Power dynamics within Teams

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Power Plan

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Power in social interactions

Power:

 is the ability to influence or control the behavior of people; the term "authority" is often used for power perceived as legitimate by the social structure;

 asymmetric control over valued resources (Emerson 1962, Fiske 2010, Keltner et al. 2003, Magee & Galinsky 2008, Pfeffer & Salancik 1978).

 as most commonly defined is therefore inherently relational, in that power exists only in relation to others, whereby low-power parties depend on high-power parties to obtain rewards and avoid punishments (Emerson 1962, Thibaut & Kelley 1959);

 as the potential for influence - a change in the belief, attitude or behavior of a someone who is the target of influence (John R. P. French and Bertram Raven in 1959)

6 forms of power by John R. P. French and Bertram Raven (1965)

Coercion - Impersonal Coercion & Personal Coercion

Reward - Impersonal Reward & Personal Reward

Legitimacy - Formal Legitimacy (position power),Legitimacy of Reciprocity, Equity & Dependence (Powerlessness)

Expert - Positive and Negative Expert

Referent – Positive and Negative Referent

Informational - Direct and Indirect Information

Sources of social power

Legitimate Power.

This power results from the position the person holds. A designated or elected leader, a military commander, a manager, all have legitimate power, power that is inherent in the position. Generally, influence based on legitimate power will be accepted by team members, but it is important that they accept the legitimacy of the power hierarchy.

Reward Power.

power is based on the ability of the person to control important sources of reward and reinforcement. Salary, bonuses, time off, access to resources, are all rewards that can be used to influence behavior. Reward power is usually well accepted by team members if the rewards are administered within clear contingencies and guidelines.

Coercive Power.

This is the power to administer punishment for noncompliance. Fines, suspensions, undesirable assignments, verbal abuse, ridicule, are all examples of punishment or coercive power. The application of coercive power usually leads to compliance, but also generates resentment, negative emotionality, and dislike for the person who employs it.

Expert Power.

This form of power is based on the knowledge, special skill, training, or experience of the person. When a person's expertise is known to the team, influence within that area of expertise is well accepted. The user of expert power must find a balance between being haughty and being too humble. Bragging about your skills doesn't establish useful expert power, but expert power can't be used if no one knows about it.

Referent Power.

This is power based on the person's attractiveness and qualities as a human being. It is called "Referent" because teams members use this person as a point of reference in developing their own personalities. Referent power depends upon developing positive relationships with team members. It is not simply mutual attraction, but a relationship that includes a kind of mentoring and guidance that is possible because one person wants to learn from the other.
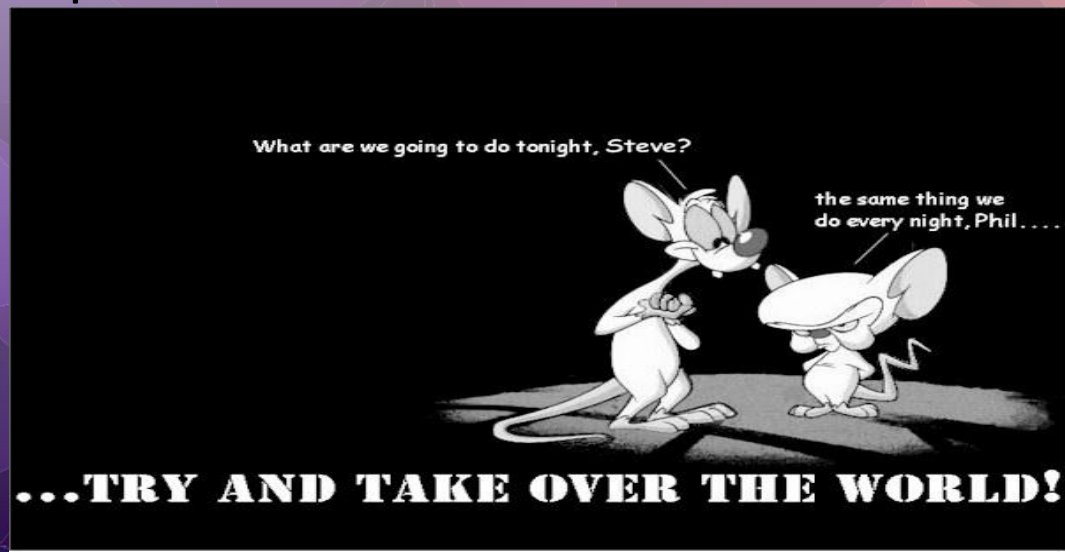
Dynamics of power in organizations

In small groups, people attempt to influence each other and exercise power. Power cannot exist without relationships or communication, but power is evident in all relationships, so power is always part of small group dynamics. And yet, no single group member "owns" power in a group.

Power is a force that gives one team the ability to influence another team to take an action which would not otherwise be taken.

 Thus, power is not the static property of an individual, group, organization, or the environment. Rather, power operates in the "in-between" spaces in contexts and relationships.

 Authority refers to power that has been validated by formal cultural, societal, small group, and organizational rules and practices.

 Power that is exercised in response to dominance is called resistance. A group member can dominate only when others cooperate.

 Power imbalances in a small group can also be correctyв through empowerment.

 Empowerment does not mean that all group members have the same amount of power in the group at all times. The distribution of power will always change as group members interact over time.

Level of power & functions

Possessing power ➡️ stronger job security ➡️

better financial rewards ➡️ being able to influence others more easily ➡️ perform one's job more effectively (Magee & Galinsky 2008).

Lacking power ➡️ lacking autonomy and control in one's job ➡️ being susceptible to unfair treatment ➡️ experiencing lower job satisfaction and morale (Keltner et al. 2003).

Lindred Greer's power- functioning and conflict research

Low-power team - lower down the organisation, who exert less influence on others

- were found to outperform teams regarded as 'high-power';
- The key seems to lie in how much conflict exists within the team, which can impair the team's overall ability to accomplish its goals successfully.
- Higher level of trust within a team

High-power team

- the high power has become part of members' individual identities and something they value;
- high-power teams experience less conflict when there is congruence between how individuals perceive themselves within the team and how other team members see them.
- Within high-power teams, if people agree on their positions, they are then able to balance the power more easily

Conflicts and power in team

Conflict is the tension experienced between individuals or groups as a result of perceived differences (task conflict and personal conflict).

Geer:

- Task conflict – i.e., over the goals or outcomes the team is meant to be achieving
- Process conflict – over how the logistics of how those goals should be arrived at
- Relationship conflict – clashes deriving from incompatibilities or differences in personality or values

Five conflict management approaches with suggestions for when they should be used

Approach	Objective	Use only when
Collaborating	Solve the problem together	at all times unless certain conditions dictate the use of another approach.
Forcing	Get your way	issue is extremely important to you. A close ongoing relationship is NOT necessary; there is a high sense of urgency; you have much more power than the other person
Avoiding	Avoid having to deal with conflict	the issue is not important to you; the relationship is not critical; your relative power is equal to high; time is not a factor.
Compromising	Reach an agreement quikly	the issue is very complex and of moderate importance to both parties; the relationship is of moderate importance; the parties have relatively equal power; time constraints are low.
Accommodating	Don't upset the other person	The issue isn't important to you; a close relationship is critical; low power; time is not a factor

Thank you!