



Foreword

The phrase – office politics; there is nothing official about it – has long become a part of workplace lexicon in India. Anuj has seen it all and has matured with his experiences over time. It is a good attempt to lay bare an attitude that is all pervasive in the myriad ways of corporate world globally; more so in the typical Indian milieu. That Anuj has brought to bear all his analytical abilities on this subject and presented the reader with his own findings, and inferences is remarkable. The subject, though it may seem mundane, almost always evokes a strong reaction among the practitioners, victims & beneficiaries of this Machiavellian art practiced at one's workplace. Both – those who thrive and those who survive – kinds of species that form a part of politics at workplace, shall like this book.

Vipul N Kaushik

Why did I write this Book?

The thought of writing a book on politics in offices which is an integral part of every office now a days came to me while in a discussion with my office mate, Kasturi Ghosh. It is one of the most important things in every office, though some people might disagree. Office Politics is nothing less than organized crime, ask the people who have been victims of this game.

Since I have been a part of six to seven organizations over past 8 years of corporate experience. Many of my friends, office mates, Hostel mates (YMCA, Colaba) have experienced these situations.

I would not have been able to come up with this book without my experiences which have come from various Organization I have been a part of in the past 8 years (i.e. Global Industry Analyst, Bank of Madura Ltd, NSDL, State Bank, GTI-HSBC India).

Hence I present my thoughts, experiences and this book, **OFFICE POLITICS - The Unorganised Crime.**

Title of the book

How did I arrive at the title of this book?

This is something that I would surely like to share with you...

Actually when I started writing the book , I just gave a working title as

“Office Politics – The Guru , The Chela , the Bhakt and the D”.

D basically was the Diplomat, but as the book progressed the title seem to strange and a bit absurd.

Then it struck to me why not keep it as **“Office Politics – The Insider”** greatly inspired from the famous Hollywood flick of Russel Crowe - The Insider.

But some how I was not satisfied, by the title, hence decided to pick it from the first paragraph of this book and named it as

Office Politics – The Unorganized Crime

“When I suggested the topic to a few of my friends, they said they would be interested in reading the book as the title sounded very interesting.”

Hence I got the title of Book and decided not to look any further on this.

Anuj Anand

Dedicate

All authors dedicate their books to someone or the other. I take this opportunity to dedicate this book to parents.

“All parents”

They could be the parents of my friends, office mates, colleagues, readers of this book.

Since I firmly believe that parents are most valuable in our lives. They have taught us everything and today whatever we have achieved, it is due to their blessing, support and good moral values imparted to us. They have taught us to fight against all the odds, and will power to achieve the best in life.

In today's life it's our parents only, who stand by our side in the times of trouble, when everyone leaves us alone to fight problems.

I would also like to dedicate this book to my Grand parents

Mr and Mrs Suraj Narain Anand / Mr and Mrs Sant Ram Bhatia

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Friends for Life

This list is so long that it would run in pages, well I will spend a few pages on them.

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**Last, but not the least my dear friends, who only live in our
Memories and Heart**

Srikant Iyer and Archana

CHAPTER I

Introduction

The Italian have the Mafia, Columbians have Cartels, Mexicans have Gangs, Chinese have Triads, Russians have Mobs, Jamacians have Gangsters, Japanese have Yazukas and Organizations have Office Politics.

All except the last one in this world, are so Powerful that they rule and it is just not possible for any one to enter and control any of the group, But Organizations are the ones, where you have a chance of mastering the way the game is played and then become the invincible to the game.

Office politics may be considered to be a fact of business life, it can cause problems both inside and outside company walls. But it's actually ingrained in the fabric of an organization so can't easily be changed.

Majority of the people say that when it comes to office politics in their organizations, the reason things are the way they are is because of culture and the kind of people who work there and neither of these can be changed easily.

It has been observed that the impact of peoples, inability to deal with office politics attributes to low morale , slower pace of work produced and useless office mates. The senior managers don't have the ability to deal with this escalating problem, so they ignore it, since it doesn't affect them. It is not just their inability but also the lack of knowledge, mainly because what happens at the ground level is something that they are not concerned of as they have to look at the bigger picture always, and why not, that is what they are supposed to do. It is the duty of the middle level management to take care of these issues.

In large companies ambitions drive office politics and in smaller organizations it is employees. Another and the Most important aspect is the HUMAN MIND which leads to a particular behaviour which in turn leads to development of culture in an organisation which again leads to unpleasant atmosphere that we call OFFICE POLITICS!!

The biggest downside of office politics is an increased internal focus with less focus on the customer.

"People seem to go about their jobs with one of two perspectives: Either to do the best job for the customer or how do I cover my weakness"

Office politics flourishes only when the behavior is rewarded, either consciously or unconsciously.

Human nature, including insecurities and ambitions tend to be key drivers of negative office politics,

The only people who are somewhat away from office politics are the ones either working so hard or going so fast that they miss their role in office politics.

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People who are working very hard are always the ones who are the most affected with the office politics because they don't know how to handle this and hence they quietly do what they think they are supposed to do. So when we say that 'they miss their role' this has to be understood contrary to the belief that they are the ones that are not away from office politics.

Office Politics is an integral part of the Organization and at no point during any-one's career' can this be avoided.

If you are new to an office, of course everyone is checking you out to see what kind of person you are and in which group (circle do you fall). That is totally legitimate.

At times you can never tell how long you would be in a particular group (circle).

For fresher's there is nothing much to worry about. For mid- level newcomers the checking out can quickly take a whole different twist.

Every existing employee in the office will want to know how to relate to you, they will like to know if you are one of them, a boss' person or simply a "happy go lucky person."

Your juniors may be under pressure to demonstrate that they can do your job just as well as you: after all, they have been around long enough (without getting there!).

Your seniors or those who are at your rank but senior in terms of a number of years, will want to make sure you do not move up too fast, or outdo them with your vast experience and knowledge, possibly by-passing them in the pecking order.

CHAPTER II

Groups in Offices

There are various groups in offices and each member of the office is part of one or the other group.

I have classified the people into the following groups.

- **Chairman**
- **People**
- **Happy People**
- **Work- Alcoholics**
- **Late Comers**
- **Office Consultants**

Chairman

The top man in the company. In reality they exist so far above the rest of the company that no-one can actually see what they're doing . Which is lucky for them.

The whole world observes them of course through the performance of the company they head. At this level people don't say that their employees are unhappy or complaining, they see that the company is doing good and the employees are contributors to this achievement and hence must be getting adequately compensated and must be happy. Problems are found everywhere and until it becomes really grave, they always ignored it.

One thing is for sure that they have to put in atleast one day's honest work per year and that is to deliver the annual report and accounts at the Annual General Meeting and speak to the shareholders as they are one who are running the company.

The night before the AGM, the Chairman will read a book of Platitudes. Their big time favourite is that 'share prices can go down as well as up', an immutable financial law, which doesn't seem to apply to their salary, which always rises.

Dress as impeccably as Prince Charles. They wear beautifully tailored suits of Armani and make a point of speaking to some workers on the floor shop once a month, so that they can keep in touch with 'the people'.

Their talks always gives an impression, that they're engaged in matters so lofty that they're simply beyond the comprehension of a common man.

These are a few things which I have observed about them .

1. They can no longer drive and have to be driven everywhere in a large car.
2. The control over their writing also goes until their signature resembles an emergency landing by an ink fly;

People

It is really very difficult to digest but the global truth is that "One should never work for a company that says that people are their most important asset", because in reality , this gets translated into a " slave trade".

" In every organization only 20% of people end up doing 80% of total organizational work **and** when it comes to increments, salary hikes and promotions, these 20% of people suffer the most. Most of you would agree with with me on all counts with this.

It goes without saying that people for people run all businesses. In reality there is no business problem, it is only people problems.

If there were no problems then, we would all have loved our jobs.

In the corporate world, we come across three categories of people :

1. people who work for you
2. people you work for
3. people who are your team mates or of the same rank can be the most obstructive and difficult of all.

The bible of all tricks is to deal with people in exactly the same way as you do in normal day to day life; either completely ignore them unless they get in your way or they want to give you trouble.

The most effective managers know that there is no substitute for personal contact. In any difficult and complex situation nothing works better than taking a person quietly aside, listening to their issues and their concerns, sharing the learning together.

The most common lines you must have heard in any office is " All I, want is to be treated like a human being". These lines are usually said by people who are being bullied, ignored and generally abused by the management who are all, with the possible exception of the Finance Manager, human beings.

I have always felt that they would have been better had they asked to be treated like a dog. This way they could guarantee that every care would be taken in their initial selection and they would be in a protected environment. They would be continually promoted and would have got the best of both the worlds.

Happy People

This is the smallest, but persistent irritated group of people in the organization, who enjoy their work.

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They consume work like normal people consume chocolates and treat themselves to special little extra projects that involve doing some great work.

These people have a closer physical relationship with their desks than with their partners. They have some sort of invisible stress proof coating.

Stress doesn't seem to exist for these people because when you give them something to do with a Threatening deadline they will smile sweetly and produce excellent end results.

Normal people find it difficult to work as compare to people who love their work. They are the master of their work and know many shortcuts.

I remember an Engg class mate of mine Ajit Suri, he was so much dedicated to his work that , the whole office was basically dependent on him for any work. He would honestly help everyone, but in the long run lost all his promotions and got layed off, during a reorganization exercise. Three months later, when he got a new job, he was with new found heights of contentment and told me that losing his previous job was the best thing that could have happened to him.

Workaholics

In office these days there is a lot of talk about balancing home and work life, so much talk , that it often makes people go late home.

The most obvious signs being are:-

1. You spend more time at your e-mail address than you do at your home address.
2. Your favorite position in bed is the Lotus Notes position, where you can only make love within the reach of your laptop computer.

The ideal definition of a workaholic is someone whose's desire to work is stronger than their desire to go home.

The most efficient people are those who work from home, because they can never slip off home early.

I always rate workaholics as homeaphobics - people who are afraid of going home. These are those people who, spend all their life working hard, to pay the loan on a house, which they 'll only ever see in the dark.

The best way to lighten your work load is just to say 'no'. But in actual reality this doesn't work. If your boss calls you at 6.10 pm and says that you have to complete a report, which has to be presented tomorrow morning at 9.30 to CEO, saying 'no' will stitch you up good and proper.

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Latecomers

In every company there are some people who respect other people's time so much that, they insist on using up as much of it as possible. The worst offenders are people who always arrive late to office, meetings and almost everywhere.

Being late to office, shows that you have so much responsibilities of the family, kids, parents that you donot have time for yourself and you are still managing the world.

In one of my previous offices, their was a lady Mrs. Sharma, always late to office and had a list of excuses. My colleagues started listing down her excuses and after 6 months we were able to decipher that in all she had about 75 excuses. So she could survive 75 working days and cycle could be repeated around 4 times a year.

With respect to coming late for meetings, there is a finely graded scale of lateness for a meeting.

1. Late by 5- 8 minutes :- Doesn't count because that time is taken up pouring the coffee and swapping notes on how bad the traffic is, rises in petroleum prices, inflation index, BSE sensex, Cricket scores, FIFA World Cup 2006 matches.
2. Late by 8-14 minutes:- It is a bit serious, but late comers have always a reason. The most common being a customer call, In the other dept, trying to sort it out the customer documents , IT support was not forthcoming on some issue.
3. Late by 15-16 Minutes : The fact is that anything over 17 minutes risks people not waiting, so they usually manage to turn up after about 15 minutes.

Their behaviour of the person on late arrival will demonstrate where they are in the office hierarchy. Lower orders will shuffle in timidly and then sit there like a lemon understanding absolutely nothing because they missed the crucial bit about why everyone's there.

Boss-like people will breeze in and start pontificating about a subject that has actually been covered in the first ten minutes (anything that has been agreed before they arrive will need to be un-agreed on principle in order that their input is recognized as important and vital in the decision making process).

The most amazing thing about latecomers is that, they are never late at meeting, where promotion letters or increments letter are being given out. On contrary they will be the first to come and last to leave.

Office cleaners – Consultants

These Consultants come to your office to do, what is called as Business re-engineering. But what they do is called Office Re-engineering. They completely rearrange all parts of your business and leave it totally unrecognizable.

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A friend of mine used to say, that these consultants don't know the difference between a vital business document and what is genuine rubbish.

You must have observed that at least those consultants who are at the middle level and top level , did have some level of knowledge. But the young Brigade has zero knowledge and often behaved as if they would revamp our business, when in fact they did not know even the 'B' of business.

CHAPTER III

Different Individuals

Just as you have various groups of people in an organization, a few specific individuals stand out among the rest.

Since I have worked in around 6-7 companies and have interacted with more than 2000 people, I have listed some characters, Try to see if you can discern those coworkers within your organization and practice the suggestions for how to manage each.

Talkative Rahul

Rahul needn't be from the same geographic area of your workspace, but when he wants to chat with you, he'll find you. The discussion is usually nonsensical or gossip (about girls (their dressing sense, what they have worn today) about new gadgets, cricket etc). The ultimate purpose of his discussion is to take up time so that the workday goes faster. After every five minutes he will say, now I have go to, lot of work is pending , but will be on your desk for 40 minutes .

These types of coworkers generally mean no harm and they feel that their willingness to chatter all day is a sign of camaraderie.

The best part of these people is that they don't have idea how to handle their jobs, and the management just gives them "things to do" to keep them busy.

To avoid Rahul in your office, psychologically distance yourself if physical distancing, isn't an option.

During conversations, respond to the conversation with short answers or a pause followed by "hmm." This will eventually discourage further conversations.

The moment you see Rahul coming to you , pick up the phone and behave that you are in conversation and tell him , you will call him .

Sanjeev, The Cunning Guy

Sanjeev achieves personal fulfillment by discrediting others. It is in his nature to belittle you at every point, at any time. He behaves like he is your best friend and through his talk will try to find out everything from your work habits to your personal life and then present it to others in twisted versions of the truth or outright lies.

His common game is "Bait and Slam,".

He is just like the jackal , who hides behind the bushes , to wait for tiger to eat his prey and go away ,so that he can eat the left overs . The same way he waits for the opportunity where he can find you improperly performing your work, so that he can bring it to the attention of your boss.

In this way, he can start gossip about your work ethic and your attitudes, when in fact you did nothing to provoke such gossip.

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When dealing with Sanjeev, don't tell him anything about yourself and check your work carefully. Also, refuse to get into a character assassination.

Never start spreading negative rumors as revenge about Sanjeev, this will only lower people's opinions of you and your abilities.

People have short memory, no one remembers who starts such attacks, but you and Sanjeev will be viewed as petty and untrustworthy. As for the negative rumors, let them flow. Eventually people will see through Sanjeev's behaviour and the rumors will be proven wrong through your personality and performance.

Chandni Mehra



Chandni is your best friend and will talk to you unconditionally with all the details of her private life. However, she expects you to feel the same and provide moral support. It doesn't matter to her, if you're uncomfortable hearing about the last fight with her room mate or her husband, she will speak out everything, you'll hear a lot of information. Chandni generally believes that the girls in the office are her family where she can find answers to all her questions and also solutions to her problems

In all cases, recognize that you're not the appropriate person to advise her, so don't feel obligated to discuss any personal topics. Don't encourage personal discourse by offering advice or asking for more information when Chandni opens up. You are not required to answer her personal questions; however, a laugh or joke is the best reply to an offensive question.

Raj Suri - The Flirt



A flirt of the highest degree. He comes to office only to observe girls, flirt with them, fall in love with them , but only for the week. The next week he will be interested in someone else. Proposing to girls is his hobby, because he himself knows, his chances are bleak. But the fun happens, when some girl accept's his proposal. Then he become really serious about his relationship. But as destiny has something else in store. It is rejected by the girls parents.

Raj will become a lost Romeo, feeling bad for what has happened. But after two months he comes back to his basics- flirting.

An interesting character, love him, admire him , but never be friends with him.

Piyush - The Thief

Piyush, this guy is always on the lookout for opinions and ideas that he can pass along as his own. Piyush' victims are always surprised to hear their own ideas mentioned by the boss as a "brilliant idea" from Piyush himself.

Don't be shocked when you see your ideas appear in his reports

Learn from your experience. Make it a point never to make a scene that Piyush stole your idea , as it is not going to win you any points or respect. As with Sanjeev , don't get into an office war and limit your discussions with this person to topics such as the cricket or traffic .

Sushil - The Party Maker

Sushil is very much like Chandni and views the office as one, big happy family. If you work together, Sushil sees no harm in spending weekends, evenings, and holidays together.

He always suggest going out on a weekend holiday, movies, dinners after meeting or some other group activity. If you're willing to socialize with the office crowd, then

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Sushil isn't a problem. The problems surface when you want to maintain some distance from the office crowd.

Decide how much of your private time you're willing to share with office-mates. Participate in group activities when you desire, and don't apologize or provide excuses otherwise.

Manu Verma - The Undercover Agent

Manu is the boss's eyes and ears. You will be shocked to hear things from your boss that you said in front of Manu. (This character will blow his cover quickly)

The best bet is to always be on guard with what you say and do in front of Manu and his cohorts. As with Manu, Never get into an office war, and limit your discussions and interactions with this person.

Rohan Singhal - The Villain

Rohan, is a simple, sweet guy, when he meets you for the first time. He will talk all big things, as if he has seen the whole world. His knowledge levels will be low, but superficial knowledge about everything. A big Bluffmaster, just waiting to be caught.

Your worst friend, best enemy. You will teach him everything and later he will teach your principles in front of others to you. Always trying to impress girls. (Are girls so stupid that they will fall for Rohan, impossible. I always rate girls are very clever, more clever than boys when it comes to handling relationships.) Will talk bad about you behind your back, he is scared to talk about you on your face, because you may blast him.

To avoid Rohan is not difficult just talk about things which he does not know, even if you talk about things he knows, his talk cannot last more than 2 minutes. The rule which applies to him is "Empty vessels make more noise."

The best practice in dealing with all these groups and individuals is to keep your personal ideals, opinions, beliefs, and desires to yourself. Your best response is to pause and reply with a "hmm" and nothing more. The reason is that some people will purposely read into your opinions and use them against you. In this case, you could be accused of being something that you are not.

Professional, individual interaction can sometimes be a tough game to play, but it is essential in the work environment. Once you learn the office culture, learn about people and how best to interact with each. Not only will it make your work and personal life easier, but you will gain much respect from your colleagues and your managers.

CHAPTER IV

Bosses – Classification of Bosses

I have been a very lucky guy, in that I got some really good people, who were my bosses, but in actuality/Reality they taught me a lot and ultimately, I owe my career to these bosses of mine.

But there are different types of bosses, Hence I have listed some, which I learnt from My Hostel mates at YMCA, Colaba.

Timid Hero

This story, I got from my room partner Sumeet Jain. His boss was a very strange character, quite unfit to be a boss. He was terribly weak and scared of anyone more senior to him.

When anyone of his rank or senior to him, just suggested any small thing , he would like a dumb idiot agree to him, no matter how foolish the suggestion/Instruction was, On the contrary when Sumeet use to explain to his boss about the deviation from the main course of action, that the suggestion would entail, he would immediately agree, but would never have the courage to back Sumeet's actions.

Sumeet quit the job in 6 months.

The Hypocrite

Girls/Ladies please don't mind my next story, but this happened to Raman Suri, a close pal of mine in his office at Chennai.

Raman worked under a boss, who was the biggest hypocrite.

He had different rules for girls and boys.

1. Girls could come late to office, but boys if were late, heaven help them for the morning would be hell for them.
2. Quality of work from the boys was always questioned, From the girls everything was acceptable, even though later it would come back to the boys for correction
3. When a boy would make a mistake, he would be subjected to a firing, but when a girl made a mistake, she would be explained in detailed, how to do things correctly.

Raman got so frustrated that he left the country with a new assignment and informed his boss from the airport at 10.30 pm on the night of 29th Sept 2000, when he was about to board the flight to London.

Office Politics – The Unorganized Crime

The Lady Boss

- ☞ Will smile like a Goddess.
- ☞ Keep a track of your wife and children, parents, to prove that she is a caring manager
- ☞ Simply “does not understand” how business works, but she is the best.
- ☞ Never in this world, will she understand mathematics, very poor with quantitative analysis, But will still advise you how to do things.
- ☞ Her makeup, dress code and appearance is more talked about than her work and her job knowledge

Insists you keep your desk clean, organized and format your report (mind you, each spelling mistake is a sacrilege)



How to Deal with a Lady Boss ?

- ✓ Make her believe she is the best .
- ✓ Never say No to anything she says.
- ✓ Listen to each and every minute detail of what she has to say.
- ✓ Never argue with her, but always offer the best solution to her politely and do your homework so well, that she cannot say no.
- ✓ Prove that you are amazing Smart-Alec.
- ✓ Prove that you are trustworthy gem and never break the trust that she has shown in you.
- ✓ You should have more knowledge on most of the subjects than her.
- ✓ Never Crib in front of her about anything and you are a winner all the way.
- ✓ Incase she shouts on you or is angry with you, just keep listening to her, no back-answering, If she likes you, after 30 minutes she will offer a solution. If she does not like you, after 2 hours she will call you and fire you again. Keep listening, and smile at your destiny and walk off for day.

CHAPTER V

Boss' Demands

My good friend Munjal always use to say that " Boss' Demands are all stupid", I beg to differ. I have been very lucky to have good bosses, who have taught me a lot and I owe my career to them.

The cases listed below were given by Munjal and his office mates, which I am sharing with you.

1. Bosses often behave like a dictator while giving dictation. It's a basic mistake to make and as most bosses are fairly simple it's a mistake that is made a lot.
2. Bosses ask you to arrange a meeting with more than ten people attending. Which is impossible to arrange, when three members of team are on-site, two are on holiday and other five have already at length discussed the problem and have almost figured out the solution.
3. Some Bosses ask you what you're doing at 8.58pm and then they give you work that is needed the following morning at 8.00 am to be presented to the CEO. The worst comes, when bosses goes home and asks you to send the file via-email and then pass comment for doing changes. The poor employee leaves the office at 2.00 am only to return back at 7.00 am.

How do you manage the prototype of "difficult boss?"

It is not easy to manage a difficult boss- it is indeed " **Big challenge**" to do so.

I have listed three ways, which you could apply would help you in managing your boss:-

Firstly, you should try to understand the reasons for your boss's difficult behavior.

If your boss generally behaves in a fairly reasonable manner, and his / her difficult behavior could be a result of stress overload rather than character, chances are good that the behavior can be modified.

Incase your boss belong to the Hitler Category, which includes a chronically hostile, abusive style of interacting regardless of the amount of stress in the workplace, the chances are less that the behavior can change.

Secondly, you should manage your own negative emotions regarding your boss's behavior so that you don't engage in self-defeating behavior (e.g. stonewalling, or counterattacking your boss).

Thirdly, once you understand and have managed your own negative reactions, you may work to communicate your concerns — as long as they are framed in a helpful, positive manner, thereby creating an atmosphere for problem solution.

CHAPTER VI

MAKE YOUR BOSS FALL IN LOVE WITH YOU

You might be feeling that I have gone mad. My dear friend, it is not difficult to do so.

The following are some simple ways to make your boss fall for you:

✓ ***Don't ask questions you can answer***

If you feel that you can answer the question, never ask your boss. Only if you feel you need their approval, ask the question.

Remember that you know your job better than anyone else, be resourceful and think things through first.

✓ ***Solutions, not problems***

Never go to your boss with problems, if you haven't spent at least 10 minutes thinking of possible solutions. It will impress your boss if you go to them with a tricky issue and then suggest ways to resolve it.

✓ ***Never apologise***

There's a right way to do this. Starting off with an apology makes you look weak. Next time you make a mistake, try this: "I think this project could have been better." or "In retrospect, I think I should have done it differently." or "Next time I would..." Your boss will be impressed and focus on what you've learnt rather than what you've done wrong.

✓ ***Don't get emotional***

Never send an email in a moment of anger or frustration. It is very tempting to reply immediately after reading an email that has caused anger. Write your response immediately, but don't send it.

Wait at least an hour, then go through the email you have written. Nine times out of ten, you will have calmed down and can send a much more constructive and considered response. Your boss will admire your diplomacy

✓ ***Never insult his/her intelligence***

People have a very bad habit of sending an sms to the boss to say that they are too ill to come into work..

Sending a sms is a sure sign that you're lying. Next time, grow up and call your boss directly.

Office Politics – The Unorganized Crime

✓ ***Go beyond the call of duty***

Always take up new projects , new challenges. Sometimes, the best way to find your calling is by trying new things. You may well learn something new and your boss will be impressed by your 'team spirit', and remember that you pitched in to help

✓ ***Ask for and give feedback.***

Communication works both ways and we all respond well to positive feedback. If there is something that your boss does what you like, tell him/her. Something as simple as saying "I appreciated your support in that meeting" will make him/her sit up and take notice of how him/her actions affect you. Positive feedback will reinforce the behaviour and will improve your working relationship with your boss.

CHAPTER VII

Hate your boss and live, survive and be cool

In every book of mine, there is someplace where I get struck. In my last book, it was the chapter on Divorce- Kids, this time it was Hate your boss and live.

This was a really difficult chapter for me to write down. The basic idea of inclusion of this chapter came from certain incidents which were narrated by my friends regarding their workplaces, I picked up those incidents and wrote this chapter.

It might have happened that you have said something wrong about your bosses, not knowing that he/she is listening to what you are saying. The end result:- stained relations as long as you stay in the organization and until you say "to hell with your boss" when you quit and deciding to behave like strangers even when you meet him/her again elsewhere.

There was a story published somewhere years back, which I like a lot, hence thought of sharing it with you.

An employee in his company in Mumbai ,referred to his former boss as "an idiot-mad-man ." The worst of all was this man was right behind him, when he mentioned this and he was not aware of this. He could not figure out, even though colleagues tried warning him.

When he turned around, he thought he would kill him. But he didn't. But he did get him fired, eventually, for some minor issue that he believed had little to do with him.

I have always felt that a lot of people manage to annoy a lot of bosses. Not all of them end up with a pink slip.

Remember, If you apologize in the right way, you can emerge unscathed, untouched.

As a matter of fact you end up having a better relationship with your boss, because the hate for your boss is over and you have spit out the venom against him/her so now it is a win-win relationship to live forward with.

As for every problem in this world, there is always is a solution. The same holds good for this one too.

The Straight way

I remember it had happened with my friend, Mohit said something particularly nasty about his bosses daughter outside the office and that the boss happened to get wind of.

In reality he didn't mean to offend his boss, but the boss did not necessarily know that.

Office Politics – The Unorganized Crime

In any case, the damage had been done and now it was the time to defuse the situation immediately. Mohit needed to handle this directly, and quickly, to avoid action that could harm his career in the future.

His first step is to regain his boss' trust.

Mohit went to his boss's cabin and apologized at once. As Mohit was a brilliant employee, the boss not only forgave him, but the relations between the two improved to a great extent in the later years.

Another incident, which I remember happened in an Office party years ago, My office mate, Raj Verma hated his boss very much and had decided to spoil his boss's brand new suit by spilling his drink. Though the boss was smiling at the party, he was in a very bad mood, which my friend was not aware of. When my friend spilt the drink, the boss, apparently responded by telling Raj to be prepared for the worst.

Raj did not sleep the whole night, Next morning he came to the office with a gift for the boss, and apologised for his behaviour at the office party, in full view of everybody.

The boss melted and actually smiled. Years later Raj went on to be the "best boy of the team" as defined by the boss in the company's dept meeting.

Always accept responsibility

Whenever you apologize, make sure, that you accept responsibility for what you have said or done. Always come up with an explanation that is plausible. Also, if it is an unintentional goof-up, you should ask your boss for tips on how to avoid similar situations in near future. Your boss will assume you mean well, making it easier to forgive.

Don't bring your personal life to the office

Never bring your personal life to the office. My ex- office mate always had a heated argument with his wife, almost every morning and one day he really lost his control and came to office in a bad mood and his boss asks for the status of the job given 3 days ago. He said "Sir, why are you after my blood like my wife".

Our boss was really good person and had an idea about the employee wife, he understood his plight and choose to forgive and forget, but that depends on the boss in question.

But if he is tough nut, you are heading for a problem.

At the end of the day...

Experts believe that almost all embarrassing moments can be managed without too much of a fuss. It's all about making the right moves at the right time.

Always remember that at the end of the day, getting away with this sort of behaviour is not at all easy.

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It is said that "Doctors make the best killers, Bosses usually find ways of getting back."

If you've been thinking about a particularly nasty thing to say, then, remember -- it's your funeral.

Survival tips

- ✓ Never hesitate while apologizing. Be firm, and mean what you're saying.
- ✓ Never come up with lame excuses. Your boss may be smarter than you think.
- ✓ Never ask your colleague to apologize for you, that's the worst thing to happen.

CHAPTER VIII

Office Romance – Instant Love

They say you can fall in love at any time, any place. So romance in the office is not new, because in the current scenario, we spend 13-14 hours in office, hence falling in love with office mates is simply not impossible.

Romance is very much a part of office life as coffee vending machines. More people meet their partners at work than anywhere else and most workplace romances end up in marriages.

The key to successful office romance whether it lasts or not, is how a person handles it at work.

It is never easy to merge two areas of your life: work and relationships. It often requires juggling, discretion and patience. But it can be done, without rocking any corporate boats.

Listed below are few ways to do so with success:-

Go Slowly

Follow the basic principle of any relationship. Think about who this person is at work. There is no point dating a cut-throat person who loses his control at the drop of a hat, and then wondering how you lost your job after he dumped you. Get real about who the person is and whether you like him, trust him and above all believe him to be good at heart.

One of my old class mates Meena Kothari fell in love with an office mate Avinash, without thinking. Everything seemed fine in the beginning, slowly she came to know that Avinash was a flirt of the highest order, getting into a relationship and walking out of it was just a matter of time for him. Meena was heart- broken, she quit her well paid job, left the city and broke off from all friends for 2 years.

Be Wise

Never use the email system or hang around at your girlfriend's/Boy friend's office or desk. A discreet phone call suggesting a coffee at Coffee Shop after work is better. If she/he say's no, accept it. Never pester. If he/she say's yes, then meet well away from the office, out of work hours.

I remember an affair of my office mate Salunki Khanna. He was going with another office mate Ruby Mehta, who was in my Department. For two years they had an affair and not a single person in office knew it (Except me, such things don't get hidden from me). Both use to meet at Spencer Plaza (Chennai) after office hours, but in office they used to behave as strangers, which I observed. This according to me is was a perfect way to play the Love game by the rules. ***It is said that when you fall in Love, it is easily noticable in your eyes.***

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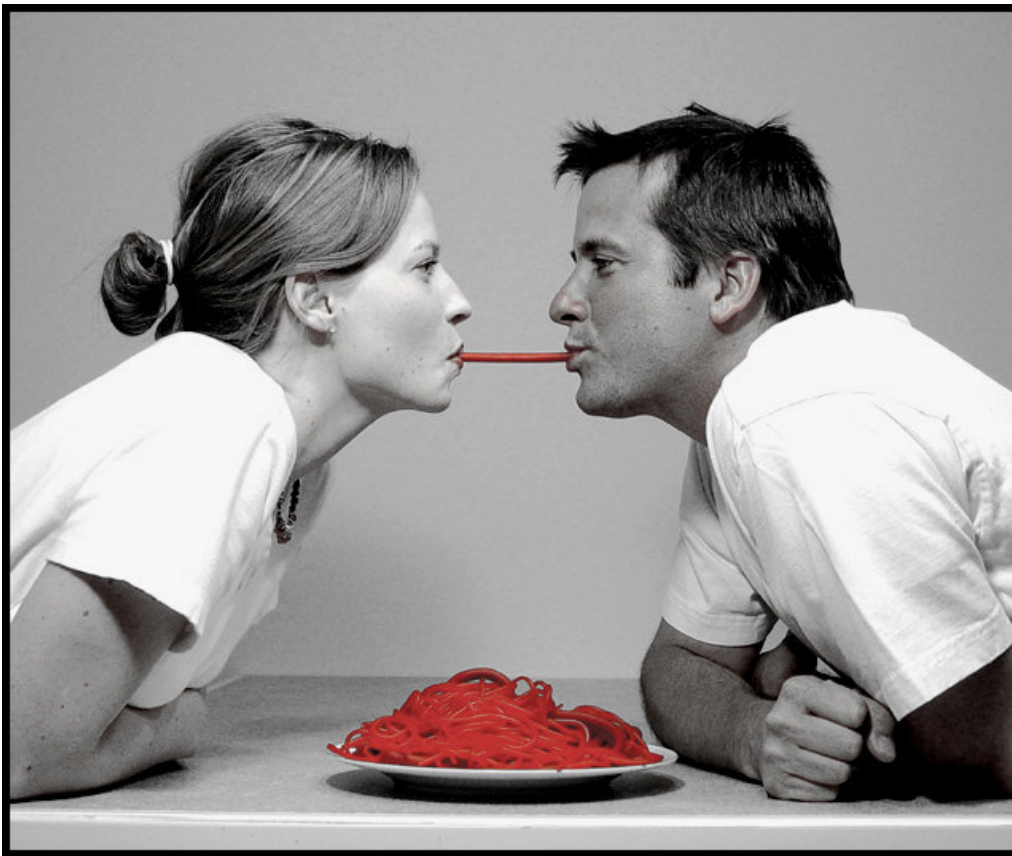
Romance has blossomed

Resist the impulse to walk around at work with a huge, smug grin on your face. Remember to **Be Discreet**. This means to remain silent, never talk about your new love in the office, never try to meet in cafeteria – or anywhere else and, above all, don't practise favouritism.

Remember, people are sharp and they will know it soon.

Be honest

'Yes, I'm seeing him/her ' – and leave it at that. Never allow gossip to fuel it and interest will soon die down.



It's Great going

If you have passed the initial hurdles – office part-time astrologer predicting doom, office gossip telling you about your new love's last three relationships – and still you reckon you're in this for the long run.

You both can still work together as long as you ***Stay Professional !***

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Be not only good at your jobs, but simply invincible. Never make eyes at each other and remain two separate people at work.

Failure in Romance - It didn't work out

It happens that at times things don't work and you both decide to walk out of the relationship but you both have to see each other at work

At this stage avoid drama and Resist Revenge. This includes everything from telling everyone what a hopeless lover she was to criticizing her work. Doing this will only make you look bad.

Focus on things that matter

Although it's over, you just can't help but be a little angry.

Revenge seems very important for you, but remember that in this case you can make it work to your advantage. The best revenge is living well, and that means renewing your focus on your career.

You will have all of sudden extra time to do other jobs, polish your skills, take on new projects, work the occasional evening (seeing as you no longer have nights out)

Remember one thing Human have a bad memory, slowly she/he will be a forgotten story, If you still say she/he lives in your memory.

It means that she/he has won the battle, not you.

So just forget her/him and move on.

When you fail in Love Affairs, Always remember my Golden Phase " Moment to Moment". For a moment she was there, the next moment, someone else will come.

CHAPTER IX

Effective Delegation

Delegation is not as simple as it is said. It is an art and effective delegation is really important for the overall success of the project and for the goodwill of the team.

Have you ever delegated a task only to have it returned back to you looking quite different from what you had in mind?

This has happened many times to me and might have happened with you also. After having given a good thought, I realized that I have not delegated the work properly.

The following are guidelines I've developed from my own experience as well as from others who have learned how to delegate the hard way.

✓ ***Never fall in “ICDIQAB” syndrome.***

Never fall in this syndrome (***I can do it quicker and better***). If you do the task it would be excellent and amazing, but then you are not managing. You will be stuck in a permant mess and keep your staff in this mess also.

✓ ***Have a clear idea of the task in your own mind.***

Remember to design and conceptualize the outcome of the work. As a manager you will often be disappointed with the work returned by the staff, because they were themselves never clear about what the outcome should have been.

✓ ***Never take the approach “that incase the outcome is not good” we will modify.***

Whenever you delegate work clearly define what you want and it will help you convey what you want more clearly. Never leave it to your team and then say “that if the outcome is not good , we will do modification” this will eat up all the time, resources and energy.

✓ ***Forget to be a perfectionist.***

It may have happened that you might have got the work back quite different from what you had perceived. Now sit down and discuss it, so that you can sort out the misunderstanding.

If the work is of good quality, say, 'This is fine for the moment, but next time I'd like it to be done this way'.

✓ ***Write out instructions***

It might happen that the person you are de legating to is not available for discussion or forgets easily. It is always advisable to write the instructions and give it to him

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✓ ***Keep a job tracking sheet***

Always keep a track of whatever work was given out and when it is due in. Remember all the details of instructions/due dates so that things do not go astray.

✓ ***Always Follow up***

Remember to check work in progress. For example You have given a task to be completed in 7 days , make it a point to ask the concerned person “ how is he progressing” , this will give him a chance to clarify his doubts incase he has one and your work will never be behind schedule.

✓ ***Allow your staff to use their brains***

It is the results that are important, not the way things are done. Never worry about the method taken to do things. Your main concern should be about the results. This should be your to delegate. If you can follow this policy, your staff will be more productive and creative and have more self-respect.

✓ ***The entire team is likely to know what each member is doing***

In a boss/subordinate relationship, delegation should never be made public. Where as in a group settings it may be the team leader, or any member of the group, who gets the group to agree on specific tasks.

This gives an advantage of more flexibility and choice about who does what than in the traditional top down situation

CHAPTER X

The Art of Negotiation

In any job the most valuable skill is the art of negotiating. It could be a pay rise, time off, a new job, getting someone to back off, more help or more recognition, the ability to negotiate will give you a much better chance of success.

If you don't have good negotiation skills, you'll have unhappy staff. If you're the junior, you'll feel downtrodden and used.

Negotiation is not about wining and dining, but creating a win-win situation for both sides. It will almost certainly involve compromise on both sides.

The seven-step negotiation plan:

1. Set out to reach a win-win situation for both the parties, so that all leave satisfied and with a feeling that they have achieved what they came for.
2. Always begin on a positive note and by saying something positive and appreciative to the person you're negotiating with. It will increase the goodwill on both sides.
3. If the person on other side is angry or hostile, then refuse to get drawn into it or to fight. Keep smiling and be cool and sooner or later they'll calm down.
4. Before you start your discussion, decide, in advance, what really matters to you and what doesn't. In other words, where you'll compromise and where you won't. Then stick to it. Get clear about your bottom line
5. Give yourself space to move with the dealings. Make sure you have something to offer the other person, as well as something you want.
6. Listen. keep listening coolly. It's really very important to understand what the other person is saying and their point of view. To listen shows respect and good intentions, and will make the other person feel valued.
7. Keep your options open. If you don't get what you want then resist the impulse to insult the other person or storm out. End the negotiation politely, and with a smile. That way you can always try again later.

Of course not everyone is willing to negotiate. But you can use these tools even when you're the only one negotiating.

The ability to negotiate will help in virtually any work situation and will often allow you to sidestep conflict.

CHAPTER XI

What is Office Politics ?

Involves intentional acts of influence to enhance or protect the self-interest of individuals or groups. It basically involves the following

- ✓ **Attacking or blaming others.**
- ✓ **Using information as a political tool**
- ✓ **Creating a favorable image.**
- ✓ **Developing a base of support.**
- ✓ **Praising others (ingratiation).**
- ✓ **Forming power coalitions with strong allies.**
- ✓ **Associating with influential people.**
- ✓ **Creating obligations (reciprocity).**

The main reasons of Office politics happening is due to the competition for scarce resources like

- **Salary**
- **Position**
- **Recognition**

The other attributes towards the creation of Office politics are

- **Subjective performance standards**
- **A too competitive work environment**
- **Unclear job Definitions**
- **Emotional insecurity**

POLITICAL TYPES

In every office there are Different Political Types. They are classified as

- ✓ **Whale**
- ✓ **Climber**
- ✓ **Survivor – The insider**
- ✓ **Straight Guy**
- ✓ **Lamb for Slaughter**

Whale

The basic characteristics of a whale are :

- ✓ **Tends to use others to enhance his career**
- ✓ **Power-hungry**
- ✓ **Ruthless and devious**



Whatever he does is for effect. The most important rule for him is that only positive information makes its way from him to his boss. Negative news is totally ignored. He makes it clear that anyone in his group who says bad things about him or the organization risks various consequences. If an employee openly disagrees, he or she is labeled a non-supporter. Everyone who reports to him agrees the best practice is to fall into line and be a “yes person”.

Climber

The most important characteristics of a climber are

✓ ***A Shrewd politician***

His Motto - Politics is everything, let's campaign



A really smart character in the office and politically excellent. He is very close to the whale and basically the right hand man for the whale. He runs the show for the whales, aspires to be the whale some time in the near future. Learns all the tricks of the game from the Whale and if is really intelligent, adds some of his own.

Survivor – The insider

The main character of this book, he has all the qualities that are required to survive this game. As you read further, you might yourself having qualities of an insider. But to win the game, you should have not only few, but many qualities, which will be reveal in the later chapters of this book.

He is keen observer. Sees work as a game and compulsively seeks to be a winner. He gets turned on by challenging, competitive activities where he can prove himself. He hates being pushed around. His goal is to become more powerful because power means becoming untouchable and invincible.

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He is a constant learner and never misses an opportunity to learn something more every day.



Straight Guy

He is not perceived as office politician in the office. He may even neglect cultivating key relations with people for career advancement. He lives his life by rule of book , which has only one policy " ***Honesty is the best policy***". He is hardworking, intelligent, but not a Smart Alec.

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Lamb for Slaughter

Doesn't believe in office politics. For he believes in the simple policy that his mom taught him " ***If you are good, the world is good***". The world is all simple and a good place to live in . You might find him continuously boasting of never practicing office politics , but he is easily eaten by whales



CHAPTER NO XII

REASONS FOR FAILURE AND HOW TO AVOID THEM

Office politics can be defined as a lottery. People have a bad habit of dreaming that they can win in Office politics. Just like in lottery you have to buy to win it, in OP you have to play if you want to win.

As IT works on the principle of binary digits, zeros and ones. to find solutions to a problem, we drill down until we get to this point of logical decision. Unfortunately, office politics can't be reduced to this level of simplicity. It is a complicated maze.

It can be said that Office politics is a complex mixture of power, ambition, control and ego.

Winning in OP, if such a thing is there, not only requires a continuous attention to who's important/not important at any given moment , but also strategically aligning with the right faction(s). One small mistake can be fatal to one's career.

Office Politics is a game not for the weak heart, It requires intelligence,pure and simple intelligence. Many people choose not to play, be sure you don't criticize those who do, or the game itself.

You might be labeled as a loose cannon or a troublemaker and slowly you might be the target of skilled political players who may then decide to use you to further their own agendas.

INSIDER

To be a master, one should be an insider that is what I define. You will be most effective, if you could deal with things the way they are, not the way you think they should be.

Modify your views of office politics, that is the best strategy.

Rather than seeing it as a hotbed of useless gossip ,intrigue, brown-nosing, or backstabbing, think about it in a positive light. Think that it is a political game for you to spread your own gospel through positive example.

Follow one simple strategy that I define as "**Killer's Strategy**" that is the strategy of Observation. Your observation powers should be flawless.

Open Your Eyes and Ears; Keep Your Mouth Shut

The basic mistake in office politics is accepting all information without independent verification.

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There are different ways in which it happens,

A) People look at the organizational chart and take it at face value.

In every organization remember there is a formal and informal hierarchy.

There are people on the chart with position and authority who are incapable of exercising it, and conversely, there are people that may not even appear on the chart who run the show.

Now your task to figure out these people and cultivate good relationships accordingly.

B) Whenever a person joins a new organization, he or she often aligns himself/herself with one faction too early, or too closely. Quite understandable - it gets you over being green and helps acclimate you to the new environment.

But there is a big danger, that you may inadvertently align with the wrong group, and you won't know until it's too late.

Be friends with the whole world and get the full range of opinions. But if you don't favor one faction over another, you'll be able to array all the different points of view and validate their legitimacy against your own observations.

Speak as less as possible and listen more. This is a wonderful technique that has great benefits.

Firstly - You will minimize the opportunity to say anything stupid or ill-advised that can come back and haunt you later.

Secondly - People who like to talk think highly of people who listen. They project competence onto you because you let them do what they need to do. They will always speak well of you later, even though your view of these conversations is not high.

Thirdly - The benefit of doing more listening than talking is that your silence, especially your continued silence, is liable to make other people a bit uneasy. People who are edgy tend to chatter more than they should, thus giving you valuable information in the Bargain.

If you can try to be silent , you will find happiness.

CHAPTER NO XIII

Rules of the Game

Always remember there is no one rule that can win you the game of office politics. But always remember never to make your boss look bad. Most bad bosses are capable of accomplishing this all on their own. They will never need your help and you don't need to get dragged down with them.

The other rules are mostly about you and your behaviour.

I have listed some basic rules with which you will surely have a better office life than you have now.

1. Always figure out what you want and then plan your strategy accordingly.
2. Never be a part of a single network only, be part of multiple networks.
3. Communicate with your networks very often, and in the ways that work best.
4. Judge behavior of people in the organizational context, not against some stupid idealized standard.
5. Always observe, how other people work and identify successful behaviors that you can model easily. Pick the best attributes from these successful people.
6. Don't pass along questionable judgments or spread rumors
7. Look for win/win ways to resolve conflicts, but never leave them unresolved.

CHAPTER XIV

Eliminate office politics and end many problems in companies

It was my first day, in one of my jobs years ago, and the boss to whom I was to report was on leave. With nothing to do and the workstation for me was just getting installed. I overheard a conversation between two colleagues in the next cubicle.

"There is just too much office politics in this stupid, company, I know why I did not get the position and Jai Verma got it" lamented an employee.

The other employee interrupted and asked. "Tell me about Jai Verma, Is he a good performer? Is he qualified? More Experienced?"

The First employee replied, " To hell with qualifications, he got a promotion because he travels with Boss in the same 8.11 am Andheri-Churchgate local train. Both Jai and Boss sit down for drinks on Friday evening"

Most people occasionally grumble about company politics on the day they get the year appraisal report. And most of us define political decisions as being impure, unjust and unfair.

So long as people are involved, Politics will be a part of Organization.

To mitigate the impact of politics in your organization. The following principles should be applied.

✓ *Stress Performance*

Rewards must be earned – not just granted in return for favors.

Accept recommendations based upon their merits -- not on personal relations, if these recommendations were made by people you liked.

Reject recommendations which are unsound and not viable, just not because persons making the recommendations have a history of fighting against your proposals and have a fault finding approach.

✓ *Communicate everything*

Secrets keep organizations sick. Open communication about promotions, new plans, changes, bad news -- anything that affects the workplace -- makes it hard for rumor and innuendo to thrive.

Managers who fully explain their decisions help in immunization process of the organization against deal-making and favoritism.

✓ *Avoid political behaviors*

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The bible of the game is that “ Never make a deal with the devil, because in the long run the result will be the loss of your soul.

Never make political decisions, which will crush teamwork and commitment to the overall good.

CHAPTER XV

Insider strategies

Many times you must have said “enough is enough”, I am fed up with office politics and want to keep to myself? I will just stay at my desk and do my job. I'm not going to hang around these people. I am not interested in this world around me.

Office politics is a fact of life and no matter how much we try to avoid it, we seem to run into the same personality types, and same problems again and again. We always ask ourselves why we didn't see it coming and avoid the conflict.

The answer is not to move yourself from your associates. If you are out of the group, you set yourself up to be the one talked about, or blamed for miscellaneous, trivial problems. You are the outsider.

The drawbacks,an outsider faces are:-

1. You will also miss out on the real news in an organization.
2. Reports regarding people,who is leaving the organization, which group is becoming powerful.

Who is an Insider?

He is some one, who doesn't have enemies, even if there are some, He is untouchable, the ever-smiling face, has mission in his mind. He could be intelligent but one thing for sure, he is a smart Alec. Give him anything and he will get the desired results. Always ready to help you, whenever you ask for help.

He is ready for the game, whenever you say and above has a never-say-never-die spirit. He might not be the pomp and show guy, but is keen observer of everything. He might even appear as a lost character at times, but he is not lost, he knows what he wants. He is a diplomat understanding of all sides, and refrains from judgment.



An insider follows the following strategies

Strategy 1 - Stay out of gossip

Being an Insider doesn't mean that you become a part of every gossip story. Always listen and keep your mouth shut in gossip.

You never would like your name circulating around the office as the guy who revealed the damaging dirt on a colleague. If you hold a grudge against a colleague, keep it to yourself. Remember nothing good will come out of spoiling someone's reputation, and in the bargain, you will end up saving your own. And most importantly, never take sides. A divided workplace is a perfect impediment to morale and productivity.

Strategy 2 - Talk to People

Always remember that work is about people. You work with people and for people. Hence Interaction is a simple but effective solution to many problems, communication gaps have the power to do a lot of damage and you can avoid it easily.

One should always talk to people face-to-face whenever possible, reserving e-mail for those not in your office.

Always make an effort to communicate in person, it shows a knack for interaction and good communication. Take on the initiative and leave your cubicle to deliver a message.

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If you refuse to be a part of the workplace, you might be setting yourself up to be the subject of gossip, or worse, the scapegoat of trivial problems. Don't be an outsider and practice the art of one-on-one.

e.g. You are aware that a colleague has been badmouthing you, rather than returning the favour, you could actually go forward and talk directly to the concerned person. You can always let him know how you felt about what he said about you. If he is an intelligent person, he will realize his fault.

Strategy 3 - Act as a mediator

If you have followed the above tip of not participating in the office politics, you surely can be of some help in the future. As you have taken neutral stand till now, your colleagues know that you won't be taking sides. If you see that the politics is creating a lot of conflict, you can offer to act as a mediator. You will surely be allowed to do that and people are bound to take your jurisdiction seriously as they know you are not biased.

Strategy 4 - Share till a limit:

Avoid sharing all your personal details with any one in office. You can politely refuse to answer questions, which you feel are crossing your boundaries.

Strategy 5 - Keep track

You should be aware of what is happening in the office. Information of any kind is always welcome. This will indeed help you in preparing for the future. Many a times you take some actions in the reflex mode but when you know the details of who and how, you can avoid a lot of unpleasantness in future.

Strategy 6 - Focus on similarities

It is really very easy to say than to do, but indeed a great tool to resolve conflicts, and also to keep yourself from stooping to dirty politics, is to look for things you have in common with your colleagues.

We end up looking at that the differences with others, and many fall for this. So put aside your dislikes and see what similarities you have instead. It'll be a lot easier to work with them.

Furthermore, don't blame others for your mistakes. Take responsibility for your mark-ups. You'll be respected for it, and maybe even set an example.

Strategy 7 - Listen as Carefully as Possible.

Always remember not all the information to be passed is written. In politically active environments, you also have to listen intently for what is being left unsaid.

Many of those around you will talk a great deal on the virtues of honest, open communication, but the really fact is, most people are afraid of plain talk.

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The levels of insecurity are so high that even most talented people are tongue-tied to speak their minds. They are so petrified by the prospect of the fact that they might be made the scapegoat of the system that they just skirt the real issues.

Strategy 8 - Don't complain

Never complain, it is a vice that's hard to break once you get into it. Complainers are basically annoying, counterproductive, and have a habit of dragging others down with them. Bosses like problem solvers, not problem seekers. If there's something about the company you don't like, make yourself a solution to the problem, not a part of it. In case you cannot be a problem solver, keep quiet.

Be a source of inspiration and pleasure to others. If you laugh and smile a lot, but keep a professional stance, you help keep things light and fresh.

Strategy 9 - Be Visible

You can't win office politics by hiding. You must be involved and others need to perceive you as a valuable contributor at work. Get involved in solving important and highly visible problems at work. In the age of downsizing, many employees are shocked to learn that they lost their jobs because upper management didn't know what they were contributing to their organization. You not only have to do good work; others must give you credit for your good work and perceive you as a good worker.

Strategy 10 - Help your boss succeed.

This is part of being a team player. It is also a smart strategy because your boss is a major player in your promotability and in how upper management perceives you and your work. If you have a positive relationship with your boss, your boss is more likely to support your career and help you advance.

You don't have to suck up to your boss, but you must nurture your relationship with your boss. If you disagree with your boss, do it privately. Be very careful, though, about embarrassing your boss in public or in front of your boss' superiors or staff. You don't want your boss trying to get even with you.

Strategy 11 - Raise voice:

If interaction has not brought any results it is about time you raised your voice openly rather than suffering alone in a job or leaving it as a loser. You know you are right and in spite of your efforts nobody is paying heed. Remember - "Never start a fight but if a fight has been initiated from the other side, do finish it".

Strategy 12 - Be Loyal

Avoid backbiting and backstabbing. Coworkers will support you if they believe that you will be there to support them. To get loyalty, show your loyalty.

Never hog the limelight, share credit. Make a reputation as a good team player. Congratulate office mates on their success

Strategy 13 - Be good at what you do

Work hard, have a strong sense of determination to develop your expertise and competence. Show up on time and work hard for your full shift. To survive in the workplace, you need to do good work. If others perceive you as a poor worker, they will not support you. They will also resent your getting promoted before them.

Strategy 14 - Develop networks

Life is a race, you never know who will win the race to the top, so be nice to everyone. Nice guys don't finish last, they build supportive networks. Don't simply focus on the current "top dogs".

Strategy 15 - Develop yourself

Read a lot. Learn more about your industry. Develop new interests. Wider interests and broad background reading help your career. You become the person who comes up with interesting ideas.(Out of box thinkers)

Strategy 16 - Try to look ahead

In a world of fast moving business and impending deadlines, it is easy to loose track.

Always be optimistic in life. Keep telling yourself that it's just a slump and that'll be over soon. Furthermore, remind your colleagues of this when they feel hopeless and disheartened.

Strategy 17 - Mind your manners.

Be polite as one can be. Avoid being sarcastic or putting other people down.

Strategy no 18 - Take things lightheartedly

At times you take harmless things to heart. Take a joke as a joke. This will help in keeping the good vibes going with your colleagues.

In the game of office politics, there are those very few (The Insiders), who know the rules and play by them.

By knowing the rules and working to keep the game fun and friendly, you rise above the "villians". And more importantly, you make work more satisfying for yourself and others

CHAPTER XVI

Positive Politics

Isn't "playing politics" a tool for those people who can't get ahead on merit - who pursue their own selfish agenda regardless of what's better for their colleagues, office mates or the company. That's the negative side of office politics. But what about the upside?

Office politics is a lot like "real" politics.

But does it mean that all office politics is negative only . No why does office politics exist. It is because there is no atmosphere where everybody agrees. Politics is basically an art of trying to accomplish things within organizations."

There was very beautiful quote, which I had read some years back, which hold good in most of the things. "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure", which implies very much with Office Politics.

Once your office mate or your boss is out to get you, it's really very hard to keep your back unstabbed. Play positive politics, though the chances are, your boss and office mate will turn any stabbing instincts somewhere else.

I had read one famous statement given by Marilyn Moats Kennedy, a career coach based in Wilmette, Illinois, stating that "**Office politics is changing - and opening the door to campaigners who want to get things done rather than do other people in the organization.**"

I fully agree with the above statement, If you have an idea worth fighting , fight it out and make it work. You must have also observed that those you think themselves to be smart and get engaged in office politics are ruled by the those who are dumber (I call them the Insiders)

Insiders are those category of people , who tend to be happy go lucky people, for the world they are always lost in their own thoughts and never speak out their minds on any issue.

They are silent observers, but they observe everything, from top to bottom in the organization.

✓ ***Nobody wins unless everybody wins.***

Office politics is no way different from other aspects of life at the office - or of life in general. Appearances matter. You must have seen that usually the best-packaged idea that wins, not the best idea.

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The best way to win is to position your idea so that your victory is everyone's victory. The real game is not to push your idea to people, but to pull/attract people to your ideas

Now the real "crux" of the story being , can you get people move to you, can you get people's trust. That is only possible how you position yourself and you are rated as a highly commitment, hard working , open minded, a die hard self believer and above all a "Smart Alec"

✓ *Why ask for opinions – to change them.*

Have you ever thought, why people ask for opinions on every project in an organization

It is not because they don't have faith in the what they are doing, but to explore the opportunity of better ideas from people, so that they have an opportunity to deliver the end product in a better shape. These people ask questions in ways that build support for the outcome they want. In business language it is called as "push polling."

These people have an amazing knack of forever selling to colleagues even as they are testing out those ideas.

They have an 'elevator speech' ready at all times. But the best aspect of these people is that they know to whom the ideas have to be presented. They will never present an idea to the wrong person. The ideas are present to the easy people first, the people you already know or can get to fast. Then comes the hard-to-get people.

Above all they are so determined that they don't let the process of testing waters sink their ship before it sails.

✓ *Law Of Reciprocity*

How do you turn the Law of Reciprocity to support you idea?

Use the following ways

1. Never underestimate the power of an amazing idea. In every company people want to do the right thing. Always give them an opportunity to make a positive contribution, and chances are that they will.
2. Never underestimate the desire to leave a mark. Most new-idea champions aren't in a position to order people to participate in their projects. But people

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will often volunteer when they see that their work will make a difference - and perhaps earn them recognition in the process.

3. Never underestimate the value of a simple "thank you." Keep expressing appreciation for what your office mates , and they'll keep doing good work. Share the credit, and they may do more than what is required.

It's good politics to make people feel good.

✓ ***Success can create opposition***

Opposition is one thing which you will encounter at any and every point from unexcepted quarters.

You have to be smart in taking in information and about dealing with misinformation. Remember the more open you are, the preparation for the opposition will be better and more creative solutions will be generated.

✓ ***Don't ignore the aftermath of success***

The basic key to winning an idea successfully across is to consider your personal ambitions separately from your strategic goals for the company. You'll be validated personally at some point. Meanwhile, you will have moved the company to a place where it might not have gone without you.

✓ ***Periodically ask your respected higher-ups for counsel sessions.***

This will encourage them to think of you as a protégé. In turn, they're more likely to come to your defense when you need it

✓ ***Never shy away from un-random acts of kindness***

e.g. stay late one evening to help a co-worker on a deadline.
send a thank-you mail to the person who gave you that MSWord tip.

One of my ex- office mate had a favorite office politics weapon:

She used to bring in home-cooked parathas to share and after that slowly move her work on others. All the members of the team, where under the impression that she was a good worker. I was a person who never believes any one fast and this habit of mine made me notice for a few months that she did was a common trick she applied, whenever the work load on her increased marginally also.

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✓ *Do visible important tasks.*

If such tasks are not forthcoming, ask if you can take one on.

But make it a point that everyone knows you did the work.

e.g. you might e-mail key employees a draft of your project's final report "for feedback" and to ensure that your mates don't steal the credit.

✓ *Keeping a Watch on things around.*

At times, despite playing positive politics, one or more people will want you to look ugly if only because he wants that promotion and bonus that you are working for.

You might not be able to respond to their machinations, unless and until you know who the perpetrator is.

Here are a few simple ways to find out:

- Who's the brainchild of the game?
- Are you being kept out of the information loop?
- Are you not getting the resources you need to get your job done? Who's behind that?
- At team meetings/ office meeting, does someone always seem to always disagree with you, if not verbally, by sighing, or appearing not to pay attention to what you're speaking?
- When you talk with your suspected saboteur directly, does he/she always seem eager to cut the conversation short?

When You Feel You're Losing the Game

Now if you have sensed that someone's sabotaging you.

Do what? It's the time to play your cards.

Here are some strategies for foiling him/her:

✓ *Get a feedback from a supporter/Friend.*

Say something like, "I'm concerned that Manish is annoyed with me. Have you noticed that? Anything you think I should do?"

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✓ ***Respond with strength.***

Humor is best way to fight out things. If your saboteur tries to put you down, especially in front of others, don't wimp out; make a strong response, perhaps using humor.

For example, let's say, at a meeting, you're presenting a solution to a problem and throughout your presentation, He/she is slouching, doodling, and rolling his/her eyes. You might say something like, "Amar, it looks like my idea is putting you to sleep. Either you went to a late night drinks party, you over drank and the hang out is still there, or you have a better solution. Can we all share it?"

✓ ***Privately confront the backstabber upfront.***

e.g. "Friend, I have observed that you seem to be annoyed with me?" Is there anything I'm doing wrong?" If you get useful feedback, fine. Thank him/her and offer to work on improving.

If, you sense that her reason for annoyance is unjustified, you need to be strong and be on the offensive. For example, you might say, " You have been withholding key information from me. Things have to change starting now or I'll have to go to the boss."

✓ ***Inoculate***

Tell others that you are concerned that Arjun Khanna, for selfish gain, is unfairly trying to denigrate you. Always point out specific evidences of unfairness or you may be perceived as the backstabber.

I can assure you that things,will fall in place.

The crux of Positive Politics is never loose your cool and never attack with hate. Anger is biggest failure in Office Politics.

CHAPTER XVII

OFFICE POLITICS FOR NON-POLITICIANS

Master Manipulator (Office Villain)

How to protect your career from a master manipulator?

If you look around yourself in the office, you will surely find one character, who falls in this category.

He is the scourge of the professional workplace is office politics.

He is one who destroys our peace of mind and create the air with suspicion, resentment and often, outright fear and loathing. Despite mediocre talents, no work ethic and the personality and moral character of a pit viper, keeps snagging the raises and promotions bearing other peoples' names.



How do you keep from becoming victimized by a creature like that?

The answer is simple, such people who are cunning and manipulative ultimately fall victim to someone who is even more cunning and manipulative.

But how does a sincere guy save himself from such people. I have listed some simple ways that have worked very well for an ex-office mate Sunil.

The characteristics of a Master Manipulator:-

- He is the one, who capitalizes on the weaknesses of others.
- His basic objective is to have enough people afraid of him so that he can get his way.
- He will typically start building his fiefdom in an office by picking out a hard, innocent worker minding his own business, someone trying to get by on sheer ability and productivity, someone who doesn't gossip. This innocent, he decides, will be the first kill to serve as bait.

This Master Manipulator, befriends the person he has marked as his victim, offering support and sympathy. Over time the victim begins revealing details of his personal life, even the embarrassing ones. Without his knowledge, the Master Manipulator begins sharing the juiciest tidbits with others in the office. At first the tidbits are shared in a sympathetic tone. Soon the gossip takes on a gently mocking tone that quickly turns malicious. Now the whole office is joined in stripping the victim of his privacy.

What is the office politician's objective?

The main objective is to force everyone in the office to be on his side or risk becoming victimized. It's sheer intimidation, disguised as friendly gossip.

It doesn't take long for everyone to fall in line, including the boss. A very few bosses have the spare energy, social self-assurance and sheer gumption to slap down an office politician who is up and running. They may know what is happening and probably regret it, but would rather play along and save their energies rather than risk open war with a killer.

So, how do you keep from becoming one of the victims?

Start by recognizing that if you are already the first victim, then you must quit for greener pastures. It doesn't matter if the manipulator himself has moved on. You are dead meat in that organization.

In case you are not the first victim, but see a manipulator casting glances in your direction.

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Then use these defenses to protect yourself:-

1. Read as much as possible on any subject and
2. Make a Knowledge base for yourself

As you are aware that a MM has only superficial knowledge, he will not be able to stand in front of you. In case he tries to cross you, you can tear him into pieces with your knowledge about the subject (any subject).

MM will never like any one crossing him, but this time, he will be the victim of his own game.

As everyone has a weakness, no one is flawless. Observe the faults of the Master Manipulator (it could be basic mistakes like bluffing, telling a lie).

The moment the Master Manipulator tries his tactics, you can catch him and blast him in front of everyone, expose him, bring his character into limelight.

You have won the battle and I can assure you that you have killed your enemy for once and all. He will never try to cut you again.

CHAPTER XVIII

KILL THEM WITH KINDNESS

Imagine you enter office one rainy morning, you wish your fellow worker " Good Morning" but you find your fellow employees giving you the cold shoulder. The office manager is shouting at his secretary.

Welcome to the world of office politics!

Rumours, gossip,backbiting, work load dumping and complaining to the boss. Seems silly? I agree with you ? Down right childish? Unmistakably. But this a reality that many of us have to deal with every day.

Running the office gauntlet without someone wanting to stab you in the back with a pencil is not an easy thing to do. People will always have prejudices both big and small. Arguing, verbal abuse and plotting work sabotage are more serious issues. But small grievances left unchecked can lead to more serious problems down the road.

So, how does one deal with grumpy, angry and resentful co-workers?

To handle these situations Apply the " KTWK" Principle

Kill them with kindness. It really does work!

Have you ever tried to stay angry with someone who has done something really nice for you? Did you ever rave at a face with a friendly smile? Not likely. It is very difficult to do.

How often have you must have heard yourself saying, "Just one more comment about my work and I am going to let them have it!" We often find ourselves waiting to be pushed one more notch. But at that time an office mate comes with a kind word, or a pat on the back instead, it defuses anger and diffuses stressful tensions.

It is hard to be angry with people who are nice to you. It is very difficult to be rude to someone who is pleasant. The biggest hurdle is swallowing our pride and making the first move. This is the most difficult obstacle to overcome. But with one 's determination to solve things out, you can do it.

Many of our problems come from people, who donot know us and judge us by what they see or hear from others. But when they have a personal encounter with us it can change all pre-conceived notions. When that happens you will also see a noticeable improvement in your work environment.

Hostilities will vanish, backbiting will give way to cooperation and strangers even if not friends, will become acquaintances.

So how does one go about being kind to people who are angry with them?

First, make a point to talk to them when they are alone, may be at water cooler, coffeepot, lounge or washroom.

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Make a point of starting a conversation with them. Offer to pour them a cup of coffee, pass them the sugar, or hand them a napkin etc.

Start with the little things then work your way up to bigger things. Offer help to them on small issues. There are all kinds of ways and opportunities to change people's opinions of you.

CHAPTER XIX

WHAT EVERY BEGINNER SHOULD KNOW, WHEN HE IS JOINING A NEW JOB

Beginning a new job also involves a significant level of uncertainty, and can spark anxiety. As a beginner it is the first opportunity to try out new skills and knowledge, and is the first exposure to the “real world” of work and career. It means stepping out of the comfort zone of lecture halls and classrooms, and into the world of dress codes, office etiquette and deadlines.

As you agree with me that first impressions are the ones that last, your boss and coworkers will establish their opinions of you and your work very quickly. Remember that you must be aware of the actions that can wreck your professional image right from the start.

However, most bosses and coworkers do realize that you are still in the learning stages of your career. Mistakes are bound to occur, but attempts to minimize their likelihood will help you to construct a professional image right from the start.

The dreaded dress code

I still remember the morning of 1st July 1998, My first day at the first job, since I was a total carefree guy, with a to hell with the world attitude, which I still carry with me.

I decided to play it safe in the first month, with plain shirt and trousers till I got a good sense of the office culture. It is really important to know it is the time to show off a trendy new outfit that could strike a negative chord with coworkers.

✓ *YOU ARE A TRAINEE, NOT THE CFO.*

Obviously, it is a must job and you want to show your level of confidence when beginning as trainee. But showing too much confidence can quickly be misinterpreted by others.

- Contribute in staff meetings only when asked to do so, but try not to run the show. Since it is beginning, your job is mostly to listen, observe and to learn.
- Know how to absorb defeat. You presented a brilliant idea, but it gets turned down due to cost, time, personnel, etc. Know how to absorb your defeat. Take the defeat gracefully, the fact that you made an attempt shows determination and creativity, so don't get down about the fact that your idea wasn't pursued.

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- Always ask as many question because asking questions will provide you with an additional knowledge, but be willing to find answers on your own too. Because this is a learning experience, questions are indefinitely going to arise.

Office politics will be present. Your job is to avoid them.

One of the worst things as a beginner is to get into office politics and gossip. Always work towards a networking opportunity or possible future job, and do not burn any bridges.

- ✓ Avoid gossip at all costs, especially in the beginning. Do not engage in conversations about other workers, your supervisor or clients, even when approached.
- ✓ Never complain about anything, even about little matters. Do not complain about how long your day was, or how boring your latest project. Keep it positive.

You have to gain trust.

You are aware of the fact that you are capable and have the skills needed to hit the ground running. But supervisors and coworkers have not seen you in action yet, so it's important to realize that they are still trying to figure out what you are all about. This means it may take a little time before you are granted the responsibilities you hoped for.

- Start out fast, but not too fast. Take on some projects and push yourself to do well at them. However, avoid taking on too many in the beginning. You want to turn out "**quality work**", not be overly stressed or leave tasks unfinished.

A mentor is a must !

With any learning experience, as a fresher, a mentor can make challenges seem a little less daunting. Mentors are important to have because they can assist you in mapping out your career and professional goals, as well as assist you in navigating a new environment. The best mentors are the people that you are able to look at and think "I want to be just like them one day".

- If you find there is someone you really admire in the workplace, try to form a professional relationship with them by asking questions about their daily tasks, career path or educational experiences.
- Observe your mentor in action, and try to model their behavior. When faced with a decision or situation, try to look at the situation as you would imagine your mentor would.

Learning Experience

Being an fresher means making mistakes from time to time. It is really important to keep a positive attitude and a resilient approach to mistakes. If you make a mistake, be willing to improve upon it in the future.

- Be receptive to both positive and negative feedback from supervisors and coworkers, and use their input to increase your knowledge. Don't let constructive criticism get you down; turn it into action instead.

Responsibility and punctuality make an excellent impression.

It is first assignment, be as responsible as you can be and punctual to the office.

Don't follow the flock. If you notice that most of the employees show up late, don't assume that being late is acceptable. If you begin work at 9:00, then show up not a minute later- even if you are alone in the office. Your supervisor will take notice!

CHAPTER XX

Basic Principle for success of one's career

Over a period of some 8 Years of my career, I have come to know some basic principle that everyone should know-but many don't.

Office is made up of ambiguous victories and nebulous defeats. Claim them all as victories. Because every defeat and victory teaches you something.

- Be professional at all times.
- Keep track of what you do; someone is sure to ask
- Play the game being played, never start one you want or think should that should be played.
- Never make any enemies. Don't burn bridges.
- Don't complain or crib.
- Never intimidate superiors. Try to avoid going over your superior's head at any point of time.
- Never portray others in Bad light.
- Never criticize employees or bosses.
- Always help achieve what they want.
- Establish affiliations of mutual advantage with important people.
- Find common grounds to work with others.
- Never discuss personal problems.
- Never assume that anything will stay secret.
- Always create win/win solutions.
- Accept challenges, lead from the front.
- Cultivate a positive, simple, accurate image.
- Force yourself to do difficult, uncomfortable or scary things.
- Be an ever-smiling personality. Laugh and smile.
- Be assertive and tough when required, not aggressive.
- Don't oversell. Be natural. Develop your own style
- Never bring your boss a problem without some solution.

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- Long hours don't mean anything; results count, not effort.
- Always write down ideas; they get lost, like good mobiles.
- Treat everyone who works in the organization with respect and Dignity.
- Never appear stressed in front of a BOSS
- Always Acknowledge someone else's contribution, you will be repaid doubly
- Career planning is a bluff. The most exciting opportunities tend to be unplanned.
- Most memos from the top are political fantasy. Never confuse a memo with reality.
- Remember that size of your pay cheque is most important for you and not the size of your office.
- Everyone want to be remembered after he/she gone (left the organization) Always choose to do what you'll remember ten years from now.
- Be honest, it helps in the long run.
- Never in your life say, "It's not my job." This is biggest crime.
- Make yourself a very interesting, knowledgeable and a helpful character, people will love you
- Understand what finished work looks like and deliver your work only when it is finished. People remember the end of the project. As they say in boxing. "Always finish stronger than you start" .
- Always be loyal to your career, your interests and yourself.
- Understand the skills and abilities that set you apart. Use them whenever you have an opportunity.

Sometimes you'll be on a winning streak and everything will click; take maximum advantage. When the opposite is true, hold steady and wait it out. Cultivate patience. Life is like a sinusoidal wave.

Your Effort may fail But .. Don't Fail to make Effort.... To achieve Success....

FINAL CHAPTER

This chapter I wrote at the last, because being an Insider, you cannot win unless you have the determination and will power to win.

The simple rule to live life is

Live your life as someone for whom triumph is a birthright.

Will – Power and Determination are the means by which you get things done

When you look around yourself in Office. You can always figure out, who is determined and has the will power to achieve.

In a meeting the person who uses his intelligence wisely, gives of the feeling of belonging in a meeting. Whatever he does, he will catch your eye. he holds it.

He will always be a bit different. If everyone is copying others or following others, he holds back.

The Insider will never complain, or slump, or cry that he's exhausted. He will keep his feelings to himself except when the use of those feelings is to his benefit. He will be as casual as he can be to the world, but to himself he will never be casual.

This attitude of the Insider will slowly get the **Power** that is required to run the show.

Powerful actions take the form of tactics

He will make every act count; that's way soldiers and artists work, as if their lives depended on their actions.

When a painter lifts a brush, he does it with thorough knowledge of how to set it down on canvas. He is well aware of the every effect that is possible to achieve: how the canvas will receive the paint, how the brush will respond to his intentions.

There are a few tactics which I have discussed here.

Tactic Number One: Behave as if your enemy is your ally

Do the unexpected. Be tenderly alert to your enemy's vulnerabilities. You have great influence over every opponent.

I had read a study some years back, which I will share with you..

A study was once done of winning racing drivers. Those who came in second consistently did exactly the same things as the winners, with one exception. The winners behaved as if they had already won. They climbed into their cars with the same confidence and composure as if they were sitting in front of the television, working the remote control. That calm allowed them to find the microscopic grooves in the road and shift the wheels just enough to pick up an extra 1/10th of a second in their race.

Office Politics – The Unorganized Crime

Calmly behaving as if you have what you want, allows you to take the lead and not get flustered by your opponent.

Tactic Number Two - Understand how to use time

Time is power now a days, The knowledge of how to use time and express time is crucial.

Power is in an ability to be strategic about time, and to make other people respect your time.

Have a working day that respects your needs.

Remember to say no. It takes years to learn to say no and mean it.

It will take a lot of experiments drawing the line, stopping people from taking advantage of you, your competence or your commitment to getting the job done. Saying no is powerful. You will be saved of doing many useless things in office.(routine jobs)

An Insider will always have the courage to say yes. It means putting yourself on the line of fire, working hard on the project against the deadlines, Leading from the front.

Tactic Number three - Ask for Everything

This is the simplest and most effective tactic. Ask for more than you think you can ever have. It's amazing it works to lot of extent. (Ask for the universe and you get the world)

Conclusion

You may not always win or get what you want. The key is to remember that many strong people lose many battles, but they win WARS. Patience is another Tool, which you will have to use.

But Remember:

***People will forget what you said, because they have short memory
people will forget what you did , because they have many responsibilities
but people will never forget how you made them feel ...***

Please feel free to share your opinions with me if you have any.

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This book can also be read on the Internet

<http://anujanand.wordpress.com/>

GOD BLESS U

