use of position power and high efficiency ratings. One's position is effective for exacting compliance, but



there is little evidence to suggest that it leads to higher levels of performance. This may be explained by the fact that position power tends to be fairly constant within a given organization.

The use of reward and coercive power has a significant inverse relationship to performance. People hold a negative view of reward and coercion as reasons for complying with a superior's requests. This view is reflected in the finding that these bases are associated with lower performance. Further, research finds the use of coercive power to be negatively related to group effectiveness.

We find that knowledge power is also strongly and consistently related to satisfaction. The evidence overwhelmingly indicates that this base is most satisfying to subjects of the power. Knowledge-based power obtains both public and private compliance and avoids the problem of making subjects comply merely because the powerholder has the "right" to request compliance.

The use of coercive power is inversely related to individual satisfaction. Coercion not only creates resistance, it is generally disliked by individuals. Studies of college teachers and sales personnel found coercion the least preferred power base. A study of insurance company employees also drew the same conclusion.

We can only speculate at this time on whether organizational politics is positively related to actual performance. However, there seems to be ample evidence that good politics' skills are positively related to high performance evaluations and, hence, to salary increases and promotions. The relationship between politics and employee satisfaction is also one where lack of hard data leads to more speculation than substantive findings. On the positive side, people with polished political skills should get increased satisfaction from their job because they tend to receive a disproportionate share of organizational rewards. Yet those who are perceived as insincere or manipulative are likely to be resented by colleagues and excluded from informal group activities. So while effective politicians may be well liked and rewarded by higher-ups in the organization, their job satisfaction may suffer as a result of being shunned by those in their immediate work group. For the politically naive or inept, we propose that job satisfaction is likely to be low. These people tend to feel continually powerless to influence those decisions that most affect them. They look at actions around them and are perplexed at why they are regularly "shafted" by colleagues, bosses, and "the system."

## 7. POLITICS IS IN THE EYE OF THE BEHOLDER

### “Political” label

### “Effective management” label

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1. Blaming others	1. Fixing responsibility
2. Ingratiation	2. Positive reinforcement
3. “Kissing up”	3. Developing working relationships
4. Apple-polishing	4. Demonstrating loyalty
5. Passing the buck	5. Delegating authority
6. Coopting	6. Negotiation
7. Covering your rear	7. Documenting decisions
8. Creating conflict	8. Encouraging change and innovation
9. Forming coalitions	9. Facilitating teamwork
10. Whistleblowing	10. Improving efficiency
11. Nitpicking	11. Meticulous attention to detail
12. Scheming	12. Planning ahead

A behavior that one person labels as “organizational politics” is very likely to be characterized as an instance of “effective management” by another. The fact is not that effective management is necessarily political, though in some cases it might be. Rather, a person’s reference point determines what he or she classifies as organizational politics. Take a look at the following labels used to describe the same phenomenon. These suggest that politics, like beauty, is in the eye of the beholder.

## COURSE TASKS

1. *Make up a logic scheme of your basic knowledge on unit’s theme.*

### 2. SELF-ASSESSMENT:

1. Trace the development of leadership research.
2. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses in the trait approach to leadership.
3. “Behavioral theories of leadership are static.” Do you agree or disagree? Discuss.
4. What is the Managerial Grid? Contrast its approach to leadership with the approaches of the Ohio State and Michigan groups.
5. Develop an example where you operationalize the Fiedler model.
6. Contrast the situational leadership theory with the Managerial Grid.

7. How do Hersey and Blanchard define maturity? Is this contingency variable included in any other contingency theory of leadership?
8. Develop an example where you operationalize path-goal theory.
9. Reconcile Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership theory, path-goal theory, and substitutes for leadership.
10. Describe the leader-participation model. What are its contingency variables?
11. When might leaders be irrelevant?
12. What kind of activities could a full-time college student pursue that might lead to the perception that he or she is a charismatic leader? In pursuing those activities, what might the student do to enhance this perception of being charismatic?
13. What is power? How is it different from leadership?
14. Contrast French and Raven's power classification to the bases and sources presented in this Unit.
15. What is the difference between a source of power and a base of power?
16. Contrast power tactics with power bases and sources. What are some of the key contingency variables that determine which tactic a powerholder is likely to use?
17. "Knowledge power and expert power are the same thing." Do you agree or disagree? Discuss.
18. What is coalition? When is it likely to develop?
19. Based on the information presented in this Unit, what would you do as a new college graduate entering a new job to maximize your power and accelerate your career progress?
20. How are power and politics related?
21. "More powerful managers are good for an organization. It is the powerless, not the powerful, who are the ineffective managers." Do you agree or disagree with this statement? Discuss.
22. Define political behavior. Why is politics a fact of life in organizations?
23. What factors contribute to political activity?
24. You're a sales representative for an international software company. After four excellent years, sales in your territory are off thirty percent this year. Describe three defensive responses you might use to reduce the potential negative consequences of this decline in sales.

# TEST-TRAINING

## PART 1 COMPUTE YOUR LPC SCORE

Think of the person with whom you work least well. He or she may be someone you work with now, or may be someone you knew in the past. He or she does not have to be the person you like least well, but should be the person with whom you now have or have had the most difficulty in getting a job done. Describe this person as he or she appears to you by placing an "X" at that point which you believe best describes that person. Do this for each pair of adjectives.

Pleasant	$\bar{8}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{1}$	Unpleasant
Friendly	$\bar{8}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{1}$	Unfriendly
Rejecting	$\bar{1}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{8}$	Accepting
Helpful	$\bar{8}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{1}$	Frustrating
Unenthusiastic	$\bar{1}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{8}$	Enthusiastic
Tense	$\bar{1}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{8}$	Relaxed
Distant	$\bar{1}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{8}$	Close
Cold	$\bar{1}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{8}$	Warm
Cooperative	$\bar{8}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{1}$	Uncooperative
Supportive	$\bar{8}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{1}$	Hostile
Boring	$\bar{1}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{8}$	Interesting
Quarrelsome	$\bar{1}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{8}$	Harmonious
Self-assured	8	7	6	5	4	3	2	1	Hesitant
Efficient	$\bar{8}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{1}$	Inefficient
Gloomy	$\bar{1}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{8}$	Cheerful
Open	$\bar{8}$	$\bar{7}$	$\bar{6}$	$\bar{5}$	$\bar{4}$	$\bar{3}$	$\bar{2}$	$\bar{1}$	Guarded

## PART 2

### POWER ORIENTATION TEST

*Instructions:* For each statement, circle the number that most closely resembles your attitude.

Statement	DISAGREE			AGREE	
	A lot	A little	Neutral	A little	A lot
1. The best way to handle people is to tell them what they want to hear.	1	2	3	4	5
2. When you ask someone to do something for you, it is best to give the real reason for wanting it rather than giving reasons that might carry more weight.	1	2	3	4	5
3. Anyone who completely trusts anyone else is asking for trouble.	1	2	3	4	5
4. It is hard to get ahead without cutting corners here and there.	1	2	3	4	5
5. It is safest to assume that all people have a vicious streak, and it will come out when they are given a chance.	1	2	3	4	5
6. One should take action only when it is morally right.	1	2	3	4	5
7. Most people are basically good and kind.	1	2	3	4	5
8. There is no excuse for lying to someone else.	1	2	3	4	5
9. Most people more easily forget the death of their father than the loss of their property.	1	2	3	4	5
10. Generally speaking, people won't work hard unless they're forced to do so.	1	2	3	4	5

## PART 3

### HOW POLITICAL ARE YOU?

Mark each of the following statements either mostly true or mostly false. In some instances, “**mostly true**” refers to “**mostly agree**” and “**mostly false**” refers to “**mostly disagree**.” We are looking for general tendencies, so don’t be concerned if you are uncertain as to the more accurate response to a given statement.

	MOSTLY TRUE	MOSTLY FALSE
1. I would stay late in the office just to impress my boss.	_____	_____
2. Why teach your subordinates everything you know about your job? One of them could then replace you.	_____	_____
3. I have no interest in using gossip to personal advantage.	_____	_____
4. Be extra-careful about ever making a critical comment about your firm, even if it is justified.	_____	_____
5. I would go out of my way to cultivate friendships with powerful people.	_____	_____
6. I would never raise questions about the capabilities of my competition. Let his or her record speak for itself.	_____	_____
7. I am unwilling to take credit for someone else’s work.	_____	_____
8. If I discovered that a co-worker was looking for a job, I would inform my boss.	_____	_____
9. Even if I made only a minor contribution to an important project, I would get my name listed as being associated with that project.	_____	_____
10. There is nothing wrong with tooting your own horn.	_____	_____
11. My office should be cluttered with personal mementos, such as pencil holders and decorations, made by my friends and family.	_____	_____
12. One should take action only when one is sure that it is ethically correct.	_____	_____
13. Only a fool would publicly correct mistakes made by the boss.	_____	_____
14. I would purchase stock in my company even though it might not be a good financial	_____	_____

investment.

15. Even if I thought it would help my career,  
I would refuse a hatchetman assignment.

16. It is better to be feared than loved by your  
subordinates.

17. If others in the office were poking fun at the  
boss, I would decline to join in.

18. In order to get ahead, it is necessary to keep  
self-interest above the interests of the organization.

19. I would be careful not to hire a subordinate  
who might outshine me.

20. A wise strategy is to keep on good terms  
with everybody in your office even if you  
don't like everyone.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

## ROLE PLAY

### CASE-INCIDENT 1

Read the text and prepare to answer the questions.

#### Developing Leadders at the Sebawang Group

Ng Pock Too has a serious problem. He can't find enough of the right kind of managers.

Ng is chief executive of the Sembawang Group, a Singapore shipyard and construction company that he is trying to expand into a diversified multinational corporation. Like many other chief executives in Asia, he sees an abundance of business opportunities and has the financial resources to pursue them. Yet there is a shortage of managers in the region. Not just any managers, but flexible, creative professionals who are comfortable in an increasingly competitive and sophisticated market. Most managers that Ng finds have skills that are no longer appropriate for the changing competition they face. As wages have risen, the region's traditionally low-tech companies have had to move into higher-value-added products whose success depends on expertise - overseas marketing sophistication and ability to direct highly skilled professionals, for instance - that old-line managers often do not have.

To compound Ng's problem, the pool of potential managers with the educational level he needs is small. In Singapore, only six percent of workers are university educated. This compares with twenty-three percent in the

United States and sixteen percent in Japan. And the competition among Asian companies for skilled and educated managers is fierce.

Ng realizes that he must invest in developing his company's future leaders. He could offer formal classes in management and leadership, and supplement this with on-the-job training. But he's not exactly sure what such a formal leadership program might look like. Or maybe he should look for graduates of business schools outside of Asia.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. What kind of leadership do you think is necessary to succeed in Singapore?
2. Do you think hiring non-Asians with advanced business degrees could solve Ng's problem? Discuss.
3. Should Ng hire Asians from Europe or North America? Discuss.
4. As a consultant hired by Ng, design a leadership program that would meet his needs.

## **CASE-INCIDENT 2**

Read the text and prepare to answer the questions.

### **Damned If You Do; Damned If You Don't**

Fran Gilson has spent fifteen years with the Thompson Grocery Company. Starting out as a part-time cashier while attending college, Fran has risen up through the ranks of this 50-store grocery store chain. Today, at the age of 34, she is a regional manager, overseeing seven stores and earning nearly \$80,000 a year. Fran also thinks she's ready to take on more responsibility. About five weeks ago, she was contacted by an executive-search recruiter inquiring about her interest in the position of vice-president and regional manager for a national drug store chain. She agreed to meet with the recruiter. This led to two meetings with top executives at the drug store chain. The recruiter called Fran two days ago to tell her she was one of the two finalists for the job.

The only person at Thompson who knows Fran is looking at this other job is her good friend and colleague, Ken Hamilton. Ken is a director of finance for the grocery chain. "It's a dream job," Fran told Ken. "It's a lot more responsibility and it's a good company to work for. The regional office is just 20 miles from here so I wouldn't have to move. And the pay is first-rate. With the performance bonus, I could make nearly \$200,000 a year. But best of all, the job provides terrific visibility. I'd be their only female vice president. The job



would allow me to be a more visible role model for women and ethnic minorities in retailing management.”

Since Fran considered Ken a close friend and wanted to keep the fact that she was looking at another job secret, she asked Ken last week if she could use his name as a reference. Said Ken, “Of course. I’ll give you a great recommendation. We’d hate to lose you here, but you’ve got a lot of talent. They’d be lucky to get someone with your experience and energy.” Fran passed Ken’s name on to the executive recruiter as her only reference at Thompson. She made it very clear to the recruiter that Ken was the only person at Thompson who knew she was considering another job. Thompson’s top management is old fashioned and places a high value on loyalty. If they heard she was talking to another company, it might seriously jeopardize her chances for promotion. But she trusted Ken completely. It’s against this backdrop that this morning’s incident became more than just a question of sexual harassment. It became a full-blown ethical and political dilemma for Fran.

Jennifer Chung has been a financial analyst in Ken’s department for five months. Fran met Jennifer through Ken. The three have chatted together on a number of occasions down in the coffee room. Fran’s impression of Jennifer is quite positive. In many ways, Jennifer strikes Fran as a lot like she was ten or so years ago. This morning, Fran came to work around 6:30 A.M. as she usually does. It allows her to get a lot accomplished before “the troops” roll in at 8 A.M. At about 6:45, Jennifer came into Fran’s office. It was immediately evident that something was wrong. Jennifer was very nervous and uncomfortable, which was most unlike her. She asked Fran if they could talk. Fran sat her down and listened to her story.

What Fran heard was hard to believe, but she had no reason to think Jennifer was lying. Jennifer said that Ken began making off-color comments to her when they were alone within a month after Jennifer joined Thompson. From there it got progressively worse. Ken would leer at her. He put his arm over her shoulder when they were reviewing reports. He patted her rear. Every time one of these occurrences happened, Jennifer would ask him to stop and not do it again. But it fell on deaf ears. Yesterday, Ken reminded Jennifer that her six-month probationary review was coming up. “He told me that if I didn’t sleep with him that I couldn’t expect a very favorable evaluation.” She told Fran that all she could do was go to the ladies room and cry.

Jennifer said that she had come to Fran because she didn’t know what to do or whom to turn to. “I came to you, Fran because you’re a friend of Ken’s and the highest ranking woman here. Will you help me?” Fran had never heard anything like this about Ken before. About all she knew regarding his personal life was that he was in his late 30s, single, and involved in a long-term relationship.

## **QUESTIONS:**

1. Analyze Fran's situation in a purely legalistic sense. You might want to talk to friends or relatives who are in management or the legal profession for advice in this analysis.
2. Analyze Fran's dilemma in political terms.
3. Analyze Fran's situation in an ethical sense. What is the ethically right thing for her to do? Is that also the politically right thing to do?
4. If you were Fran, what would you do?

## **ORGANIZATIONAL BEHAVIOR ОРГАНИЗАЦИОННОЕ ПОВЕДЕНИЕ ЮНИТА 6**

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