

Organizational politics reflection report

Self-assessment I: How political are you?

Instructions: This questionnaire is designed to measure your political behavior. You have been asked to answer “true” or “false” to 10 questions. Select the answer that better represents your behavior or belief, even if that particular behavior or belief is not present all the time.

1. You should make others feel important through an open appreciation of their ideas and work.

☐ True
☐ False

2. Because people tend to judge you when they first meet you, always try to make a good first impression.

☐ True
☐ False

3. Try to let others do most of the talking, be sympathetic to their problems, and resist telling people that they are totally wrong.

☐ True
☐ False

4. Praise the good traits of the people you meet and always give people an opportunity to save face if they are wrong or make a mistake.

☐ True
☐ False

5. Spreading false rumors, planting misleading information, and backstabbing are necessary, if somewhat unpleasant, methods to deal with your enemies.

☐ True
☐ False

6. Sometimes it is necessary to make promises that you know you will not or cannot keep.

☐ True
☐ False

7. It is important to get along with everybody, even with those who are generally recognized as windbags, abrasive, or constant complainers.

☐ True
☐ False

8. It is vital to do favors for others so that you can call in these IOUs at times when they will do you the most good.

☐ True
☐ False

9. Be willing to compromise, particularly on issues that are minor to you but important to others.

_____ True

_____ False

10. On controversial issues, it is important to delay or avoid your involvement if possible.

_____ True

_____ False

Source: Adapted from Joseph F. Byrnes, "Connecting Organizational Politics and Conflict Resolution," *Personnel Administrator*, June 1986, p.49.

How to interpret your score:

This questionnaire is designed to measure your political behavior. You have been asked to answer "true" or "false" to 10 questions. When you have finished, consider the following:

If you answered true to almost all of the questions, you should consider yourself a confirmed politician (this is meant to be a compliment!).

If you answered False to questions 5 and 6, which deal with deliberate lies and uncharitable behavior, you have shown yourself to be someone with high ethical standards.

If you answered false to almost all of the questions, you are most definitely not a politician; rather, you are a person who rejects manipulation, incomplete disclosure, and self-serving behavior.

Self-assessment II: What are your bases of power?

Instructions: Using a current or former job, answer each of the following items by circling the response that most suits your answer. If you have never worked before, you can use a school or volunteer experience where you worked with others.

1 - Strongly disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Neither agree nor disagree

4 - Agree

5 - Strongly agree

1. ____ I always try to set a good example for other employees.
2. ____ My coworkers seem to respect me on the job.
3. ____ Many employees view me as their informal leader at work.
4. ____ I know my job very well.
5. ____ My skills and abilities help me a lot on this job.
6. ____ I continually try to improve the way I do my job.
7. ____ I have considerable authority in my job.
8. ____ Decisions made at my level are critical to organizational success.
9. ____ Employees frequently ask me for guidance.
10. ____ I am able to reward people at lower levels in the organization.
11. ____ I am responsible for evaluating those below me.
12. ____ I have a say in who gets a bonus or pay raise.
13. ____ I can punish employees at lower levels.
14. ____ I check the work of lower-level employees.
15. ____ My diligence helps to reduce the errors of others on the job.

How to interpret your score:

This instrument examines the five bases of power. When you have finished the questionnaire, add up

your score for each scale as follows:

Referent power (add up items 1–3)

Expert power (add up items 4–6)

Legitimate power (add up items 7–9)

Reward power (add up items 10–12)

Coercive power (add up items 13–15)

To interpret the scores, consider the following:

A score of 3–6 points indicates a weak power base on a particular scale.

A score of 7–11 points indicates a moderate power base on a particular scale.

A score of 12–15 points indicates a strong power base on a particular scale.

Self-assessment III: Political skill inventory

Instructions: Using a current or former job, answer each of the following items by circling the response that most suits your answer. If you have never worked before, you can use a school or volunteer experience where you worked with others.

1 - Strongly disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Neither agree nor disagree

4 - Agree

5 - Strongly agree

1. ____ I am able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me.
2. ____ It is easy for me to develop good rapport with most people.
3. ____ I understand people very well.
4. ____ I spend a lot of time and effort at work networking with others.
5. ____ I am able to communicate easily and effectively with others.
6. ____ I am good at building relationships with influential people at work.
7. ____ I am particularly good at sensing the motivations and hidden agendas of others.
8. ____ When communicating with others, I try to be genuine in what I say and do.
9. ____ At work, I know a lot of important people and am well connected.
10. ____ I spend a lot of time at work developing connections with others.
11. ____ I am good at getting people to like me.
12. ____ It is important that people believe I am sincere in what I say and do.
13. ____ I try to show a genuine interest in other people.
14. ____ I am good at using my connections and network to make things happen at work.
15. ____ I have good intuition or savvy about how to present myself to others.
16. ____ I always seem to instinctively know the right things to say or do to influence others.
17. ____ I pay close attention to people's facial expressions.
18. ____ I have developed a large network of colleagues and associates at work whom I can call on for support when I really need to get things done.

Adapted from: Ferris, G. R., Treadway, D. C., Kolodinsky, R. W., Hochwarter, W. A., Kacmar, C. J., Douglas, C., & Frink, D. D. (2005). Development and validation of the political skill inventory. *Journal of Management*, 31(1), 126-152.

How to calculate and interpret your score:

- To find your overall political skill score: add up your scores and divide them by 18.
- To find your scores for each political skill dimension:
 - social astuteness = $(3 + 7 + 15 + 16 + 17) / 5$
 - interpersonal influence = $(1 + 2 + 5 + 11) / 4$
 - appear sincere = $(8 + 12 + 13) / 3$
 - networking ability = $(4 + 6 + 9 + 10 + 14 + 18) / 6$

Scores lower than 2.3 → low political skill

Scores between 2.3 and 4.6 → medium political skill

Scores over 4.6 → high political skill