

WIL (Wisdom in Leadership): Political Awareness

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)?.....
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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)?.....
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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.)?.....
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5. Place the people you have identified into a political hierarchy. Who is on top?.....
Second?.....
Bottom?.....
Why have you put them in this order?.....
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6. 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)?.....
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7. What are the ambitions, desires, wants, needs of the key players you've identified?.....
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8. What approaches are they taking to get what they want?.....
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9. Are there subgroups formally or informally organized and competing or in conflict?.....
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10. 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?.....
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11. What typically gets in the way of you making necessary changes personally or professionally?.....
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12. What was the most difficult political situation you have ever faced?.....
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13. What happened?.....
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14. What were the short- and long-term consequences for you?.....
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15. What was the best political situation you have ever faced?.....
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16. What happened?.....
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17. What were the short- and long-term consequences for you?.....
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18. What made it successful?.....
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19. Have those patterns or dynamics repeated themselves for you?.....
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