Winning at Office Politics: Strategies for the Technical Communicator

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Topics

- Politics are real and unavoidable
- How political are you
- About political types
- How to size up the political climate
- Winning strategies
- Rising above it all
- 7 Habits of Politically Savvy People
Politics are Real and Unavoidable

- Not all politics are bad
- Realize that this is reality
- Expect politics in all situations
- Politics are part of human interaction
What Creates Office Politics

- Scarcity of resources
- A too competitive work environment
- Subjective performance standards
- Unclear job definitions
- Emotional insecurity
How Political Are You

- Answer the question with your first impression
- Think most of the time when answering

You can also use these questions to help identify people in your office.
About Political Types

- Corporate Shark
- Climber
- Survivor
- Straight Arrow
- Lamb for Slaughter
Corporate Shark

- Score of 90 plus
- Tends to use others to enhance career
- Power-hungry, ruthless, and devious
- Survives well in Piranha Land
Climber

- Score of 75 to 89
- Shrewd politician
- A moderate score (75-85) suggests you might have a good chance of success
- Politics are everything - let’s campaign
Survivor

- Score of 50-75
- Practices some office politics and is aware of the political climate
- Ok, what do I have to do to survive
Straight Arrow

- Score of 35-49
- Not perceived as office politician
- May neglect cultivating key people for career advancement
- Honesty is the best policy
Lamb for Slaughter

- Score of less than 35
- Doesn’t believe in office politics
- Commonly boasts of never practicing office politics
- Easily eaten by sharks
- Survives in Nirvana Land
Sizing up the Climate

- Who’s related to who
- About my boss
  - Irritations
  - Enemies
  - Personal facts
  - Politics practiced
- Identify the true power and players
- Look below - motivations
- What are favored behaviors and status symbols
What’s Your Corporate Climate

- Answer the question with your first impression
- Think most of the time when answering
Piranha or Nirvana

- Score of 90 plus is Piranha Land.. Wear bullet proof vest
- Scores of more than 50 indicate some problems
- Score of 10 or less is Nirvana… Never leave
Winning Strategies

- Help your boss succeed
- Be loyal, avoid disloyalty
- Praise your boss to upper management
- Imitate your boss’ slogans
- Present options
- Be visible
- Teach your boss a skill
- Be different - not part of whining masses
Rising Above it All

- Shine at meetings
- Compliment influential people
- Talk big, outside the box
- Appear cool under pressure
- Display good corporate manners
- Learn new skills and sell them
- Be a team player
7 Habits of Politically Savvy People

1. Politics are part of human interaction - you can set the tone by:
   - Not participating in gossip
   - Telling the truth
   - Checking out praises and criticism
7 Habits of Politically Savvy People

2. Help design/define clear job roles and compatible teams.
3. Expose dirty tricks used by the sharks.
4. Don’t allow anyone to “get” something on you that can be used later.
7 Habits of Politically Savvy People

5. Make emotional deposits with the people you work with.
6. Be known as a producer and not a politician.
7. Lift others up with you and forgive failures.
Politics are unavoidable
How political are you
What’s your corporate climate
How to rise above it all
7 Habits of Politically Savvy People
Questions