



**POLITICS** | 'pələ,tiks |

**The art and science of governing a unit**

The word “politics” gets a bad rap—but individuals with political skills manage stress and job demands better and have a greater impact on organizational outcomes.

You probably already hold more power than you think. Consider the following types of power:

**Legitimate power:** Your role has power embedded within, e.g., program chair.

**Reward and coercive powers:** You can assign positive or negative consequences to actions.

**Referent power:** You have likability and appeal personally or through your affiliations.

**Expert power:** Your skills and knowledge produce trust and respect.

**Informational power:** You possess knowledge others need or want.

**Tips to Enhance Meeting Effectiveness**

- 1 CHAIR**  
Is the chair the most influential person in the meeting? When you are the chair, you keep the agenda moving, keep people on task, and get to decisions.
- 2 ATTENDANCE**  
Is it mandatory or optional? What is the motivation for attending? If decisions that impact you are made at the meeting, make it a priority to attend.
- 3 AGENDA**  
Create and distribute the agenda prior to the meeting and identify if items are for information, discussion, or decision. This allows participants to be prepared and engaged.
- 4 MINUTES**  
Identify who has this responsibility. Beware of gender bias when assigning note takers. Then, distribute minutes within a timely manner to all the people who were invited, even those not in attendance.
- 5 TIME CONSIDERATIONS**  
Evaluate whether the meeting is necessary or can be handled via email. Adhere to time limits set for agenda items. Start and end meetings on time to model consideration of others’ time demands.
- 6 SET EXPECTATIONS**  
Address rules for attendees, such as phone usage and sidebar conversations.
- 7 CONSIDER WHERE YOU SIT**  
Where you choose to sit during a meeting sends a signal about your personal power and connections. For example, sitting in the middle can signal that you wish to observe.

**Additional Resources**

Cacciattolo, K. (2015). Organisational Politics: The Positive and Negative Sides. *European Scientific Journal*, 11, 121-129.  
 Jarrett, M. (2017). The 4 Types of Organizational Politics. *Harvard Business Review*. Retrieved from <https://hbr.org/2017/04/the-4-types-of-organizational-politics>



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