Chapter Outline

- A Definition of Power
- Bases of Power
- Dependency: The Key to Power
- Influence Tactics
- Empowerment: Giving Power to Employees
- The Abuse of Power: Harassment in the Workplace
- Politics: Power in Action
Power and Politics

1. What is power?
2. How does one get power?
3. How does dependency affect power?
4. What tactics can be used to increase power?
5. What does it mean to be empowered?
6. How are power and harassment related?
7. Why do people engage in politics?
Exhibit 8-3 Continuum of Responses to Power

EXHIBIT 8-3  Continuum of Responses to Power

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Bases of Leader Power</th>
<th>Most likely employee response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coercive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reward</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legitimate</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expert</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Referent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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**Exhibit 8-4**
**Employee Empowerment Grid**

**EXHIBIT 8-4  Employee Empowerment Grid**

- **Decision-Making Authority over Job Context**
  - INCREASING

- **Decision-Making Authority Over Job Content**
  - INCREASING

Sources:

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Exhibit 8-6 How Political Is Your Workplace?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exhibit 8-6</th>
<th>A Quick Measure of How Political Your Workplace Is</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>How political is your workplace? Answer the 12 questions using the following scale:</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD = Strongly disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D = Disagree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U = Uncertain</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A = Agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SA = Strongly agree</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Managers often use the selection system to hire only people who can help them in their future.  
2. The rules and policies concerning promotion and pay are fair; it’s how managers carry out the policies that is unfair and self-serving.  
3. The performance ratings people receive from their managers reflect more of the managers’ “own agenda” than the actual performance of the employee.  
4. Although a lot of what my manager does around here appears to be directed at helping employees, it’s actually intended to protect my manager.  
5. There are cliques or “in-groups” that hinder effectiveness around here.  
6. My co-workers help themselves, not others.  
7. I have seen people deliberately distort information requested by others for purposes of personal gain, either by witholding it or by selectively reporting it.  
8. If co-workers offer to lend some assistance, it is because they expect to get something out of it.  
10. You can usually get what you want around here if you know the right person to ask.  
11. Overall, the rules and policies concerning promotion and pay are specific and well-defined.  
12. Pay and promotion policies are generally clearly communicated in this organization.  

This questionnaire taps the three salient dimensions that have been found to be related to perceptions of politics: manager behaviour; co-worker behaviour; and organizational policies and practices. To calculate your score for items 1–10, give yourself 1 point for Strongly disagree; 2 points for Disagree; and so forth (through 5 points for Strongly agree). For items 11 and 12, reverse the score (that is, 1 point for Strongly agree, etc.). Sum up the total. The higher the total score, the greater the degree of perceived organizational politics.

Summary and Implications

1. **What is power?**
   - The capacity that A has to influence the behaviour of B, so that B acts in accordance with A’s wishes.

2. **How does one get power?**
   - There are six bases for power: coercive, reward, legitimate, expert, referent, and information.

3. **How does dependency affect power?**
   - To maximize your power, you will want to increase others’ dependence on you.

4. **What tactics can be used to increase power?**
   - One study identified nine strategies: rational persuasion, inspirational appeals, consultation, ingratiation, personal appeals, exchange, coalition tactics, pressure, and legitimating tactics.
Summary and Implications

5. **What does it mean to be empowered?**
   - Empowerment refers to the freedom and the ability of employees to make decisions and commitments.

6. **How are power and harassment related?**
   - People who engage in harassment in the workplace are typically abusing their power position.

7. **Why do people engage in politics?**
   - People use politics to influence others to help them achieve their personal objectives.