

PAL (Political Awareness and Leadership) Q

Adapted from: Kilburg, R.R. (2006). *Executive Wisdom: Coaching and the Emergence of Virtuous Leaders*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

1. Who are the formal leaders in this organization
(unit)?.....
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.....
2. Who are the informal leaders in this organization
(unit)?.....
.....
.....
3. How are they connected to each other (socially, psychologically,
economically, through interests, shared time, shared history, similar
backgrounds or educational histories, clubs, associations, shared values,
geography, families, mutual
friends)?.....
.....
.....
.....
4. What are their sources of political clout (formal position, talent, information,
skill, past favours, special knowledge – blackmail – political bank accounts
through dependencies, heroic action, achievements, mistakes, failures,
fears,
etc.)?.....
.....
.....
.....
5. Who in the unit seems to know the local map
best?.....
.....

6. What are the bases of your assessments?.....
.....
How reliable and valid is the information you have obtained, the intuitions you have formed?.....
.....
7. Place the people you have identified into a political hierarchy. Who is on top?.....
Second?.....
Bottom?.....
Why have you put them in this order?.....
.....
8. Who currently has what by way of power and influence in the organization (resources, budgets, staff, buildings, equipment, decision-making responsibilities, information, strong relationships, ideas, knowledge and skill)?.....
.....
.....
9. When and how did he/she get the power/influence?.....
.....
.....
10. Did anyone lose when he/she got it? Who, what, why, when, how much?.....
.....
Who had the relationships with the loser(s)?.....
.....

Did anyone help the loser(s)? Who, what, why, when, how much?.....
.....

Are they still in the unit/organization?.....

Did anyone help the winner? Who, what, why, when, how much?.....
.....

Who had relationships with the winner(s)?.....
.....

Are they still in the unit/organization?.....

11. Does anyone still around remember the events? Carry a grudge? Play to even the score? Redress the losses?

Who?.....
.....

What has happened?.....
.....

With what impact?.....
.....

What are the information sources for your observations?.....
.....

12. What are the ambitions, desires, wants, needs of the key players you've identified?.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

- 13.** What approaches are they taking to get what they want?.....
.....
- 14.** Is there any overt or covert competition or conflict between these individuals or between groups of them?.....
.....
Do some of them want things others have? Who, what, why, how much?.....
.....
- 15.** Are they doing anything overt or covert to get what they want or need?.....
.....
.....
- 16.** What is their personal history of competing?.....
.....
.....
- 17.** What is their personal style of competing? Of being in conflict?.....
.....
.....
- 18.** Are there subgroups formally or informally organized and competing or in conflict?.....
.....
- 19.** What have been the outcomes, costs, benefits, consequences of the competition or conflict for the individuals, the unit, their careers, their families, their physical or emotional health?.....
.....
.....

20. What history, traditions, values, attitudes, beliefs, virtues, or vices have contributed to the development of the current landscape? For you?.....
.....
.....
- For the other players?.....
.....
- How do you define truth for yourself?.....
.....
- For others?.....
.....
- What are the “vocabularies of meaning” being used by the actors (money, political power, status, ideas, relationships, programs, sex, love, hate, admiration, and devaluation)?.....
.....
.....
- Are these also political currencies in actual circulation?.....
- Who keeps the books?.....
- What are people’s balances with each other?.....
.....
- What is the unit’s balance with other units?.....
.....
.....

- 21.** Are you prepared to suspend some or all of your current views of the situation? Which ones?.....
.....
Why?.....
.....
- 22.** Is there anything missing from the picture drawn so far?.....
.....
Whom does the map privilege?.....
Whom does the map oppress?.....
What and whom does the map protect?.....
.....
What and whom does the map expose?.....
.....
- 23.** Can you examine the map from different perspectives – the privileged, the oppressed, the knowledgeable, the skilled, the ignorant, the haves, the have-nots?.....
.....
- 24.** Can you create a different picture, a new map of what the political and power landscape could be? What would you like or need it to be?.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

25. What steps could or should be undertaken to achieve such a vision?.....

.....
.....

Do you have the required knowledge, skills, abilities, resources, and motivation to take those steps?.....

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26. What barriers might be in the way of achieving the vision?.....

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27. How might you address those barriers?.....

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28. What new knowledge and skill will you need to cope with the present landscape, create a new idea, identify or overcome barriers, and implement the actions necessary for change to occur?.....

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.....

29. How will you know when you've changed the map?.....

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30. How you have managed change in the past?.....

.....
.....

31. What typically gets in the way of you making necessary changes personally or professionally?.....

.....
.....

32. What was the most difficult political situation you have ever faced?.....
.....

33. What happened?.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

34. What were the short- and long-term consequences for you?.....
.....
.....
.....

35. What made it difficult?.....
.....
.....

36. Is that history informing or influencing your current understanding and action in the present situation?
How?.....
.....
.....

37. Have those patterns or dynamics repeated themselves for you?.....
.....
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.....
.....

38. What was the best political situation you have ever faced?.....
.....

39. What happened?.....
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40. What were the short- and long-term consequences for you?.....
.....
.....
.....

41. What made it successful?.....
.....
.....

42. Is that history informing or influencing your current understanding and action in the present situation?
How?.....
.....
.....

43. Have those patterns or dynamics repeated themselves for you?.....
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