



TenStep Supplemental Paper

5 April 2005

Corporate Politics

Organizational politics not only encourage hypocrisy, rumors, and self-promotion, but also demoralize employees, leading to team ineffectiveness. HR has a critical role to play in eliminating these corporate politics before they become detrimental to employee performance.

Politics will be part of any organization. Though employees often complain about work-life taking over their personal lives, the roles they play in the office, their relationships with other colleagues and the familiarity they gain with the work atmosphere all contribute to an individual's happiness. A small imbalance in any of these elements can adversely affect their performance. Organizational politics act as a catalyst in creating this imbalance.

To deal with corporate politics, HR not only needs to understand the root cause but also keep aware of its effects to avoid damage to morale and the company.

Role of HR

To save talented employees from dying a political death, HR should take some proactive steps. Employees caught in a political situation either realize it too late or hesitate to approach HR, as they are not sure if HR would help them.

To eliminate office politics, HR should:

- Communicate openly and clearly
- Sense signals and keep track of events before any damage is done
- Counsel both the parties to understand the problem from both sides
- Publicize employee performance data
- Show confidence in employees so they feel comfortable confiding their troubles

Such an approach of HR not only helps employees manage their careers, but also contributes to the progress of the organization.