

Organization Politics

An incongruent mission

I have a direct question for all those who have taken the responsibility for the growth and well being of the organization and even those who chose to create their organizations;

- What is the purpose of your organization?
- What is the environment you promise to your members?
- What are the values on which your organization is based?

The answer always has been improving the quality of life of the people through its products and services, a great environment to work in, with growth for all and a value system driven by ethics and quality. A mission of every organization. None have ever indicated disruptive tendencies in their plan. Then why is it that a whole lot of organizations of today have been plagued with politicks? The reason is the choice exercised by the people running the organizations. Politicks exists because it is your choice, nothing stops you from eradicating it, but you yourself. The comfort level of the organization is in retaining its people at whatever cost. A change is a pain, thus not welcome. I have seen in my organization behavior consulting projects, this suits the designs of all those who play politics in the organization.

Before we discuss the remedy we need to understand the cause of this. Politicks is a game of survival. To survive and then grow at all cost without increasing the competence. Thus the mission is very clear, growth without investing in development of skills and performance. A game of not working on upgrading personal competence and still control competent and effective people. An impossible proposition. Though this is a paradox, it works. The corporate politicians are skilled in the methods of passing requisite information with their importance camouflaged in it to the people who matter. Financial data misrepresenting people data. They always carry the mask of nice people who believe in quality, equality and growth for all who deserve it. However there is an element of shrewdness in all this. A question again, do we have to be shrewd if we deliver what is expected? The organizations chose to tolerate them because they exercise the control and clout and an upset means extra work and effort in trying times which always exist. The control and clout is again the organization choice. Also at times by design people who are supposed to bring about the changes are a part of this politicking group.

Imagine the fallout of all this. Politicks is a game of survival and hence any competent person, a threat, entering the group would be systematically eliminated. The growth of the organization depends on the performers and not survivors. Politicks puts off the performers and then they move out others choose to become politicians to survive. The end result is the organization keeps working on survival in the market and thus the trying times never leave them. Performers know their worth and hence move. The irony is, they get into organizations, which need performers for a turnaround but again get stuck, in the web of the survivors. An unending process. The lucky ones finally get to an organization which is anti politicks, others ultimately become entrepreneurs themselves. Politicks is a force that retards growth of the organization and it is the organizations choice.

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The issue is how do the organizations clean up this mess. It is important there has to be a will to do so. Then you need the courage to unmask these politicians and give an opportunity to the new leaders to take over. A clear message that politicks will not be entertained henceforth. It is easy to unmask these designs through study of value systems of people in the organization. Then it is important to let them discover their personal missions, which give them a unique sense of contribution through their unique capabilities. Personal missions aligned with organization missions gives a sense of contribution and self-worth to people. An environment of growth and contribution then results in an organization and brings about a sense of security amongst the members. A secure environment then does not need politicks. Also it is important to de-weed the organization of the people who play a survival game because they will gain create a environment of mistrust and insecurity for their personal gains. Politicks is a severe in-congruence in every mission. It is an act of sabotage by design, for personal gains against the organizational interests.

The law of cause and effect, you reap what you sow. Growth is a result of win/win symbiotic relationships. Politicks is parasitic win/loose, an ultimate loose/loose game for the organizations. Focus on quality people, growth will happen on its own. Operations issues are nothing but people issues.