

Politics of Organizational Decision Making

Organizational politics, also known as workplace politics or office politics, can be good or bad. Some definitions include:

- The use of power and social networking within an organization to achieve changes that benefit the organization or individuals within it.²
- A tool to assess the operational capacity and to balance diverse views of the interested parties.³

Organizational politics can increase efficiency, form interpersonal relationships, expedite change, and profit the organization and its members simultaneously. On the other hand, self-serving political actions can negatively influence social groupings, cooperation, information sharing, and other organizational functions.⁴ Questions for executives in the decision-making process include who is involved, what drives the decisions, how deep is the analysis, how unfettered are the discussions, and how and where are politics involved?¹

Decision-making disciplines that make a difference must include several factors:

- ensuring that people with the right skills and experience are included in the process;
- making decisions based on transparent objectives; and
- ensuring that the person who will be responsible for implementing a decision is involved in making that decision.

McKinsey Global Survey¹ results indicated that decisions initiated and approved by the same person generate the worst financial results, indicating the value of good discussion. Results also indicated that decisions made at companies without any strategic planning process are twice as likely to have generated extremely poor results as extremely good ones, which may indicate an overall lack of rigor at these companies. Although corporate politics may at times seem to undermine strong decision making, some types of consensus-building and alliances apparently can help create good outcomes.

Next: [Groupthink](#)

¹ <https://www.mckinsey.com/business-functions/strategy-and-corporate-finance/our-insights/how-companies-make-good-decisions-mckinsey-global-survey-results>.

² Musa, Dr. Sam. "Tip Sheet for Leaders on Politics."

³ Marilyn Haight, Office Politics, BigBadBoss.com

⁴ Larsen, James. "Business Psychology - Latest Findings". Supervision Findings. Retrieved 1 December 2012.