

Power, Authenticity and the Internal Consultant



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Opening Activity

*Directions: Find one other participant as a partner.
Discuss your answers to the following questions:*

- 1. What is a current political issue in your organization and how does it impact you?
(Consider political to mean the actions taken to gain access to a share of limited organization resources.)*
- 2. Who are the key players and how do they exercise their power?*
- 3. What power do you have and how do you exercise it?*

What Is Authenticity?

- *History of the concept*
- *Existential philosophers and authenticity*
- *Western psychology and authenticity*

What the Philosophers Say

Heidegger, Sartre and Kierkegaard...

- *Intrinsic to “the good life”.*
- *Intrinsically difficult*
- *It is a revelatory state*

Authenticity and Western Psychology

Four basic dimensions:*

- 1. Self-awareness*
- 2. Unbiased processing of information*
- 3. Relational transparency*
- 4. Authentic behavior (behavior that is aligned with one's values, needs and preferences)*

* Kernis, M.H. (2003). *Toward a conceptualization of optimal self-esteem*. *Psychological Inquiry*, 14(1), 1-26.

*Authentic Leaders**

- *Focus on relationship building, building psychological closeness with subordinates*
- *Transparent organizational context*

*From: Harvey, P., Martinko, M. J., & Gardner, W. L. (2006). Promoting authentic behavior in organizations: An attributional perspective. *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 12 (3), 1-11 ; Luthans, F., & Avolio, B. J. (2003). Authentic leadership development. In K. S. Cameron, J. E. Dutton, & R. E. Quinn (Eds.). *Positive organizational scholarship*. (pp. 241-251). San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler ; Miller, J. B. (2003). Telling the truth about power. *Work in Progress*, 100 Wellesley; Stone Center Working Paper Series.

Authenticity Requires

- *A focus on relationship building and building psychological closeness with associates*
- *Transparency both personally and organizationally*
- *Balanced processing of information*
- *Authentic behavior that is aligned with one's values and needs*
- *Self-awareness and a quest for self-understanding*

Case Study Discussion Questions

- *What are the challenges to authenticity as a consultant in this situation?*
 - *Values*
 - *Relationships*
 - *Transparency*
 - *Self Awareness*
 - *Balanced processing of information*

Activities of Power

Chart 1: Activities of Power

Authentic

Inauthentic ←

→ Inauthentic

Initiative

Responsive

Using Spin

Supplementing truth with self-serving distortions.

Influencing

Using reason, arguments, true data and the relationship with others to direct the course of action

Offering

Creating and exploring options, providing resources for others to implement their ideas.

Manipulation

Rigging options by playing to the needs of others dishonestly.

Exploitation

Deceiving others and taking more than one gives.

Negotiating

Seeking a deal between relative equals which levels the playing field for each person's perceived benefit.

Negotiating

Supporting and being responsive to a proposal between relative equals to each person's perceived benefit.

Using Others

Taking advantage of the others in a pseudo deal, which may look real but is not.

Tyranny

Demanding which is arbitrary, capricious, unfair, or without legitimate authority.

Insistence/ Requiring

Utilizing recognized and legitimate authority to persuade others to act in accordance with your position.

Resistance

Refusing to participate or giving advice against a course of action that would violate authenticity.

Revenge/ Betrayal

Transforming refusal into sabotage or deviously or unfairly punishing others.

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Examples of the Activities of Initiative Power

Chart 2: Examples of the Activities of Initiative Power

INFLUENCING:	Using reason, arguments, true data and the relationship with others to direct the course of action.
Example:	Utilizing factual information and analysis to obtain client's agreement to proceed on a new project or initiative. When influence is distorted and inauthentic, the expression moves toward "spin". . .
USING SPIN:	Supplementing truth with self-serving distortions.
Example:	Using incomplete information or data slanted to give a biased or self-serving picture to support your proposed recommendation.
NEGOTIATING:	Seeking a deal between relative equals which levels the playing field for each person's perceived benefit.
Example:	Proposing processes to involve all relevant stakeholders in the decision process. When negotiating is distorted and inauthentic, action becomes "exploitative". . .
EXPLOITATION:	Deceiving others and taking more than one gives.
Example:	Gaining a client's agreement for an intervention by promising positive outcomes when your data suggests otherwise.
INSISTENCE/ REQUIRING:	Utilizing recognized and legitimate authority to persuade others to act in accordance with your position.
Example:	Insisting that a client address a sensitive moral or legal issue as a basis for continuing your consulting contract. When requiring or demanding is exercised with inauthentic or illegitimate means, it becomes "tyranny". . .
TYRANNY:	Demanding which is arbitrary, capricious, unfair or without legitimate authority.
Example:	Threatening a client with exposing sensitive or personal confidential information unless the client acts on your demands.

Examples of the Activities of Responsive Power

Chart 3: Examples of the Activities of Responsive Power

OFFERING:	Creating and exploring options and providing resources for others to implement their ideas.
Example:	Offering processes and interventions which allow employees to express and implement their concerns and ideas. When offering is distorted and inauthentic, it becomes “manipulative”. . .
MANIPULATION:	Rigging options by playing to the needs of others dishonestly.
Example:	Offering processes and interventions which you know will undermine the credibility of certain individuals/managers.
NEGOTIATING:	Supporting and being responsive to a proposal between relative equals to each person’s perceived benefit.
Example:	Responding to a co-facilitator’s proposal on how you will both manage the responsibility of the intervention. When negotiating is distorted and inauthentic, it becomes “using”. . .
USING:	Taking advantage of others in a pseudo deal which may look real but is not.
Example:	Taking advantage of someone’s mistaken credit for a successful intervention result that was not your own.
RESISTANCE:	Refusing to participate or giving advice against a course of action that would violate authenticity.
Example:	Refusing to share confidential information about an employee when pressured by a senior manager. When resistance becomes distorted or inauthentic, it becomes “revenge”. . .
REVENGE OR BETRAYAL:	Transforming refusal into sabotage or deviously and unfairly punishing others.
Example:	Refusing to share your information which contradicts a negative assessment of a difficult client whom you don’t like.

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Case Study - Part II

- *How do you use your power authentically?*
- *What do you say?*

Case Study - Part II

A. *Conversation with Associate Director*

- *How do you use your power authentically?*
- *What do you say?*

Case Study - Part II

B. Conversation with Division Director

- *How do you use your power authentically?*
- *What do you say?*

Case Study - Part II

- C. *Dialogue or Discussion with the whole team. After you referred Associate Director to HR, you decided to raise the issue of their reactions to the marketing director.*
- *How do you use your power authentically?*
 - *What do you say?*

Conclusion

Given what you've learned about power and authenticity, how would you now assess the situations in your own organization?