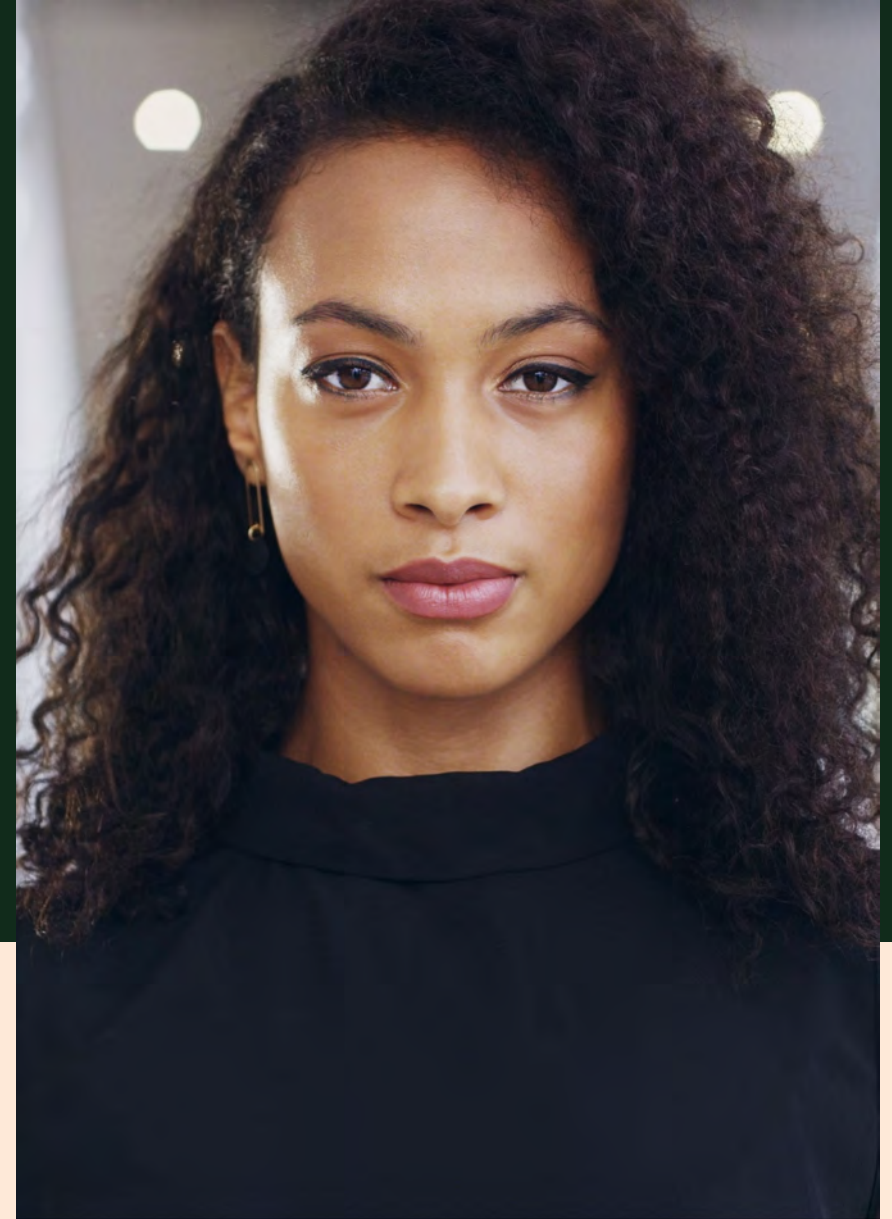


Dealing with Political Games

How to navigate office politics and
make it work for you



Politics in Organisations

Have you ever experienced this? You have a great plan, but you just can't get it through your organisation. You sense there's a lot happening beneath the surface, but you can't quite identify where the roadblocks are. How do you deal with such a situation?

Sooner or later, everyone encounters a situation where they have to engage in the 'political game'—whether they like it or not. Organisational sensitivity and environmental awareness are essentially the same thing: developing a 'sixth sense' for the political landscape.

It is about power, influence, informal rules and customs, sensitivities and relationships within an organisation. People have different interests and agree to work together. In this e-book you will learn how to make the 'political game' work for you. And how to bring others along to achieve your goal!



Chapter 1

Draw up an outline of your strategy

You're working to get things done within your organisation, but this naturally creates resistance. There will always be people both for and against your plan. To navigate this, learn how the 'political game' operates in your workplace. Who are the informal decision-makers? What are the key interests at play, and how do underlying relationships influence decisions?

Think of it like chess—a strategic game where losing occasionally is part of the process. Sometimes, you'll need to make a sacrifice or take a detour before making your move. In the long run, you'll be most effective if you play with integrity.



Here's how to get what you want in four steps

1. Clearly define your goal

Make sure you know what you want. Make your goal SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-bound). The more specific, the better. And formulate your goal positively, without 'not'.

Example: 'I want all colleagues in my team to drive electric cars by 1 January 2024'.

2. Individuals and their motivations

Preparation is half the battle. If you start taking steps immediately, you will come up against a closed door. So start by making a list of all the people who have influence. Ask yourself who might be interested in your idea and who might not. Who is against your plan? And who are the ambassadors for your plan?

There may be 20 or 30 people who are directly or indirectly affected. Think about their motivations and needs. These may be related to their function as well as their character.

3. Define Your Strategy

Create a list of potential actions, possible responses, the sequence in which you'll take them, and the communication tools you'll use. Which move will you make first? Think several steps ahead. Map everything out and approach it strategically.

Leverage your knowledge of colleagues, managers, and the relationships within your organisation. Understand how your colleagues approach getting things done.

For example, in the case of an electric car initiative, decide who to approach first. Should you start with someone who supports the idea or someone who opposes it? In some cases, it might be more effective to begin with someone higher up in the hierarchy.

4. Action!

Now is the time to take action and implement your plan. This will ultimately determine how successful you are. It helps to know how you come across to others and how to use that to your advantage. Do you have people skills, i.e. can you assess the motivations of others? Do you know which person to approach and how to approach them? It is useful to spar with someone who knows the organisation well. Think outside the box.

Tip: Think about your personal boundaries too, as you want to maintain your integrity.

Chapter 2

Make the Most of Your Communication Skills

Effective communication is key to getting your message across. It's about connecting with the other person—both in what you say and how you say it. If you find yourself getting stuck in conversations or discussions, take a step back and consider if there's a different approach you can take.



Our Influence Model® provides the tools.

There are 4 communication and behaviour styles:

- **Persuade**
- **Asserting**
- **Bridging**
- **Attracting**



1. **Persuading**

You take a position and support it with arguments. You use this style when a situation is negotiable.

Example: 'I propose that we gradually convert the car fleet to electric cars. It will be cheaper in the long run and better for the environment.'

2. **Asserting**

You use this style when something is non-negotiable. For example, you indicate a clear boundary or expectation

Example: 'I really want you to think about that carefully and get back to me next week.'

3. **Bridging**

In this style, you pay attention to the other person by asking questions and actively listening.

For example: 'What are your views on electric driving? What are your objections?'

4. **Attracting**

You use this when you want to draw others into your story with enthusiasm, painting a vivid picture of a positive end result.

Example: 'Imagine how amazing it would be if we all travelled from A to B in a climate-neutral way. Picture us driving cars without harmful emissions, stepping out feeling proud of the difference we're making.'

Choosing the right communication style at the right time will make collaborating with others more effective. You'll find it much easier to get people on board with your plan!

Take action

Looking to actively develop your communication skills?
Choose our Positive Power and Influence® Programme!

Learn to navigate the political and strategic dynamics that shape decision-making in your organisation. Guided by our experienced trainer, you'll discover how to turn these forces to your advantage. With hands-on practice, you'll gain the tools to approach things differently and more effectively.

Since our founding in 1962, we've been experts in helping professionals increase their impact.



We are The Influence Company

We understand the challenges professionals face. We empower people like you to achieve your goals, take responsibility, and strengthen your relationships.

Behaviour change doesn't happen overnight. That's why, with us, you'll gain hands-on experience, break through limiting patterns, and discover new insights. Experience, learn, and act—until you've mastered it!

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