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## A STUDENT EXERCISE FOR INTEGRATING THE CONCEPTS OF POWER AND MOTIVATION

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THE PAPER DESCRIBES A POWER AND MOTIVATION EXERCISE, AND NOTES THE DIRECTIONS THAT MIGHT BE TAKEN TO USE THE EXERCISE TO LEAD INTO OTHER, RELATED TOPICS, SUCH AS LEADERSHIP.

One of the key determinants of success in teaching Organizational Behavior is the degree to which students learn to apply the abstract concepts they are studying to real situations.

Bowens, Boglarsky, and Cannon (1990) suggest that a movie might be used to provide experiential data for the study of different types of power. Consistent with this reasoning, this paper suggests a second exercise that might be used in addition to the power exercise.

### THE CONCEPT OF MOTIVATION

Motivation to work refers to the forces that account for the level, direction and persistence of effort expended at work (Schermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn 1988). Intrinsic motivation is motivation derived from performance of a task itself. By contrast, extrinsic motivation is derived from a desire to obtain the rewards that are offered as inducements to perform the task.

### MOTIVATION AND THE CONCEPT OF POWER

Power, as we use the term, is the capacity to influence another person or group to accept one's own ideas or plans (Greiner and Schein 1988). Given that behavior is driven by motivation, the topics of power and motivation are inextricably connected (French and Raven 1967).

1. Coercive power is based on the perception that someone other than the self can impose penalties for non-compliance.
2. Expert power is based on the perception of another person's competence in a certain situation or arena. People tend to be persuaded by a perceived expert, both publicly and privately (Evan & Zelditch 1961, Luchins & Luchins 1961, Bass 1960, Mausner 1953, Torrence 1959).
3. Legitimate power is based on the internalization of common norms and values regarding the appropriate behaviors for a person holding a specific position or role.
4. Referent power is based on the identification with or liking of another.
5. Reward power is based on the ability for one person to provide desired outcomes for another. This is basically the ability to give positive reinforcement (Worchel and Cooper 1983).

### THE EXERCISE

Part 1 of the exercise consists of an introductory presentation of the basic issues and concepts that students will use to analyze the relationship between power and motivation.

In Part 2 on the analysis, students select some aspect of the movie to illustrate the effects of each aspect of power, as it appears, or as students project it to exist. Each sentence they write is the description of a specific effect a specific power event had on a specific kind of motivation/outcome combination.

Part 3 of the exercise uses journal analysis (Allen and Enz 1986-7; Harris and Brown 1988-9) to record personal experience regarding the impact of power on motivation and outcomes. Students are instructed to use a worksheet to analyze critical interactions they encounter, either in the class situation or in some aspect of their outside lives.

In the final part of the exercise, the instructor returns to class discussion as a means of linking the concepts of power, motivation, and organizational outcomes to the specific events recorded in student journal entries.

### SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This exercise not only helps students to understand the concept of motivation, but it clarifies the concept by contrasting it with that of power. Thus it contributes to the integration of concepts that are incorporated into a useful fabric of working knowledge.

(Contact authors for references)