

## Ashridge Business School Webinar Media Invite

Monday 5 August, 2013

Media are invited to a webinar entitled Navigating the maze of office politics, on 20 September, at 10.00am GMT, hosted by Ashridge Business School. Leadership expert Phil Anderson and Psychometrics Consultant Alex Davda will guide attendees through the labyrinth of office politics. All organisations are subject to competition between the desires and interests of different departments, teams and individuals. Learn about different organisational political landscapes and how to build relationships to help managers meet their objectives and become a positive political player.

The webinar is based around a new cutting-edge questionnaire that participants will have an opportunity to trial and complete before the webinar.

Alex Davda, Psychometrics Consultant and Occupational Psychologist at Ashridge Business School, said: "The outputs of the survey deliver insights into your approach, attitude, aptitude and action orientation towards office politics and will help you understand how to operate more effectively in the political landscape of your organisation. The innovative developmental instrument analyses your perceptions of your political positioning, and offers the opportunity to receive feedback from your colleagues."

Office politics is often associated with narcissists, Machiavellis and psychopaths, and backstabbing or underhand tricks. Rather than taking such a dark view of politics, Phil and Alex suggest that by understanding your own political approach and how that compares with your political landscape, individuals can become much more successful political players.

Phil Anderson said: "Organisations are like political structures in government, and personalities and politics play a significant, if not an overriding role, in the way that organisations are run. Look around you - who gets on in your organisation, who seems to get more projects approved and more praise from the boss. Are they 'playing politics'? Is it working both for them and the organisation? Is it time you started to learn how to play the game too? It could make a real difference to your performance and that of your organisation."

By promoting a positive culture, leaders are able to channel people's interests and energy away from negative political interplay and towards an alignment with organisation objectives.

Phil Anderson added, "From large multi-nationals, to SMEs, to voluntary organisations, all companies are impacted by internal politics. Organisational politics are ever-present and have widespread effects on critical processes, such as performance evaluations, resource allocations, decision making, and promotions. Politically effective leaders line up resources to accomplish personal and professional goals through the power and influence of their relationships"

Phil Anderson suggests that the British period drama Downton Abbey is compelling because of its take on workplace politics and illustrates the complexities of organisational life.

"The show depicts the Crawley family and their servants, highlighting events in history and their impact on the characters' lives. Robert Crawley, Earl of Grantham, leads the Crawley family, and Carson, the butler, leads the servants. The family tree is a dynamic and complex organisational structure, as servants report to both Carson and Crawley family members. The superiors often contradict each other - which is also common in business settings. Typically, complex organisations are formed in a matrix structure where the employee reports to both their direct boss as well as other project specific leaders. Who do you listen to? Who has the most power? How do you communicate effectively?

"The lines of communication and gossip are both horizontal and vertical to both the family members and the servants. Communication, or lack of communication, equals power - at both Downton Abbey and within the organisation in which you work."

- Ends -

Register for the webinar now to become more politically effective.

The results of the questionnaire will be confidential, and given to the participant only.

To join the webinar contact:

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Read Phil's article featuring 10 top tips on how to survive office politics

[www.ashridge.org.uk/Website/Content.nsf/wCOR/How+to+survive+office+politics?opendocument](http://www.ashridge.org.uk/Website/Content.nsf/wCOR/How+to+survive+office+politics?opendocument)

Ashridge's Open programme:

Impact and Influence: Driving outstanding results focuses on influencing as a key leadership skill and developing personal credibility. It helps participants understand and develop the capability to manage the organisational context in which they influence, and includes a session on Office Politics.

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