The Manager: Empowering Self, Organization and Community

TABLE OF CONTENTS

FORWARD 3

PART 1: CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES.....7

PERSPECTIVE 8
DEFINING THE EMPOWERMENT TERRITORY 9
MAKING SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT 10
THE MANAGEMENT THEORY OF THE MONTH CLUB 13
EMPOWERMENT, MOTIVATION AND MANAGERIAL INTENTIONS 14
TURNING THEORY INTO PRACTICE 15
EMPOWERMENT AND ORGANIZATION CHANGE 16
EMPOWERMENT OF SELF 26

PART 2: WORKSHOP IDEAS 34

INTRODUCTION 35
OPTION 1: WARM-UP/ICE BREAKER 38
OPTION 2: SELF-ASSESSEMENT OPPORTUNITY 40
OPTION 3: PRESENTATION 41
OPTION 4: SMALL GROUP EVENT 43
OPTION 5: SELF-ASSESSEMENT OPPORTUNITY II 45
OPTION 6: PLANNING ACTIVITY 51

PART 3: WORKSHOP SUPPLEMENT TO OPTION 55

WORKSHOP SUPPLEMENT HANDOUT 1 56
WORKSHOP SUPPLEMENT HANDOUT 2 63

END NOTES 67

The future for us, too, is in our own place. If we can learn to see it differently, and are 'strong in will' to change it.
-Charles Handy

FORWARD

It has been said that the only certainty in management today is the certainty of change. Unquestionably, the concepts and strategies of management are among the fastest moving targets. They are rapidly changing for a variety of reasons. First, there is competition for scarce resources, particularly in the public domain. This means that managers are constantly challenged to do more with less. Second, demands by customers (and citizens) for better service, higher quality goods, more responsive and open organizations continue to grow. From my perspective, there is little difference between the meaning of the term's customers and citizens. The adoption and implementation of the concept of customer by many progressive local government managers is a good example of how management concepts and strategies change with times. Third, the increasing speed and ease of communicating new management ideas and their use in the market place have been no less than phenomenal in the past few years. For example, to engage in a bit of instant research on the latest managerial fads, all you need to do is tap into the Internet and the myriad of management related web sites.

Finally management, both private and public, has become a "legitimate" profession. This means, among other things, that the tools of the profession, management concepts and strategies, are constantly being refined and redefined in the hands of those who research and write about them and by those who use them. In fact, it is almost impossible in this rapidly changing discipline to know where the new ideas come from. Do they emanate from the halls of academia, research institutes and the growing ranks of management consultants who need new wares to market? Or do they originate with aggressive and innovative operating organizations, the users of management concepts, strategies and ideas.

SLOVAK CONTEXT FOR THE TRAINING SERIES

The local Self Government Assistance Center, funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), has as one its major program objectives the strengthening of in-country training capacity to serve local government's development needs. The fulfillment of this objective includes the development of training materials, training of trainers, and further improvement in the management of local government training services. These activities are embodied within the larger LSGAC goal to help

Slovakia's local governments be more effective, responsive and accountable in service to their citizens. The *Strengthening the Management of Local Self Government in Slovakia* workbook series, therefore, is intended to help local governments achieve higher levels of performance through new and improved management principles and practices gained through on the job learning.

THE TARGET AUDIENCE

For public managers in Slovakia (among them the elected majors and deputies as well as city managers, department heads and directors of public service organizations), the task of learning new approaches to public management and putting the learning into practice, is daunting. You and your organization have been thrust into the heart of a country-wide paradigm shift of political, economic and social values and norms. For local governments, these changes have created a host of new problems, but also the potential to pursue new opportunities. Given the dynamic and changing nature of your work environment, this series focuses on concepts and strategies that can help you mold your local government organization to deal more effectively with the political, economic and social changes that are sweeping your country and region.

We have picked a few core topics and competencies we believe are central to your current challenges and demands as local public managers and leaders. Consequently, this series of short learning experiences is not a comprehensive course in managerial theories and strategies. No effort has been made to go back to the early *basics* of management theory that have often set the stage for many contemporary management ideas and fads. Nor was an attempt made to explore all the new schools of management thinking that consume meters of space in full-service book stores in London and elsewhere. Rather, this series is, more modestly, an attempt to help you gain managerial insights and skills in a few targeted areas of managerial practice so you can increase the effectiveness, responsiveness and accountability of your local government organization, as assessed by the citizens you serve.

To reach the goal intended for the *Strengthening the Management of Local Self Government in Slovakia* workbook series, I decided to return to the *Guide for Managing Change for Urban Managers and Trainers,* a workbook I wrote several years ago for the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat). The workbook has substantially altered and updated with the help of an able and experienced Slovak advisory team, and David Tees, a colleague I rely upon more and more in crafting learning materials for practitioners in the public service.

EXPECTATIONS

Here is a brief overview of what you can expect from the *Strengthening the Management of Local Self Government in Slovakia* workbook series. Workbook #1, *The Evolving Roles and Responsibilities of Local Government Manager* and Workbook #2, *The Manager and Organizational Culture* are based on concepts from which the users of these materials might benefit: 1) local government management roles and how they have evolved over the last few decades, particularly in the United States and other Western countries; and 2) organizational cultures, how they are invented and how they can be changed to better serve the changing mandates of local governments as keystone institutions in building open and democratic societies. These workbooks are designed to lay the groundwork for planning and managing organization change as defined in Workbook #3.

The core learning module, Workbook #3, *The Manager as Organizational Change Agent,* focuses on concepts and strategies associated with the planning and management of changes within organizations and their immediate environments. While much has been written about organization development and planned change, they are still relevant and important topics for discussion.

This module, in a metaphorical sense, will be wrapped around another set of LSGAC supported training materials. These are the skill development workshops on *Consulting Skills* which focus, in more depth, on two phases of the organization change process, contracting and data collection and analysis.

Workbook #4, *The Manager as Visionary Strategist,* addresses the issues and processes associated with strategic planning. To many, strategic planning is an ally of the planned change process. To others, it is an overlapping intrusion. Nevertheless, strategic planning is a potentially valuable tool for planning the future of your community. As Tom Cannon reminds us, in this book, *Welcome to the Revolution,* "Managers are craftsmen and strategy is their clay…like the potter, they sit between the past of capabilities and the future of opportunities."

Some insights are offered on *The Manager as Staff Developer* (Workbook #5). The conceptual framework used to describe the institution building role of the manager assumes the manager should use different management styles based on the work situation. Since this approach to leadership styles focuses, in large measure, on the maturity (development) of the work force to determine the appropriate management response to most situations, it offers insights into the potential for staff and organization development. We will also look at the growing use of interdisciplinary and interdepartmental teams as essential to achieving high performance within complex organizations.

The Manager As Empowering Self, Organization and Community (Workbook #6) focuses on concepts and techniques for encouraging individuals to take initiative and ownership of their work and their professional development. Empowerment can be a major driving force behind organizational and personal performance. We

will explore the basic definition of empowerment and related terms, as well as various approaches for empowering self and others. Lastly, this workbook will present exercises whereby individuals can examine their readiness for empowering both self and others.

THANKS TO MANY WHO MADE THIS POSSIBLE

Many individuals and organizations have contributed to this effort. These training materials were originally written under the sponsorship of the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the guidance of Dr. Tomasz Sudra, Chief, Training and Capacity Building. This revision is funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and managed by the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) through its affiliate, the Local Self Government Assistance Center (LSGAC) in Bratislava, Slovakia. LSGAC, initiated and funded by USAID, is devoted to strengthening local governments in Slovakia through capacity building endeavors with local support institutions.

These Slovak support institutions include: The Foundation for Training in Self Government of the Slovak Republic; The Regional (Local Self Government) Training Centers; the Slovakia city Managers Association; the School of Public Administration;, Academia Istropolitana, and the newly established Association for Management Training and Development. In the development of this series, special thanks go to Dr. Anastazia Kozakova, who directed the local advisory committee, and to the team of experts she assembled to provide their insights and good judgement. They include: city manager Jana Blazejova, Jan Dreisig, Richard Hojer, and Maria Pfliegelova; and, Peter Bercik, and advisor to the Slovak Ministry of Interior. Bo Tilney provided an invaluable service as layout and design artist and computer specialist in transmitting complex documents via the internet. I want to recognize the invaluable contribution of Luba Vavrova, my colleague at LSGAC. Without her continuing assistance, the development of these training materials would not have been possible. And of course, thanks to my colleague, David Tees, University of Texas at Arlington, who provided valuable inputs to the development of learning exercises for the series.

In my short stay in Slovakia, I have come to appreciate the valuable contributions that mayors, city managers and other senior local government officials are making to secure an open and democratic society for their citizens. I hope this series of management materials will help you perform your roles and responsibilities in strengthening local self-government to be more effective, responsive and accountable.

Fred Fisher

Bratislava, Slovakia 1999

Part 1

Concepts And Strategies

Beginnings are always messy.
-John Galsworthy

PERSPECTIVE

The English language, for good or bad, has the capacity to re-invent itself as it goes along. New words erupt out of the literary landscape, even as we sleep, and attach themselves to our everyday lives. And, the flow of new words, phrases and meanings doesn't stop at linguistic boundaries. They ignore the formalities of country clearance and passports, riding on the coat tails of Internet and professional gadflies (otherwise known as international consultants) who appear to have no permanent home nor concern about bastardizing vocabularies in far flung places.

So be it with terms like *empowerment* and *enabling.* These words and others have been invented to convey actions, strategies, and values that defy the traditional modes of organizational bureaucratic norms and behavior. They convey a "new spirit" of collaborating in order to get things done in a fast moving world. They also reflect the rapid spread of freedom of thinking about democratic principles and values.

There are growing realizations and expectations everywhere in the world that individuals have rights, and I might add corresponding responsibilities, to engage in thinking and actions that give them more influence and control over their everyday lives. As well as influence and control over their collective destiny as communities and societies. It is within this context that we will look at these terms, with a specific focus on *empowerment*, and what they mean in your role as public manager. Let's start with an attempt to define these terms.

DEFINING THE EMPOWERMENT TERRITORY

While this learning module will focus primarily on the term *empowerment*, we need to think about it in the broader framework of more traditional words like power and influence. Max Weber, the German sociologist, who either invented bureaucracy (or simply described in complex and theoretical terms what he saw happening around him in terms of organizational behavior) had this to say about power:

> "Power is the probability that one actor within a social relationship will be in a position to carry out his own will, despite resistance, regardless of the basis on which this probability exists."[1]

Life is not a problem to be solved but reality to be experienced
- Kierkegaard

As we now know, that description is a bit dated. Today we differentiate power into many types, such as *reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, expert, information, connection and catalytic.* In its most simplistic terms, **power** is the ability to get things done, either through the use of more personal sources (the referent, expert, information, connection, catalytic kind) or the power of official position (the so-called legitimate sources that carry with them the potential to reward and coerce).

The use of power through more traditional channels (power associated with organizational mandates and official offices and positions) has proven inadequate in today's complex world. Power and influence can no longer be ascribed as human commodities that exist within organizational and national boundaries. Nor can they simply be attributed to the anointed few who believe they can guard the gates to these formalized kingdoms. Power and influence flow in and out of these man-made borders as though they were sieves. Given the reality of how contemporary organizations and political institutions, (i.e., local self-governments) function, those with leadership and management responsibilities are challenged to invent new tools to keep pace with the changes that swirl about them.

This is, in part, why personal, managerial and leadership processes like *empowerment* and *enabling* have become so popular. They are attempts to categorize or label new ways of thinking and acting so that we can talk about them, and explore their use in more concrete terms. In the context of this discussion, we will explore what these new management strategies are and how to use them as tools to improve your performance, as individuals, managers, and community members.

Raisins soaked in water don't become grapes

MAKING SENSE OF EMPOWERMENT

Writers have described empowerment in many ways, for many occasions. For example:

- "Empowerment is the ability to let others assume the responsibility, risks and rewards associated with making their own decisions."[2]
- "Empowerment is strengthening others' belief in their own sense of effectiveness and sharing leadership power with others."[3]
- "To feel empowered is to have a strong sense of 'can do', a feeling of control and choice over life's events. People who are empowered are fully aware of all their resources, their strengths and weaknesses, their feelings and frustrations, their values and their attitudes. They are clear about what they want to accomplish in life, and are optimistic about their ability to achieve their goals."[4]
- Empowerment is determining what you want, what I want and how can we accomplish it together.[5]

You probably noted that these definitions don't deal directly with the more traditional notions of delegating authority and responsibility. Or, what we have long accepted as the transfer of power to do things within formalized, organizational settings. As Ken Blanchard, of One Minute Manager fame, reminds us, "The traditional management model of the manager in control and employees under control is no longer effective. To create an empowered workplace, management's role in organizations must move from a command-and-control mind-set to a responsibility-oriented and supportive environment in which all employees have the opportunity to do their best".[6] Empowerment calls for a philosophical change in the way organizations operate. Managers and employees alike must learn, first, not to be bureaucratic and second, to be empowered. To which we would quickly add the footnote, "easier said than done!"

Inventing our future demands an embracing of chaos, innovation, and risk
- Nicola Phillips

While Blanchard is being "philosophic", Peter Block suggests a different "mindset". For Block "empowerment is a state of mind as well as a result of position, policies, and practices. As managers we become more powerful as we nurture the power of those below us."[7] In their own way, both of these management gurus describe empowerment as an antidote to bureaucracy. When left unattended, Block says bureaucracy reinforces itself and encourages business (and politics) as usual. A bureaucratic culture tends to make us experience ourselves as vulnerable, losing control, and somewhat helpless. By contrast, being

empowered means: feeling our survival is in our own hands, that we have an underlying purpose, and are willing to commit ourselves to achieving that purpose now.

The bureaucratic contract between boss and employee (which Block also describes as patriarchal; a state of organization behavior we will touch on later) requires us to

- ❑ submit to authority,
- ❑ deny self-expression, and
- ❑ make sacrifices for unnamed future rewards.

Empowerment (the *entrepreneurial contract*), by contrast requires us as organizational members to: be our own authority, encourage self-expression, make commitments, and believe that these conditions of working together are fair and just.[8]

Empowerment, as an organizational philosophy, style, or norm of collective behavior, cannot be implemented without dealing (in one way or another) with the issues of delegating authority and responsibility. On the other hand, empowerment is more than an organizational process, embodied in policies and day to day work practices. We will, in the course of this discussion, explore empowerment as an individual opportunity in self-expression and actualization, as well as efforts to empower others within organizations that are outside the boundaries of delegated authority and responsibility. Finally, we will explore the extra-organizational opportunities to use empowerment as a community building venture. But first, let's look briefly at the companion piece to empowerment, what many refer to as *enabling*.

ENABLING: AN EMPOWERMENT COMPANION

Enabling, a sibling strategy to *empowerment* is more akin to the delegating aspects of empowerment, when looked at from a public management perspective. Enabling, as described in the UNCHS (Habitat) *Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000,* is

> "an approach whereby the full potential and resources of all the actors in the shelter production and improvement process are mobilized; but the final decision on how to house themselves is left to the people concerned."[9]

Enabling is doing things that mobilize resources others need without forfeiting their right to decide how, when and where to use them. Said somewhat differently, enabling makes things possible, practical and easier for others who are not quite prepared to do things for themselves.

In a related training manual, aimed primarily at elected officials, the fine line was defined between enabling and other policy and management strategies that public officials use to be more effective in serving their constituents. Among the ideas put forth in that manual, was reference to a publication on public sector decentralization by the World Bank. Jerry Silverman describes the difference between the "provision" of public goods by local governments and the "production" of these goods and services. Provision is the decision to allocate resources to a particular good or service and monitor its use; production is the transformation of those resources into the delivery of the goods and services.

Silverman goes on to say that "it is axiomatic that governments are responsible for the provision of public goods; although it is not necessary that they be directly involved in producing such goods and services".[10] More frequently, local governments are "enabling" citizens to undertake the provision of certain public services, rather than producing them by using public funds and organization resources.

As an example, smaller local governments have provided training, technical assistance, access to loans that neighborhood groups will be responsible for repaying, and support in getting organized to plan, build, operate and maintain community-based water supply systems. In other words, enabling is creating the kind of environment where citizens, to the extent possible, can meet their own needs through their own efforts.

Empowerment, as a management strategy applied within the organization's operating structure, is a bit more complicated and implies more direct on-going involvement of managers and others in the organization. But, as mentioned earlier, empowerment is more than just a management strategy to be applied within organizations, primarily through the devolution of authority and responsibility. Empowerment can be used to alter the organization's value system, resulting in enhanced performance and worker satisfaction. To reiterate a point made earlier, we will also consider ways to empower others beyond the self and organization. But first, a word of caution about this thing we are calling *empowerment!*

Men in search of a myth will usually find one
-Pueblo

THE DARK SIDE OF EMPOWERING OTHERS

Empowerment sounds like one of those "motherhood" phrases that defy criticism. Not so! James Lucas, in a recent book entitled *Balance of Power*, takes dead aim at the piety that often surrounds the most recent management fad to sweep the world. As for empowerment, Lucas says:

> "I have come to hate the word. It has many flaws: First, it implies that we as leaders have some kind of godlike prerogative to 'anoint' others for action. Second, it says that all power resides in us annointers until we decide (or condescend) to share some of it with others. Third, it completely overlooks the barriers and obstacles that may exist within the 'empowered' (for instance, they don't want power, they don't know what to do with it, they're afraid to use it, they'll use it to advance their own position, they'll use it to attack us).[11]

Obviously, Mr. Lucas has a deep-seated dislike for what he sees as a move to "empower" subordinates within organizations. From my perspective, he reveals his bias and his position with the last comment; *they'll use it to attack us.* It reminds me of the famous quote from the cartoon character, Pogo. "We have met the enemy and they are us". The irony of his tainted pen is the central theme of his book. He makes a strong case for employing something he calls *power-sharing.* (For those who have read the LSGAC manual on Involving Citizens in the Local Governance Process, you will undoubtedly recognize a common theme.)

THE MANAGEMENT THEORY OF THE MONTH CLUB

While I find the Lucas attack on empowerment overdone, I agree with some of the concerns he raises about the misuse of empowerment as a management strategy. There is the danger that empowerment, in the hands of manipulative managers, will become the latest version of medieval *Lord-serf* patrimony. In *The Witch Doctors*, a book that captures "what management gurus are saying, why it matters and how to make sense of it", the authors also have some unkind things to say about empowerment. They characterize it as just another version of the trend to market the management theory of the month. One manager, delivering his verdict to this fashion trend, said "Last year it was quality circles, this year it will be zero inventories. The truth is, one more fad and we will all go crazy".

As Micklethwait and Woodridge lament,

> Managers have learned how to pay lip service to theories without really understanding them, let alone bothering to implement them. Many managers are rather like Soviet bureaucrats, living in a dual world-the real world and the world of officially sanctioned ideology. Thus they talk about "empowerment" but habitually hoard power, or proclaim that they are "re-engineering" their organizations when they are really just sacking a few of the more lackluster workers.[12]

Empowering employees can be a powerful force within an organization but it must be understood for what it is: a strategy that will, if implemented successfully, fundamentally change the authority and hierarchical relationships within the system. The danger of flirting with such ideas and concepts is the tendency to trade them in for a new model when they appear to be faltering. Empowerment, when nibbled at around the edges by experimenting managers, is just another word for manipulation.

New infantry man to officer: "Sir, where is my foxhole?" The officer replies, "You're standing on it. Just throw out the dirt".

EMPOWERMENT, MOTIVATION AND MANAGERIAL INTENTIONS

Empowering others in an organization to take more decisions, be more responsible, is akin to the manager motivating her staff. As managers, we can't motivate anyone. What we can do is create the conditions where those we work with are motivated to behave differently. Like motivation, empowerment comes from within the individual, based on sound policies, practices and support, taking into consideration the needs and aspirations of individual employees and the organization.

Stephan Covey reminds us that "empowerment can't be installed (in organizations), it has to be grown. It's a matter of nurturing the conditions that create it…by nurturing these conditions, we create the environment in which they can empower themselves".[13] We will be looking at ways to implement empowerment strategies within the workplace, including those conditions that Covey and his associates identify as critical to the process. But first, a time for some reflection.

Reflection

Before continuing, take a few moments and reflect upon your own ideas about *empowerment.* What do you think it means? How might you use it as a management strategy? Or, as a personal strategy in interacting with others?

TURNING THEORY INTO PRACTICE

The focus of our discussion from this point on will, in large part, involve your role as public manager. Not just any public manager but one dedicated to creating conditions within the work setting that enables everyone to participate in making decisions, based on competency and mutual gains). In addition, we want to give some thought to two other arenas where empowerment can play a role in your personal fulfillment. They are self empowerment, and the process of creating conditions for others so they can achieve greater freedom in making decisions that affect their own destiny. Helping to empower others to achieve their goals and aspirations will ultimately help you achieve a greater measure of self-empowerment (even when there is no apparent *quid-pro-quo* in the effort).

In many ways, these simple acts of empowering others with insights, ideas and potential opportunities can be the most satisfying because they are done through the joy of sharing with no strings attached. It can be as simple as telling a friend about a new job opportunity, one they might not be aware of. Or, linking two or more individuals, who may not know each other but can benefit from future interaction.

EMPOWERMENT AND ORGANIZATION CHANGE

There is considerable agreement, among those who write about empowerment, about what is required to use empowerment as an organizational change strategy. We will look at several models that have been recognized by managers and others as useful in understanding the steps required "to empower" employees and organizations.

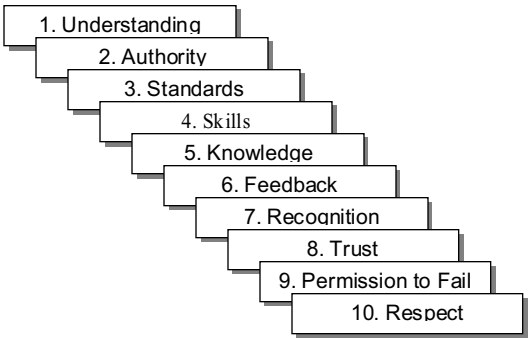
DIANE TRACY

Diane Tracy, in *10 Steps to Empowerment*, has laid out a simple and straightforward process for empowering employees.[14] It is a good place to begin our discussion.

The power of Tracy's model is in its simplicity. You may be saying (as I did in reading her book) that these steps are just plain management truisms. Every competent manager should know them and know how to apply them. True. However, many managers don't.

- *Step 1:* A manager empowers others by giving them a clear understanding of the responsibilities of the job.
- *Step 2:* A manager empowers others by giving them authority equal to the responsibility assigned to them.
- *Step 3:* A manager empowers others by setting standards of excellence that enable them to reach their full potential.
- *Step 4:* A manager empowers others by providing them with the skill and confidence they need to meet the standards of excellence.
- *Step 5:* A manager empowers others by providing them with the knowledge and information they need to make good, sound decisions.
- *Step 6:* A manager empowers others by giving them feedback on their performance.
- *Step 7:* A manager empowers others by giving them recognition, which enhances their self-esteem and motivates them to continue to do their best work.
- *Step 8:* A manager empowers others by trusting in them, which helps them believe more in themselves.
- *Step 9:* A manager empowers others by giving them permission to fail.
- *Step 10:* A manager empowers others by treating them with dignity and respect.

Diagram 1



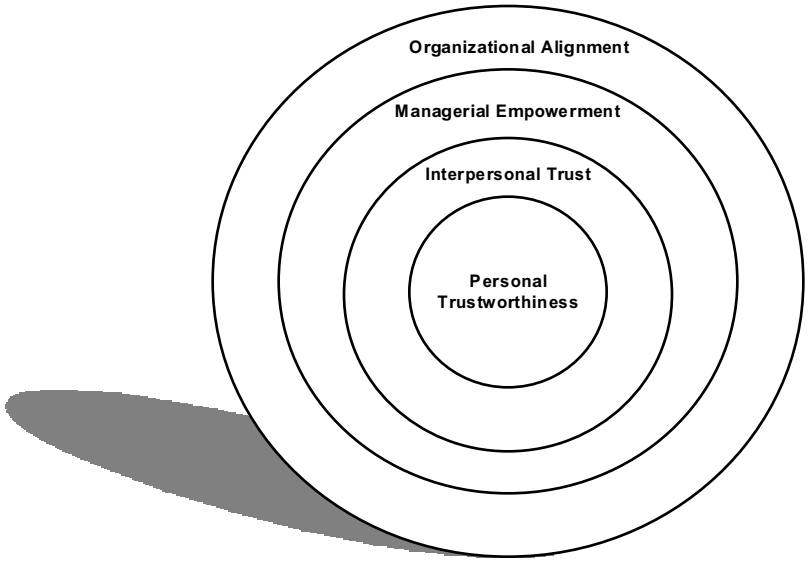
STEPHAN R. COVEY AND ASSOCIATES

Let's look at a more complex model, based on the research, writing and training emanating from the Covey Leadership Center. (Many of you may recognize Covey as the author of *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People*). Covey uses a horticultural metaphor to set the stage for his approach to empowerment. He says we need to cultivate the conditions of empowerment.

> Empowerment can't be installed; it has to be grown. It's a matter of nurturing the conditions that create it. The more these conditions are present, the more empowered the culture will be.[15]

The conditions Covey says we need to cultivate to achieve a state of empowerment within organizations are:[16]

Diagram 2



CONDITION 1. TRUSTWORTHINESS

> **A shady lane breeds mud.**
> **-Hopi**

Covey sees trustworthiness at the heart of any effort to empower individuals and organizations.

Trustworthiness, according to Covey, is a function of character and competence. Character is what we are; competence is what we can do. Both are essential in creating the condition of trustworthiness.

Character includes:

1. Integrity ("the ability to walk our talk");
2. Maturity (the balance of courage and consideration that enables us to engage in such helpful behavior as saying what needs to be said and giving honest feedback); and,
3. Abundance mentality (the approach to life that sees ever expanding opportunities and unlimited potential.)

Competence, the other half of trustworthiness, includes:

1. Technical competence: (decision making and problem solving knowledge and skills, among others);
2. Conceptual competence: (the ability of see the big picture, examine assumptions, shift perspectives and play with metaphors in order to see the world differently).
3. Interdependent competence: (the interpersonal skills of active listening, communicating effectively, achieving win-win solutions, working with others to create new alternatives-to name just a few of the tools of interaction).

CONDITION 2: TRUST

Covey sees trust as the natural outgrowth of the first condition (trustworthiness) in efforts to achieve empowerment within various settings). In other words, we create trust by being trustworthy. We've encountered "trust" in writing other manuals in this management series. For example, trust was seen as an essential quality to be nurtured in the role of the manager as staff developer. When discussing teamwork as an integral aspect of staff development, the point was made about the importance, and fragile nature of trust, that is germane to this discussion. Trust is the bond that allows significant relationships to exist between people.

In their research on teams and the issue of trust, Carl Larson and Frank LaFasto, identified four human traits and behaviors that are important to producing and maintaining a climate of trust.

1. Honesty: integrity, no lies, no exaggerations;
2. Openness: a willingness to share, and a receptivity to information, perceptions and ideas;
3. Consistency: predictable behavior and responses; and,
4. Respect: treating people with dignity and fairness.[17]

CONDITION 3: WIN-WIN AGREEMENTS

There is nothing good or bad, but thinking makes it so.
-William Shakespeare

Win-lose and lose-lose results are unacceptable conditions when working toward empowerment. In many ways, the agreement Covey is talking about as a condition for cultivating empowerment is similar to those used in consulting. They include agreement on: the results to be accomplished, guidelines to be followed in working together, agreement on resources, accountability issues, individual and collective roles and responsibilities, potential consequences and a commitment to integrity. These elements of what Peter Block calls the entrepreneurial contract, when honored, should result is a shared vision and strategy for implementation.

CONDITION 4: SELF-DIRECTING INDIVIDUALS AND TEAMS

Covey describes these self-directing efforts as doing what we agreed to do-including plan, act and evaluate-without someone having to direct, control, check up and otherwise manage our progress and performance. In reciprocal fashion, we help others build this capacity in self-directedness, not by supervising but by holding people accountable for results and being a source of help to them in achieving those results.

Those who have one foot in the canoe and one foot in the boat are going to fall into the river.
-Tuscarora

CONDITION 5: ALIGNED STRUCTURES AND SYSTEMS

Alignment is another one of those engineering terms that has seeped into the management lexicon in recent years. For me it brings up an image of one of my front wheels on my car going off in one direction while the other seeks a path of its own. Not very reassuring, either on the road or in organizations. John Kotter, who has written some significant thoughts about power and influence, describes alignment (from a leadership perspective) as follows:

> A condition in which a relevant group of people share a common understanding of a vision and set of strategies, accept the validity of that direction, and are willing to work toward making it a reality.[18]

Covey says an organization that encourages cooperation but rewards competition is not aligned. When systems and values are aligned, they foster integrity and facilitate the realization of the organization's mission and goals. Alignment is crucial to synergy, that point in time when the sum of individual contributions on a team add up to far more than what those individuals can contribute on their own. Synergy is another way to describe empowerment.

CONDITION 6: ACCOUNTABILITY

Accountability is assuring that the win-win agreements are kept. Or, to put it a bit differently, that we accomplished what we said we would at the same quality or higher that planned and agreed upon. Results are in alignment with expectations.

> At the core of accountability are standards and measurable criteria; the ability to discern our own performance and contributions, and the willingness to give and receive feedback.

We will be known forever by the tracks we leave.

THE BLANCHARD VIEW OF EMPOWERMENT

Ken Blanchard, who made a small fortune on telling us how to be a one minute manager, now admits that empowerment takes more than a minute. Nevertheless, his Empowerment Game Plan is worth looking at as we complete this tour of organization empowerment think tanks.[19] (See Figure 3)

The Empowerment Game Plan (Fig. 3)

Start with-

Sharing Information with Everyone

- Share performance information about the company; help people understand the business.
- Build trust through sharing
- Set up self-monitoring possibilities.
- View mistakes as learning opportunities.
- Break down hierarchical thinking; help people behave as owners.

Then	*Now*
Create Autonomy through Boundaries	**Replace the Old Hierarchy with Self-Directed Teams**
▪ Clarify goals and roles.	▪ Provide direction and skills training for empowered teams.
▪ Define values and rules that underlie actions.	▪ Provide support and encouragement for change.
▪ Create rules and procedures that support empowerment.	▪ Use diversity as a team asset.
▪ Provide needed training.	▪ Gradually give control to the team.
▪ Hold people accountable for results	▪ Recognize there will be some tough times.

From "Empowerment Takes More Than a Minute" by Ken Blanchard (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, San Francisco, 1996, p. 114)

Reflection

The models of empowerment just presented provide differing views of how a manager might implement an organization change strategy involving greater devolution of authority and responsibility. Review them again and jot down some of the ideas you think would be most useful if you were to initiate such a program in your organization.

_____

_____

_____

_____

SYNTHESIZERS CAN MAKE GOOD MUSIC

Let's look back briefly at these different models of organizational empowerment. While they have a lot in common, there are also some significant differences. Trust is high on everyone's list of prerequisites for using empowerment as a capacity building and performance seeking strategy in the workplace. But Lucas has a slightly different perspective about this thing called *trust.* Here's what he has to say about this value-laden term.

> Most of us have a hard time trusting people, *really* trusting people. And the rest of us who do easily trust people probably shouldn't be that way. The fact is, we shouldn't trust people because they're trustworthy (they often aren't), but rather because it's the right thing to do and leads to the greatest overall success for our organizations and ourselves. Naivete will get us killed, because we won't be prepared for the inevitable letdowns. We have to expect that some people are going to betray our trust and waste our attempts at power sharing.[20]

Remember, Lucas hates *empowerment* but loves *power sharing.* About trust, he says, "if we're in authority, we design an organizational environment, a social architecture, that oozes trust."[21] Empowerment, without trust in those who give the authority to free up the system and unleash its human potential, will fail. Employees will spend their time looking in the rear-view mirror, not trusting their bosses to honor the rhetoric of empowerment. Managers on the other side, not sure they can trust their employees with more authority, will keep the backup plan in their outbox for immediate retrieval

Empowerment without trust that flows all ways in the organization is the modern day version of the medieval castle. Empower your employees but keep the drawbridge well oiled. There is no lower form of management manipulation than being empowered at the end of a chain.

Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Walk beside me that we may be as one.
-Ute

AUTHORITY, RESPONSIBILITY AND SELF-DIRECTEDNESS

Empowerment without authority is an empty vessel. Authority without responsibility is irresponsible. Tracy, in her *10 Steps to Empowerment*, says the manager empowers others by giving them a clear understanding of their job responsibilities and then gives them authority equal to the assigned responsibilities. From a management perspective, these two intertwined actions are absolutely essential to the process of empowerment, as we have been defining it in organizations.

When you tie these two essential actions to the ***trust*** imperative, you can see how trust can easily be betrayed between managers and subordinates (regardless of whatever level of the organization we are talking about). If I, as a manager, give you responsibility to perform a task but no authority to carry it out, you will ultimately feel trapped. You will probably not find it easy to trust me. On the other hand, if I give your authority but no responsibility, I may not trust what you plan to do with your newly granted authority. "Aha", you say, "who's dumb enough to do that as a manager". To which I would probably reply, "It happens all the time."

Both Blanchard and Covey put a premium on self-directed behavior in the empowerment process. But both recognize that such behavior is learned and earned. In other words, those who have been working in traditional hierarchies with top-down direction and control as operating norms may need special on-the-job coaching and nurturing to get to the point where they are self-directed. Blanchard, in particular, puts considerable emphasis on building the empowerment support system by (as he characterizes it) *creating autonomy through boundaries*. These boundaries include: clear goals and roles, rules and procedures that support empowerment, accountability, defined values and rules that underlie actions, and needed training. As Blanchard puts it "empowerment isn't magic. It consists of a few simple steps and a lot of persistence."[22]

PERMISSION TO FAIL

> **There is much to be said for failure. It is much more interesting than success.**
> **- Max Beerbhom**

Empowerment involves risk. Risk, if it is worth it, will on occasion look like failure. Notice I said; "look like failure". One person's failure is another's path to success. Failures are only failures if we don't learn from them. What school child hasn't heard of Madam Curie and her contributions to our quality of physical well being? And yet, her path to success in discovering radium was paved by incremental failures. As the story goes, her husband threw up his arms in despair after their 487th experiment to isolate radium from pitchblende failed. Pierre exclaimed, "It will never be done. Maybe in a hundred years but not in my lifetime. To which Marie responded, "If it takes 100 years, it will be a pity, but I will not cease to work on it as long as I live."

When I die, I fully expect to find a *Post-it* on the gate leading to my next life. That's how ubiquitous they have become. And yet, they were created out of the failure of a certain glue compound to stick permanently. Moreover, one person in the 3M Corporation risked his job by "sticking" with the notion that the failed glue could be used differently. He literally kept his experiments to invent post-it's a secret because his bosses threatened to fire him for incessant tinkering. Three cheers for the Post-it man.

Failure is less a symbol of defeat than a part of the process of seeking success. "The real trick is to make errors faster than the competition so we can have more information and more opportunities to win."[23] The authors of Celebrate Your Failure provide some insights into how we can institutionalize risk into the lifeblood of our organizations.

The following page lists a synopsis of their seven easy steps.

SEVEN STEPS:

Celebrate failure may be the most difficult feature of empowerment to implement. Public organizations are particularly vulnerable to public criticism and tend to cower behind their bureaucratic systems to keep risk to a minimum. It's a pity this has become an acceptable norm, particularly in local governments. They forfeit opportunities to become more innovative in serving the public and thwart creativity within the staff.

Seven Steps:

Recognize the existence of good conflict and nurture it. Good conflict occurs when people are assured that they can express, even fight, for differing opinions.
Get the word out to all levels in the organization that taking reasonable risks is okay.
Change the meaning of loyalty in the organization to include telling the boss something he doesn't want to hear; and, being rewarded not fired, for it.
Develop a team mentality. Healthy teams can explore the limits of risk and absorb failure much easier than employees acting alone.
When changing the organization culture to recognize the importance of failures and the opportunities to learn from them, make sure the employee review process is in harmony with these changes. It's not fair to celebrate failure in theory and punish employees in practice for taking risks.
Find opportunities to rotate employees among different parts of the organization. Job rotation reduces isolation and encourages new perspectives. (I visited a small city in Japan many years ago that had initiated a city cable television information system. Members of the city staff were encouraged to spend time working at the TV station, rotating out of their normal assignments, for short periods of time. It turned out to be a win-win situation for the city.)
Go public within the organization with risks taken and lessons learned. Encourage everyone to abandon the dirt under the rug syndrome.

OPPORTUNITIES TO LEARN

The final condition to empowering staff in organizations are opportunities to engage in non-stop learning. It's a step in the empowering process that all our anointed gurus agree on. It is not just formalized training sessions, although they are important. The learning organization also engages in:

- ❑ Sharing information, ideas and experiences widely in the organization;
- ❑ Rotating employees into new roles and responsibilities;
- ❑ Encouraging the giving and receiving of feedback up, down and across the organization;
- ❑ Giving emotional support to those who are moving into new job responsibilities associated with the empowerment process;
- ❑ Encouraging access to others within the organization and outside who can provide new insights and ideas;
- ❑ Ensuring employees it is okay to take time to think; and,
- ❑ Providing staff development opportunities on the job through coaching, team building and other direct engagement activities between supervisors and staff.

Reflection

Spend a moment or two and record your own thoughts about failure. What has been your experience as a manager when confronted with risks and the possibility of failing? For example, how do you think you might react to subordinates that present you with a plan that has great potential if successful but a better than even chance of failing?

_____

_____

_____

_____

EMPOWERMENT OF SELF

The next two discussions, about self-empowerment and empowering others beyond the boundaries of the organization will be short, but no less important. Peter Block reminds us that *empowerment* is a state of mind. That state of mind should include such personal empowerment opportunities (even thoughtful pleasures) as:

- Learning how to be more trusting of others and more trustworthy in the eyes of others. Everything we have said about the importance of trust applies to your own game plan to become more empowered as a person.
- Shedding those factors in your life that breed dependence. They include such things as: entitlement thinking ("they owe it to me, it's my right" type of statements); being a good follower (follow the rules, follow the crowd, follow directions); engaging in self-contempt (blaming yourself for everything, thinking you have no value); fearing the consequences of reaching out (turning "yes, buts" into "what ifs")
- Thinking outside the box. Trust your intuitions, engage in divergent thinking, be creative, do some conceptual thinking (i.e., creating metaphors of those things you take for granted is a good place to begin).
- Be kind to yourself. Many years ago I experienced a public religious event where individuals were beating themselves with chains, slashing their body with sharp instruments-all in an effort to prove to others that they were holier-than-thou. Sounds extreme but many of us do this to ourselves. The only difference is we use mental knives and hammers.
- Realize that reality is better than fantasy. Many of us fantasize about a better job, more time off, being someplace else. Most of these fantasies lead to frustration, not new realities.
- Turn your immediate environment into a negative-free zone. Sometimes we fall into the pattern of negative thinking and acting. It's the "I've never met a good idea that I couldn't dislike immediately" syndrome.
- Become an adventurer, teacher, friend, doer, creator, and inventor of your own legacy.

Self-empowerment is important to all of us but particularly important to managers who are thinking about initiating an empowerment program in their organization. Without a plan to get your own life in an empowered mode, it is difficult to help others take on more authority and responsibility in the workplace and to create the work environment that will make it possible.

While I could go on about the importance, need for, and ways to engage in self-empowerment, it would no doubt begin to look like the latest version of some TV talk show pop-psychologist routine. Nevertheless, I did promise to provide some insights into how you empower others outside your official realm of influence as a manager.

Reflection

Now's a good time to stop and think about the ideas just outlined on empowering self. Do a quick check to see how many of these ideas you agree with. Put a check mark beside them or jot them down in the space below.

Now, go back and identify those you agree with but haven't done anything about for the last two years. Finally, pick the one that you think you need to work on most to increase your level of self-empowerment. Jot down what you plan to do within the next week to make it more a part of your life.

EMPOWERING BEYOND YOUR BOUNDARIES OF OFFICIAL INFLUENCE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

The latest term for these kinds of empowering activities seems to be *networking*. Books are written about this seemingly new phenomenon and professionals are seeking training opportunities on how to be a better networker. It's the kind of popular management strategy stuff (I think this is the right term) that drives me a bit mad. And yet, I know there is something to it. First, let me describe briefly what I believe to be empowering others through networking, and an example of what it isn't. Let's start with what it isn't. Sending 30,000 new friends and acquaintances bad jokes over the Internet **is not networking!** If it makes you feel empowered, so be it but please take me off your distribution list.

On the other hand, we all have experienced someone giving us a valuable piece of information, or connecting us up with another individual when there were no strings attached. In other words, that person had no expectations of a favor in return. It was a selfless act of kindness and consideration. Such events may be personal or professional. The only questions we should ask ourselves when engaging in these kinds of empowering acts are:

- ❑ From my perspective, will the information or connection be helpful?
- ❑ Am I expecting something in return? (the dependency trap)

Here is an example from my own experience. I recently joined the staff of a University in a part-time capacity. While my responsibilities do not include working directly with faculty members, my international experience and contacts provide me with insights that may beneficial to others. My role as the "empowering net-worker" (hate that term!) is to pass along the information and ideas when I think they might be of interest, with no strings attached.

It's a terrible thing to look over your shoulder when you try to lead and find no one there.
- Franklin D. Roosevelt

METAPHORICAL INVENTIONS TO NETWORK BY

Fifteen years ago, before networking became the latest fad in being contemporarily fashionable as a manager, or human being, I conducted a research project for the Governor's Office in one of the north eastern states in the US. He and his staff were frustrated about the delivery of human services in the state. They knew that some of the agencies and their staff of social service professionals were much more successful than others in providing services. They also realized that the traditional lines of communication between those who had services to offer and individuals who needed them didn't seem to be working as well as they should. Our task was to determine who did what better than others in linking up needs and resources. The project was based on the assumption there was a body of knowledge, skills and experience we could tap that was transferable.

The research included identifying individuals, from the point of view of service users and service providing colleagues, whom met the following criteria. Effective networkers were assumed to be those who:

1. Effectively assisted clients in mobilizing resources from various agencies, not just their own;
2. Willingly responded to requests for assistance from individuals in other agencies;
3. Actively sought out information on a wide range of human service concerns, not just those they could respond to, based on their own agencies resources;
4. Frequently worked beyond the boundaries of their own organization and between the boundaries of established and formal systems to perform tasks and provide specific services;
5. Took risks to help others; and,
6. Were seen as highly energetic, action oriented, and totally aware of social service problems and opportunities for resolving them.

The response to our call for nominations was overwhelming. Over 150 individuals were identified from an incredible array of public, private and not for profit organizations. Out of these we interviewed 20 in depth, representing a wide range of institutions, roles, ages, backgrounds, and other obvious signs of diversity. I hadn't looked at the results of this project for more than 15 years. When I did, to help me prepare for writing this manual, I realized how contemporary the insights and lessons learned from that ancient project really are. The following comments are representative of the many "pearls of wisdom" we learned from those individuals who were seen as "effective networkers" by the colleagues and clients.

THE PERSONAL DIMENSION

Key attitudes and behaviors that kept recurring in the interviews defined effective networkers as:

- ❑ Honest and open with others
- ❑ Optimistic (there is always a solution)
- ❑ Self confident (at ease with him/ herself)
- ❑ Trusting (and we might add trustworthy)
- ❑ Empathetic and caring
- ❑ Impatient (Make things happen)
- ❑ Flexible
- ❑ Pragmatic, outgoing, articulate
- ❑ Always willing to get involved
- ❑ Available when they are needed
- ❑ Believes in what they are doing
- ❑ Having an attitude of "new things to conquer" which frees them up to share information and ideas
- ❑ Willing to take stands that are unpopular (risk takers!)

Their style of operating was interesting and very much contemporary in tone. Those interviewed had these comments about their personal efforts to be more effective in linking client needs and services.

- ❑ "I try to develop at least one personal relationship in those agencies I want to work with."
- ❑ "I always ask, ' whom do I know that can help me meet my client's need' ".
- ❑ "When I work with a client, I try to find out who else has been helpful to them".
- ❑ "I look for people who have a sense of power and control over things."
- ❑ "Who do I know who will provide me with access to someone else."
- ❑ "I always try to figure out what's in it for the other person to get involved."

Those interviewed also had some important things to say about their own sense of empowerment. At the heart of their empowerment was a strong self-esteem, the ability to believe in themselves.

- ❑ "I'm able to work in the background to promote my concerns and those of my clients."
- ❑ "The main issue in networking is to understand the needs of others."
- ❑ " The opportunity to empower others is important to me."
- ❑ "I see that others get into a position where they can support my ideas and concerns."
- ❑ "Networkers don't sit on their knowledge."
- ❑ "Plant a seed, turn it around and let someone else take the credit for it."

LEARNING TO NETWORK

When asked how one acquires networking skills (helping to empower others), the answers suggested some approach other than checking into the nearest university.

- "You learn this business more by osmosis than by formal training."
- "Life experience plays a major role in those who are effective networkers."
- " The role of the mentor is important."
- The willingness to share resources and information." (The real mark of learning by doing.)
- "Seeing the workplace as an effective learning environment."
- "I watch other people who are doing it effectively."
- Those who succeed are "not discouraged by failures but try to learn from them."

Two qualities are fundamental to the networking (empowering others) process. They are spontaneity and freedom. Spontaneity is the willingness of individuals to reach out at any time under almost any circumstance to help those in need. Freedom, on the other hand, is both the individual and institutional value that must be present if networking of needs and resources is to take place. It includes:

- Freedom to act;
- Freedom to redefine institutional and program boundaries in order to be more responsive in time of need; and, Freedom to share power, influence and access to resources in a collaborative, non-threatening manner.

These two qualities, spontaneity and freedom, drive the networking process and make it dynamic and responsive.[24]

Reflection

Think about your own efforts to empower others through the approaches just discussed. Are you satisfied with your efforts? If not, what are some of the ways you might increase your efforts to work through others in a helpful, non-dependent way?

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

FOUR STEPS TO SPONTANEITY AND FREEDOM

The self and community empowerment processes include four basic steps:

1. Assessing needs and opportunities (your own in terms of self-empowerment and others when they are community related);
2. Focusing in on the problem or opportunity to be addressed;
3. Matchmaking (linking resources and needs/opportunities), and,
4. Letting go.

Of these, the fourth is the most difficult to learn and put into practice. Since letting go is the antipathy of empowerment in a world that sees power in terms of control and influence, you will be working against the stream. To paraphrase a much overused analogy, let me just say that empowerment is in the minds and hearts of the empowered.

READ, REFLECT AND MOVE ON

To complete the discussion of empowerment, I've decided to include an old fairy tale from *Tales for Trainers.*

GIANT STEPS

Once upon a time, in a land far away, there lived an enormous giant. He was at least ten feet tall, with a mop of red hair and a beard, and in his hand he carried a mighty axe.

Every year, on the same day, at the same time, the giant would walk down from the mountains which were his home, to stand outside the castle walls, terrorizing the inhabitants.

"Come, send me your bravest man, and I will fight him", the giant would shout, towering over the wall and waving his axe menacingly. "Send me someone to fight, or I will knock down your castle walls and kill everyone with my axe."

And every year, the gate in the castle wall would open slowly and fearfully, and one poor, valiant soul would walk out to face the foe and certain death.

"Is this the best you can do?" the giant would laugh mockingly. The poor wretch would stand, mesmerized by the enormity of the giant and the task at hand. Not one person had even managed to draw his sword, before the giant would crush them with his mighty fist, and chop them into little pieces with his axe.

But then one day, a young prince arrived in town. "Why does everyone here look so frightened and sad?" he asked a fellow traveler.

"You haven't seen the giant yet?", replied the traveler. "What giant?" asked the young prince, intrigued.

The traveler told him the tale. "Every year, on this very day, the giant arrives and challenges our bravest to a duel. And every year, he slays them exactly where they stand. They don't even move or draw their swords. It's as though the giant hypnotizes them."

"We'll see about that," said the young prince.

When the giant arrived later in the day, he was waiting for him.

"Come, send me your bravest man, and I will fight him," the giant shouted.

"I am here," said the young prince, throwing open the gate, and striding out towards him.

For a moment, they stood and faced each other. Although he was still a long way away from him, the prince was instantly struck by the sheer size and shocking appearance of his opponent.

But, summoning up his courage, he started to walk towards the giant, brandishing his sword, and never talking his eyes off that dreadful face with the red hair and red beard.

Suddenly, he realized that as he was walking, the giant-rather than appearing larger-actually began to shrink before his very eyes. He stopped and stared. The giant was only five feet tall.

He walked closer to him still, then stopped and stared. Now the giant was only two feet tall. He continued walking until he was face to face with the giant, and each step he took, he saw the giant shrink. By now the giant was so small, that he had to look up at the young prince. He was only 12 inches tall.

The young prince took his sword, and plunged it into the giant's heart.

As the giant lay dying on the ground, the young prince bent down and whispered to him, "Who are you?" With his dying breath, the giant replied, "My name is Fear."[25]

MORAL

When you take action the fear disappears!

Part 2
Workshop Ideas

THE MANAGER:
EMPOWERING SELF, ORGANIZATION AND COMMUNITY

INTRODUCTION

The following materials are intended to help trainer's help others learn more about the *empowering* process. The exercises that follow include a mix of ideas about how to help others learn more effectively in group settings. As learning facilitators, you should feel free to adapt the materials to meet your own needs and those of the participants you are working with.

PURPOSE OF THIS TRAINING

This set of learning materials is designed to help individuals and work groups from organizations learn more about empowerment, as a management strategy, a commitment to self-development, and outreach to others in their development. Admittedly, the objectives are broad. They address a current topic of interest to managers from three different perspectives: self, organization and community. Of these, the strategies for empowering employees in organizations are more defined both in the literature and practice.

Given this reality, the emphasis has been weighted toward efforts to be implemented in organizations. Nevertheless, creative learning facilitators will find ideas in each of the approaches that cut across all three. The challenge, therefore, is up to you to think of ways to enrich the learning for whatever special group you decide to work with. Good luck in your ventures into the somewhat vague world of empowerment.

OPTIONS

This section includes training exercises designed for use in a variety of ways and settings. For example, you might be:

a) planning of workshop for a group of public managers;

b) preparing a presentation on empowerment as part of a professional conference; or,

c) designing an intervention into the life of an organization to bring about changes in the way they distribute authority and responsibility.

As mentioned earlier, feel free to alter them to meet your needs and the expectations of your client group.

OPTION 1: WARM-UP / ICE BREAKER

What is Empowerment?

Working individually and in small groups, participants would explore the term *empowerment* from their own experiences and perspectives. (Approximately a 60-minute event but could take longer if participants are interested in the exercise.)

Two additional warm-up exercises are included for your consideration under Option 1.

OPTION 2: SELF-ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITY

How effective are you in using your current power sources? This exercise is written around the participant's involvement within a work organization. Therefore, it would be appropriate to use it as an exercise to help practicing managers assess their own perceptions about their personal sources of power as organization members. You could also consider using it as part of an organization development intervention. If you plan to use it within an organization, one variation would be to have individuals complete it based on their perceptions of self (as you would with groups of managers from different organizations). This could be followed by an exercise to have the team members give their perceptions of the types of power being used by various members of the team. This assessment of each other could be followed by a discussion of how the use of power affects the performance of the organization and individual members.

OPTION 3: PRESENTATION

Based on what you want to accomplish to facilitate learning, the choice is yours.

Making trainer presentations is a useful and important part of any learning event. They may be as short as summarizing what participants have learned from an exercise such as completing and processing the self-assessment, setting the stage for a case study or role play event, or presenting key concepts and strategies about the topic at hand. Given the topic of empowerment, you

might consider the following suggestions for preparing your presentation(s).

a) What you believe regarding empowerment often depends on your experience in working in organizations. You could direct a guided discussion about the various definitions and descriptions provided in Part I of this manual.

b) Or, you might give a lecture on the steps and issues involved in the models provided regarding empowerment within organizations. A little comparative analysis would be useful in presenting these models. If you are conducting a training of trainers' workshop, you could ask three participants to prepare and make presentations on the different models in thc) e Essay.

c) Another option might be a short lecture on the topic of failure and its role in forging new pathways to the future.

Well, you no doubt get the picture. Presentations come in an assortment of sizes, shapes and textures. No more will be said about this option. Be empowered in your efforts to present empowerment to others.

OPTION 4: SMALL GROUP EVENT

Designing an organization intervention: There are many ways you might design this session. For example, you could create three work groups and assign each one of the three models presented in Part I. (Tracy, Covey and Blanchard). Each group would be asked to make a presentation to the others outlining how they would work with a local government organization to implement an empowerment strategy based on the model assigned to them. Critiques of each and a synthesis of the best ideas could follow the three presentations. A different exercise will be outlined in the more detailed instructions that follow.

OPTION 5: FORCED CHOICE

Power and influence with honor: Blaine Lee, of the Covey Leadership Center, has written a book entitled, *The Power Principle: Influencing with Honor*. At the heart of his approach to the use of power are ten basic principles. These are listed on a handout sheet under Option 5 in the materials that follow. Also included are instructions on how to conduct the learning event.

OPTION 6: PLANNING ACTIVITY

Planning your empowerment strategy: The final exercise involves an individual planning process to help participants put into practice what they have learned about the empowerment process.

Discovery consists of seeing what everybody has seen and thinking what nobody has thought.

OPTION 1: WARM-UP ICE BREAKER

MAPPING THE EMPOWERMENT TERRITORY

Purpose: This exercise in intended to provide participants with an opportunity to get acquainted with each other and to begin exploring the concepts and ideas associated with empowerment.

Time required: About 60 minutes. (If it takes longer, it probably means the participants have come up with some good maps of the territory to be covered in the workshop. Rearrange your time and anxieties accordingly.)

Process:

Step 1: Provide each participant with 3-4 large index cards (heavy stock paper about 5 by 8 inches in size) Ask them to write on each card one word (or short statement) that expresses one idea, feeling or descriptive statement of what they believe empowerment is. Remind them that they should put only one thought on each card.

Step 2: Ask each person to stand, introduce him/herself (if they haven't already done so) and read what they have written on each card.

Step 3: After the messages on the cards have been read, ask participants to attach them to a wall reserved for displaying the information.

Step 4: Break the group into three or four smaller groups (no more than six participants / group) and ask them to create a conceptual map of the ideas that have been presented. You might want to remind them (since somebody is likely to ask) that a conceptual map is simply a way to cluster and organize ideas, information, data, and other snippets of insights so they convey a framework for thinking about a particular issue like, empowerment.

Step 5: Convene the groups and have them display their conceptual maps for discussion and critique. If it appears that a generalized "map" of empowerment is emerging from the various group efforts, try to visualize it in writing (a drawing is always helpful) for reference during the rest of the workshop.

OPTION 1A: POWER FANTASIES:

Process:

Step 1: Give everyone a large index card on which you will instruct them to write three words, all associated with *Who, where and with what means* they would feel most powerful and influential.

First word represents who you want to be.

Pick a role or person (e.g., general, head of the secret service, pope, medical researcher, etc) you believe would make you all-powerful and influential.

Second word: Where you want to be to carry out this role.

For example, Bran Castle (reputed home of Dracula), the Vatican, Tahiti, hell- or that other place. In other words, be creative about where you think you could best perform in this role.

Third and final word: What instrument, tool, machine, idea, formula, book, etc. would most help you achieve this all-powerful and influential state.

For example, latest version of the Pentium chip; Lenin's tomb, world's most powerful telescope, a nuclear powered skateboard.

Step 2: Have each person identify him or herself by name, location and possessor of….with a brief rationale as to why they selected the particular set of variables they did.

Step 3: If no one selected themselves and their current role and location in order to be more powerful and influential, ask the group "why" they think this was the case. Help them consider the consequences of their responses in wanting to be more self-empowered.

OPTION 1B: INVENTING EMPOWERMENT ICE BREAKERS.

Process:

Step 1: After quick introductions break the group into three or four groups depending on the size of the total group. One group will be instructed to identify three criteria by which they will judge the efforts of the other groups. The other two or three small groups (depending on the total number in the workshop) will be given 20 minutes to invent a warm up exercise that illustrates the topic *empowerment*. (This is particularly appropriate when you are conducting with a training of trainers' workshop.)

Step 2. Have each design group present their warm-up exercise to the evaluation team. At the end of the judging, the evaluation team should be given about five minutes to decide which team had the best design based on their three criteria and to report their findings.

Step 3. Have the winning team conduct their warm-up exercise with the rest of the participants and discuss both the results and process used to achieve the results.

OPTION 2: SELF-ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITY

HOW EFFECTIVE ARE YOU IN USING YOUR CURRENT POWER SOURCES?

Purpose: This exercise is designed to help participants understand various kinds of personal power sources and how they assess their personal use of them in working with others in the organization.

Time required: About two hours.

Process:

Step 1: Deliver a short lecture on the various types of power covered in the assessment instrument. Check for clarification to be confident that everyone understands the types and their use.

Step 2: Hand participants one copy each of the short description of power types (Handout # 1) and assessment questionnaire (Handout # 2). Explain the scoring process and ask each participant to complete the self-assessment questionnaire on **Personal Empowerment**. They should complete the scoring process and follow-up questions. (The questionnaire is based on the power categories described in your lecture).

Step 3: Ask each participant to join one or two others to discuss their responses to the self-assessment instrument. It is important not to rush participants on this task. They will need time to reflect upon their responses and to discuss them with their small group colleagues.

Step 4: Reconvene the participants and ask a few individuals to comment on the exercise and how it might help them be more effective in their job responsibilities in relation to power issues.

**SEE PART III:
SUPPLEMENT TO OPTION 2**

**"Thoughts without content are empty. Intuition without concepts are blind."
-Immanuel Kant**

OPTION 3: PRESENTATION

The choice of topic is yours. However, it is suggested you use the following format to help you plan your presentation.

TITLE OF YOUR TALK:

KEY POINTS YOU WANT TO MAKE:

(Three or four are probably optimum to keep them memorable.)

REAL LIFE EXAMPLES YOU WANT TO USE TO MAKE YOUR POINTS:

QUESTIONS TO YOUR AUDIENCE:

(Designed to evoke comments based on their experience about the points you are making)

SUMMARY OF YOUR KEY POINTS (TELLING THEM WHAT YOU TOLD THEM!):

DESCRIBE HOW YOU PLAN TO USE VISUAL AIDS TO REINFORCE YOUR PRESENTATION:

OPTION 4: SMALL GROUP EVENT

> **The significant problems we face cannot be solved by same level of thinking we were at when we created them**
> **-Albert Einstein**

DESIGNING AN ORGANIZATION INTERVENTION.

Purpose: The purpose of this exercise is to help participants learn about and understand empowerment as an organizational intervention and change strategy.

Time required: Plan on about a four hours to cover this training design adequately. The time required may vary based on how you decide to carry out the exercise.

Process:

Step 1: Brief participants on the exercise which is described in detail on the following page (Consulting Team Assignment).

Each person should receive a copy of the write-up at the same time the exercise is introduced.

Step 2: Form three teams to carry out the tasks outlined in the *Consulting Team Assignment.* Two teams will be asked to work in the role of the Consulting Team. The remaining team will play the role of City officials and staff. Ask the City team to prepare an evaluation strategy for assessing the presentations. The teams should include no more that six participants each. The City evaluation team should have at least three participants. Assign each team a space to work and tell them they have 90 minutes to get prepared.

Step 3: Reconvene the consulting teams and have them make their presentations. The evaluation team will play the part of the convener and be prepared to ask questions during the presentations.

Step 4: After the consulting team has made their presentation, give the City team 15 minutes to rank order the presentations and prepare their rationale for their decisions.

Step 5: Have the City team present their conclusions and hold a plenary discussion of the experience.

Guidelines

Provide an overview of your firm's empowering approach to organization development and change. List the assumptions you make about such an organization intervention. For example, assumptions you would make about planning and implementing such an organization strategy, who should be involved in the effort, and expected results. Who, given the information provided, you would consider to be the primary client for this intervention.

Provide an outline of the steps you would take to carry out this program, based on the information presented above.

Identify what you will expect from the organization and officials in order to assure the success of the program.

Some indication about the length of the program and how much time commitment will be required from employees and managers during that time period.

What do you consider to be the results of implementing a program of empowerment within the City organization and the departments as suggested by the Mayor?

CONSULTING TEAM ASSIGNMENT

You have been asked, as a municipal consulting group, to prepare a concept proposal for the implementation of an empowerment program in a local government organization. The city requesting the consultation service (Krakrod) has a population of about 50,000, operates under the overall guidance of an elected Mayor and council, and has a city manager who manages the day to day operations of the City.

The Mayor initiated this request. He works for an international manufacturing firm that has successfully decentralized many decision making processes within their work operations. These changes have resulted in higher motivation among employees, increased productivity and quality of products. He believes a similar process can be implemented successfully in the city's departments responsible for public works and human service programs.

The city manager is not convinced that such a program can work successfully within the city organization. But, he admits he doesn't know much about this thing the Mayor is calling "empowerment" and is willing to be enlightened.

Your organization is one of three consulting firms that the City has asked to make presentations to the Mayor, council and city's senior staff. Each consulting firm specializes in providing management and organization development services. These initial presentations will be part of a pre-bid qualification process. The City doesn't want any information presented at this initial meeting on the estimated costs of the program.

Your presentation to the Mayor, members of the personnel committee of council, and the senior management team should include the following information.

YOUR TEAM WILL BE GIVEN THIRTY MINUTES TO MAKE A PRESENTATION TO THE CITY OFFICIALS

OPTION 5: SELF- ASSESSMENT OPPORTUNITY II

PERSONAL AND COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT VALUES, SKILLS AND BEHAVIORS

Purpose: The purpose of this exercise is to help participants assess their own use of behaviors, skills and values that are associated with self and community empowerment. These statements have been constructed from research conducted by the author many years earlier and confirmed by the literature that deals with issues of empowerment. The research was designed to identify personal characteristics of individuals who are effective in identifying individual and community needs for support and services, and linking these needs with resources.

Time required: This exercise could take from one to three hours, based on how deeply the participants and the trainers decide to explore the information assessed by the questionnaire. Answering the questionnaire and processing the data should take about 30-45 minutes.

Process:

Step 1: Introduce the participants to the exercise. Help participants understand the complexity of empowerment as an interactive process. Explain that empowerment involves many personal values, skills and actions (behaviors) that, when combined, can help each of us become more effective in our interactions with others (and ourselves).

Step 2: Hand out the self-assessment questionnaire and instruct participants to complete the following tasks:

- ❑ *Task A:* Read the instructions carefully; and, ask participants to assess their perceptions of how characteristic each of these statements are in terms of their own values, skills and behaviors. After assessing the individual statements, ask them to proceed to task two.
- ❑ *Task B:* Transfer their individual scores for each item to the two column score sheet following the self-assessment statements. This task is designed to help participants categorize these values, skills and behaviors in terms of self-empowerment and community empowerment. Remind them to be careful in the transfer of this information.
- ❑ *Task C:* This task is designed to help the participant review the data from the assessment questionnaire with the intent of determining what actions they might want to take to increase their own effectiveness in terms of self and community empowerment.

Step 3: At this point in the process, it would be helpful to have the participants sit together in small groups (from 2-4) to discuss their scores and their perceptions of the personal qualities of interaction as described by the individual statements. Some may take issue with specific statements, such as the one involving the importance of conflict. Here are some questions and tasks you might put to each discussion group for consideration:

- ❑ Do you agree with the qualities of empowerment as described in the assessment statements?
- ❑ What other qualities would your group add to the list?
- ❑ Pick the five personal qualities that your discussion group believes to be the most important in enhancing the quality of empowerment at the community level of interaction.

Step 4: Reconvene the participants and ask them to report on their small group discussions.

SELF ASSESSMENT OF EMPOWERMENT VALUES, SKILLS AND BEHAVIOR

The following statements reflect certain personal values, skills and behaviors (how you apply these values and skills) in terms of self-empowerment and empowering others. The intent is to help you reflect on each of these personal qualities and to assess how characteristic they are of your interactions, within yourself and with others.

Each statement is followed by a seven point scale, designed to help you assess the extent to which you believe it describes your own values, skills and actions in terms of empowering self and others. Please be as honest with yourself in assessing these personal qualities of empowerment, using the seven point scale.

1 =	Not At All Characteristic Of HowThis Quality Is Reflected In My Action
4 =	Somewhat Characteristic Of HowThis Quality Is Reflected In My Action
7 =	Very Characteristic Of How This Quality Is Reflected In My Action

Of course, the numbers in between 1, 4 and 7 are also options to help you be a bit more precise in your self-assessment task.

TASK A:

Score each principle using the 1 to 7 scale (described above). Table is on page 47.

The Manager: Empowering Self, Organization and Community

Personal Qualities Of Empowerment	Extend To Which I Reflect These Qualities In My Actions						
1. I am honest with myself (and honest in completing self-assessment questionnaires!)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I am confident in my abilities	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I care about me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I have the courage to act on my convictions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I am willing to get involved in issues I believe in	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I help others believe in themselves	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. Others see me as someone they can trust	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I am caring toward others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I am willing to take risks	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. I share my ideas willingly with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I am an optimist (while others may see the glass half empty, I see it half full)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I get impatient when things that need to be done, don't get done	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I accept others without judging them	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I am able to learn from failures	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
15. I find ways to be available when others need me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
16. It is easy for me to work "back stage"	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Personal Qualities Of Empowerment	Extend To Which I Reflect These Qualities In My Actions						
1. I take responsibilities for my own actions	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2. I am receptive to new information, ideas and ways of thinking	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
3. I trust my intuition	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
4. I believe conflict is an important force for bringing about change	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
5. I find it easy to think "outside the box" (finding creative solutions)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
6. I frequently work beyond the boundaries of my organization and community to get things done	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
7. I am spontaneous in my interactions with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8. I believe it is important to provide others with the freedom to act	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
9. I have a commitment to help others learn how to help themselves	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
10. It is easy for me to share power and influence with others	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
11. I like who I am	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
12. I am willing to help others find resources	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
13. I have a tolerance for ambiguity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
14. I am available when others need me	1	2	3	4	5	6	7

Note:

The statements you have just scored have been written to reflect a set of values, skills and behaviors that define, first of all, how you feel about your own personal empowerment. Empowerment translates into having a strong sense of control and choice over life's events, being fully aware of all our resources, our strengths and weaknesses, our feelings and frustrations, our values and attitudes. It is being clear about what we want to accomplish in life, and optimistic that we can be successful in achieving our goals.

Secondly, the statements reflect your ability to empower others: your neighbors, those in the community. Of course, many of the values, skills, attitudes and resulting behavior that help you empower others are those that define your own sense of empowerment. The phrases are paradoxical, capable of saying one thing and conveying another. To have a sense of self-empowerment will translate into positive responses to those in the community who want to be empowered but need a boost from others to feel and act empowered. Don't be too concerned if you believe some of the statements are in the wrong category. Use the difference of opinion to explore these ideas in more depth.

TASK B:

Calculate total scores for each column: self-empowering and community empowering. Possible total score in each column is 105. The higher your score, the more characteristic the values mentioned in the statements are in terms of your interaction within yourself and with others.

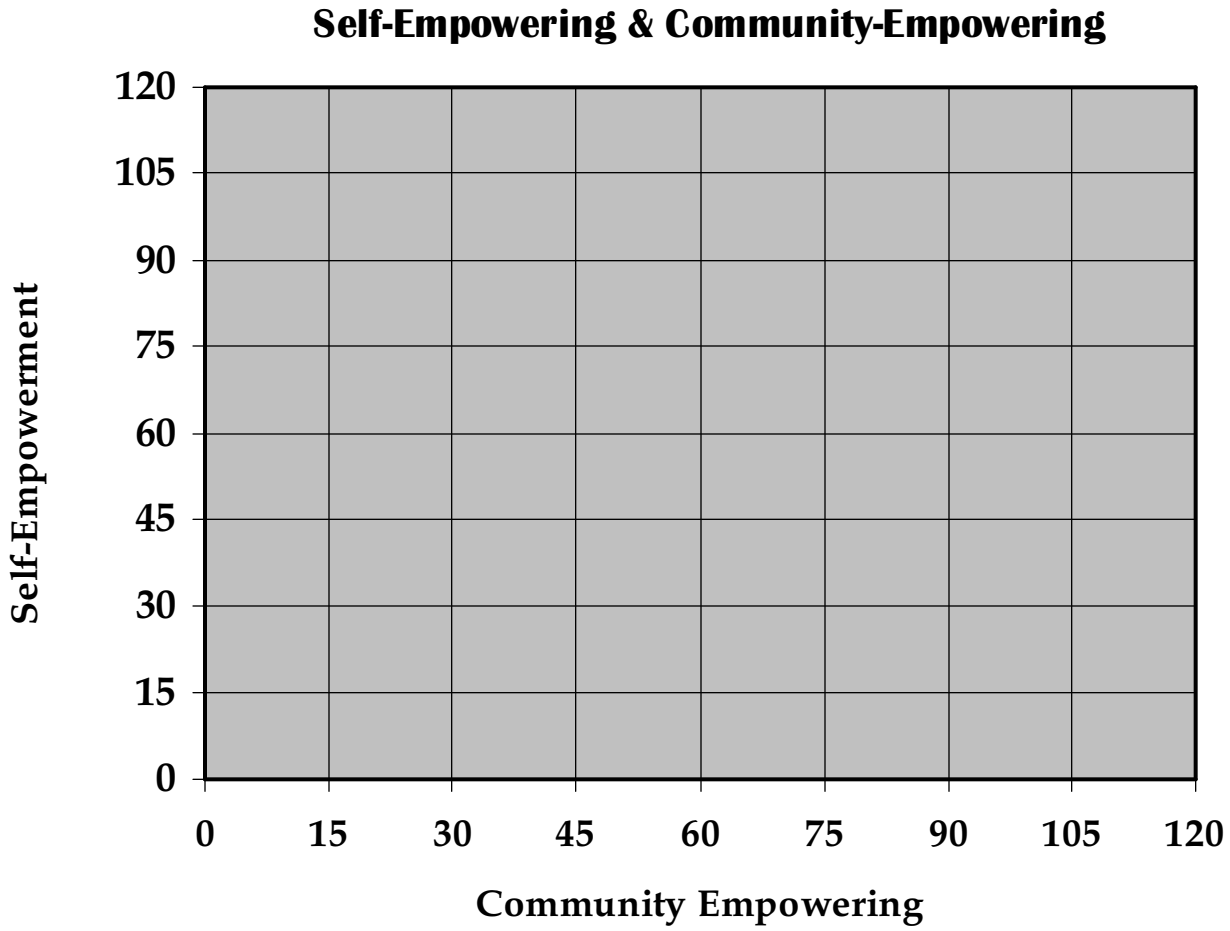
Self Empowerment Score	
Question	**Score**
1	
2	
3	
4	
9	
11	
12	
14	
17	
18	
19	
20	
21	
27	
29	
Total	

Community Empowerment Score	
Question	**Score**
5	
6	
7	
8	
10	
13	
15	
16	
22	
23	
24	
25	
26	
28	
30	
Total	

The Manager:
Empowering Self, Organization and Community

Plot Your Score

My Self-Empowerment Score Is:	My Community Empowerment Score Is:



TASK C:

Based on what you have learned about yourself and the empowerment process take a few moments and identify 2-3 things you might do to increase your capacity be more *self-empowered*.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

And, what you might do to increase your capacity to be more effective in *community empowerment*.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

OPTION 6: PLANNING ACTIVITY

Purpose: This activity is an opportunity to put what you have been learning about empowerment into action. Action, unless it is spontaneous, usually requires some planning.

So, we urge you to take this task seriously!

Time required: Probably about one and one half-hour.

Process:

Task 1: Instruct participants to spend a few moments reviewing what they have learned about empowerment, particularly their scores on the assessment exercises, in preparation for completing their *Going forth and doing good works* plan. Give them about 30 minutes to complete this task.

Task 2: Suggest they find one or two individuals in the group that they would like to discuss their plans with. Give them another 30-45 minutes for this task.

Task 3: Hold a short plenary discussion on this individual planning exercise and ask them to share a few thoughts with each other if they want to.

MY GOING FORTH AND DOING GOOD WORKS PLAN OF ACTION

Now that I have learned more about the art of empowerment, here are some actions I plan to take, beginning NOW!

1) Regarding my own empowerment and ability to influence others, I plan to do the following things (I will be as specific as possible by stating with whom I plan to do what with to increase my empowering abilities.)

2) As a manager or supervisor, I plan to do the following things to help employees have more authority so they can take more responsibility in carrying out their duties. (I realize this can be as modest as providing more freedom and responsibility to my assistant or secretary – or as bold as a plan to begin delegating authority and responsibility to an entire department or work unit with future plans to make it an organization wide effort if successful.

3) In my interactions with individuals outside my organizational role I plan to do the following things (see task 1 for your commitment to be specific!)

I am now prepared to go forth and do good empowering deeds

Part 3
Workshop Supplement

Handout 1

Supplement to Option 2

Power Overview
Handout #1

WORKSHOP SUPPLEMENT

The following discussion is to provide you with an in-depth look at the issues of power, particularly as it relates organizational life. **You are encouraged to read this handout before you complete the self-assessment exercise which follows Handout #2.**

POWER

It is a subject that we rarely talk about.

And yet, power is at the core of most organizations and the way they operate. Let me speculate for a moment why power is a topic that often gets ignored in management training.

First, many of us feel that power is something someone else possesses in the organization, but not me.

Second, power often conjures up unpleasant experiences in each of us as organizational members. I personally have lots of battle scars to show others from my bouts with power during my professional career.

Third, the use of power, or the lack of it, often has negative consequences in organizations, resulting in control over others or denying them something they would like to have or do.

Finally, even the use of the word, POWER, puts tear into some people. Consequently, it is a topic rarely discussed during courses of this kind.

There are obviously other reasons why power, as a topic of discussion, gets swept under the management training rug but I am suggesting we address it head on. I am going to assume that power and influence are: legitimate, viable resources; potentially available at all levels of an organization; and should be used by individuals to get things done.

The first concern I have about power is how to define it so we can all be working on the same frequency. After all, power is a bit like St. Augustine's view of time in his day. "We all know perfectly well what it is - until someone asks us."

CATEGORIES OF POWER

Power resembles a pile of miscellaneous clothes at a hawker's stall. It is hard to know what is available or whether it fits, until you sort it out. Power comes ma lot of different colors and styles. Here are just a few ways to categorize power.

French and Raven[26] have come up with some categories of power that are useful from a management perspective. They categorize power as either reward, coercive, legitimate, referent, expert or information and define them in the following manner.

- **Reward Power** is based upon B's belief that A can provide rewards - promotions, favors, recognition, access to material and other resources.
- **Coercive Power** rests with B's perception that A has the ability to punish - to inflict pain, reprimand, demote, and take away privileges.
- **Legitimate Power** is based upon holding a particular position, title or office in an organization. The position gives that person the right to exert power over others.
- **Referent Power** is based upon B's identification with A who possesses personal traits that engender such responses as respect, obedience, and allegiance.
- **Expert Power** comes from B's belief that A possesses some special knowledge, skill or expertise.
- **Information Power** is based upon B's belief that A has information or access to information that is important to him.

To these six categories of power by French and Raven, I want to add two more that are commonly experienced in organizations.

- **Connection Power** is based upon B's belief that Ahas connections with influential or important people.
- **Catalytic Power** resulting from the ability to combine two or more bases of power, each of which, by itself, may be insufficient to produce results.

Of these bases of power, three (reward, coercive, and legitimate power) focus on the power holder and his or her ability to change the behavior of another individual despite resistance by that individual. The remaining four types of power (information, referent, expert, and connection) place part of the success of the power holder on the perceptions that others hold about him or her.

Before we consider the more practical matter of how to work with power as an organizational and personal resource, it may be useful to look at one or more academic attempts to categorize power sources.

Mary Cavanaugh, in an in-depth study of trends in literature about power, identifies five distinct approaches to power and its manifestations.[27]

They are:

1) **Power as a characteristic of the individual**. As one writer commented, "Power is an attribute of man. It does not exist without a holder." This approach to power grows out of individual motivation and recognizes the importance of the individual as a catalyst in the manifestation of power. The pivotal issue, in this concept of power, is interaction with the environment rather than interaction with other people.

2) **Power as an interpersonal phenomena** This concept of power places its emphasis within the boundaries of an interpersonal relationship - the ability of one individual to move forces within another. This approach requires that the role of the target in the power relation be considered. It recognizes the reciprocal nature of power - that power, when exercised, can and often will result in counter-power.

3) **Power as a commodity**. The commodity viewpoint puts power into perspective as an investment - something to be acquired and expended in relation to its trade offs, costs and consequences. For example, the higher the costs of exercising power, the less likely it is that an individual or organization will involve its use.

   (These three conceptual frameworks concentrate on power as an individual attribute or as an attribute of interpersonal or inter-organizational relationships.)

4) **Power as a casual construct.** This approach links power with cause. Specific behavior, by the source of power, will elicit certain responses from the target of the power. The greater the probability that the source of power can evolve specific responses from the target, the higher the degree of power that can be ascribed to that source. This is an attempt to put power into a quantitative perspective.

5) Finally, Cavanaugh describes **power as a philosophical construct**. This final category addresses several issues of power such as (a) the morality or amorality of power; (b) power in relation to values and value systems; and (c) the relationship between power and responsibility. While managerial power is often manifested in the previously defined categories, it is this one which is used, in many cases, to describe the power outcome. Philosophical constructs, as we know, tend to be: more abstract and less concrete, more qualitative than quantitative and, therefore, more difficult to address in managerial or organizational terms.

Cavanaugh's typology further illustrates the multifaceted nature of the concepts of power and demonstrates why power, as a subject for consideration, often falls outside the boundaries of most management training.

POWER AND MANAGEMENT - AN EMERGING PERSPECTIVE

The typologies outlined above tend to be academic, somewhat abstract and difficult to put into operation as a manager. Nevertheless, they provide a certain perspective and help to define the many dimensions of power. What is even more helpful, from my perspective, is a growing tendency for certain writers to deal with power as an organizational or personal resource for decision making and problem solving. Their perspective is more pragmatic, more positive and, often, more value laden.

John Kotter is one of those who advocates power as a driving force for "bringing about change in organizations and interorganizational settings." The sources of power he prescribes as essential to contemporary managerial effectiveness are based on the assumptions that:

1) Things no longer get done in today's complex work setting simply because someone issues an order and someone else follows it;

2) Most managers experience "power gaps" because their responsibilities exceed their formal authority; and

3) These factors require a new approach to management, one which empowers the individual beyond the limits of authority vested in the role or job.[28]

Given these assumptions about the current day work setting, Kotter spells out the following bases of power the manager should cultivate to improve his or her overall effectiveness:

a) The manager should increase his or her information and knowledge about the social reality of the situation being managed. This includes knowing who the relevant parties are to any decision, what they want, how they view the world, what sources of power they possess, and the extent to which they are prepared to use that power.

b) The manager should cultivate good working relationships based on respect, perceived need, obligation, and friendship.

c) The manager, who wants to use power to get things done, should establish a credible reputation and track record without which it is difficult to establish the information base one needs to operate effectively; and

d) Finally, the manager should develop interpersonal, analytical, conceptualization and influence skills which can be used to unlock the power sources that exist within all social systems but are often unused.

The Kotter traits, knowledge, and skills are based upon the assumptions that power is both a characteristic of the individual and an interpersonal phenomena (to use Cavanaugh's typology). Kotter further assumes that most managers are faced with making decisions and solving problems that often transcend their formal authority within the organization. This makes the direct use of reward and coercive power a limited or non-existent alternative.

In contrast to the Kotter perspective on power is the recent view of Rosabeth Kanter who takes an organizational viewpoint and builds on Cavanaugh's

characterization of power as a commodity. Based upon her research into contemporary successful American corporations, Kanter says organization power derives from supplies of three "basic commodities" that can be invested.[29]

Information (data, technical knowledge, political intelligence, expertise);

Resources (funds, materials, space, staff, time);

Support (endorsement, backing, approval, legitimacy).

Ironically, Kanter's list of organizational power commodities is the same "capital" that individuals use to bring about innovation and change. While Kanter sees the bases of power ("power tools," in her terms) as largely organizational in context, their acquisition and investment as commodities are carried out by individuals.

What Kotter and Kanter have in common is a positive viewpoint about power and its role in bringing about change. They also take for granted that individuals can have power and influence in organizations, irregardless of their specific role or status. They would argue that power not only flows down in an organization (or social system) according to the traditional view, but up and across. It is confirmation that sharing power is not the same as giving it away.

MANAGING POWER RELATIONSHIPS

For most individuals in an organization, the challenge is not one of bringing about long term, major changes in the organization or its environment but rather one of managing more immediate superior, subordinate, and collegial relationships to get things done. Before we look at ways to use power and influences-or, more appropriately, to mobilize power in various relationships, it may be useful to consider some basic propositions about the nature of power and influence in organization settings.

a) While power is often perceived as a top down phenomenon to be exercised by those in authority, in reality, organizational power flows in all directions.

b) Contrary to popular belief, managing the power relationship downward in the organization may be more difficult than managing power relationships with superiors

c) Power relationships are dynamic, not static, and subject to constant re-negotiation.

d) The absence of power in many organizations may be more pervasive than the use of power.

e) Power voids make individuals and organizations vulnerable to their environment.

f) Filling and managing power voids may be more effective than managing power surges.

g) The powerless in organizations and communities often do not recognize their own strength in any power relationship.

h) Power is, more often than not, a process of interaction and cooperation which involves constant bargaining between those who perceive they have power and those who perceive that they don't.

i) The powerful need assurance that their power is held rightfully within a relationship which sanctions its use and validates its right.

j) The first power of the powerless is the orderly use of disbelief. (e.g., refusing to accept the definition of oneself that is put forth by those in power).

k) Individual and organizational power are bounded but the boundaries can be redefined.

Although stated previously, it is worth repeating - sharing power is not the same as giving it away.

Handout 2
Supplement

Personal Empowerment Self Assessment Exercise Handout #2

Each of us, as organizational members, have sources of power available to us in varying degrees to help us perform our job responsibilities. The following questionnaire is designed to help you better assess the kinds of power you have available and whether or not you believe the source of power can be increased to improve your effectiveness in the organization.

	Not At All	To Some Extent	To A Considerable Extent
Reward Power: Others in the organization believe I can reward them through such things as promotion, favors, recognition, access to information and other resources.	❑	❑	❑
Coercive Power: Others in the organization believe I can punish them through such things as demotions, dismissal, reprimands, and the removal of privileges.	❑	❑	❑
Legitimate Power: My position in the organization gives me the right to exert power over others.	❑	❑	❑
Referent Power: Others in the organization see me as a person who possesses personal traits that engender such responses as respect, obedience, and allegiance.	❑	❑	❑
Expert Power: Others in the organization believe I have the skills, or expertise that can help them and the organization carry out their mission and goals.	❑	❑	❑
Information Power: Others in the organization believe I have information or access to information that is important to them and the organization.	❑	❑	❑
Connection Power: Others in the organization believe I have connections with influential or important people that can help them and the organization.	❑	❑	❑

Review your responses to the above statements. Consider whether or not you would like to increase the extent to which others in the organization view your various sources of power. If so, what are the steps you might take to increase your organizational power and influence. Be as specific as possible.

1. List the categories of power you would like to work on to increase your sense of personal empowerment within the organization.	

2. Identify some specific situations in which you would like to increase your personal source of empowerment	

3. Would your increased power and influence be directed primarily towards:	Your Superiors?
	Your Subordinates?
	Your colleagues?

4. Who in the organization (or others) could help you increase your personal power source? How might they help you accomplish this?	

5. List five (5) specific actions you can take to assure that your personal power quotient increases to meet your expectations, as stated above.	(a)
	(b)
	(c)
	(d)
	(e)

END NOTES

[1] Weber, Max, *Theory of Social and Economic Organization,* translated by A.M. Henderson and T. Parsons (New York, Oxford University Press, 1947), p. 152.

[2] L. Kristi Long, *Empowering Employees*, (Chicago, Irwin/Mirror Press), 1996, p.3

[3] David Mason, *Leading and managing the Expressive Dimension*, (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishing, 1996), p. 220.

[4] Pamela Cuming, *The Power Handbook*, (New York, Van Nostrand Reinhold Co. 1981), p. 2.

[5] Stephen A. Stumpf and Joel R. DeLua, *Learning to Use What You Already Know*, (San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1994), p.109

[6] Ken Blanchard, John Carlos and Alan Randolph, *Empowerment Takes More Than One Minute*, (San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1996), p. vi.

[7] Peter Block, *The Empowered Manager*, (San Francisco, Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1987), p. 68.

[8] Ibid. pp. 69-71.

[9] United Nations Center for Human Settlements (Habitat), *The Global Strategy for Shelter to the Year 2000,* (Nairobi, UNCHS (Habitat), 1988

[10] Jerry Silverman, *Public Sector Decentralization*, (Washington, The World Bank, 1990) p.11.

[11] James R. Lucas, *Balance of Power*, (New York, AMACOM American Management Association, 1998) p. 15.

[12] John Micklethwait and Adrian Wooldridge, The Witch Doctors, What Management gurus are saying, why it matters, and how to make sense out of it, (London, Heinemann, 1996), p. 20.

[13] Stephan R. Covey, A. Roger Merrill, Rebecca R. Merrill, *First Things First*, (New York, Simon and Schuster, 1994), p.239.

[14] Diane Tracy, *10 Steps to Empowerment: a Common Sense Guide to Managing People*, (New York, Quill, 1990) These ten steps form the basis of Tracy's conceptual framework and are infused throughout the text making it impossible to identify individual pages.

[15] Covey, p.239. See also four-levels of Principled-Centered Leadership in Principled-Centered Leadership, Fireside 1991, p. 28.

[16] Covey, The conditions are from Chapter 13, Empowerment From the Inside Out, pp. 240-66.

[17] Carl E. Larson and Frank M. J. LaFasto, *Teamwork, What Must Go right/What Can Go Wrong*, (Newbuy Park, CA. Sage Publications, 1989) pp. 85-6

[18] John P. Kotter, *A Force of Change How Leadership Differs from Management*, (New York, The Free Press, 1990), p.60.

[19] Ken Blanchard, John P. Carlos and Alan Randolph, *Empowerment Takes More Than a Minute*, Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 1996), p. 114.

[20] James R. Lucas, p.90.

[21] James R. Lucas, p. 97.

[22] Ken Blanchard, p. 115.

[23] John W. Holt, Jr., Jon Stamell, and Melissa Field, *Celebrating Your Mistakes*, Chicago, Irwin Professional Publishing, 1996), p. 85.

[24] Fred Fisher, *Resource Exchange Networking: Metaphorical Inventions in Response to Differentiated Human Needs in a Collectivist-oriented Society*, Journal of Voluntary Action Research, Volume 12, Number I, January – March 1993. Pp. 50-64.

[25] Margaret Parkin, *Tales for Trainers*, (London, Kogan-Page, 1998) p. 120-1. This is an old fairy tale that the author has told in her own words. She uses it as an inspirational end to seminars on assertiveness, empowerment and self-esteem.

[26] French and Raven, "The Bases of Social Power" in D. Cartwright (ed.) Studies in Social (Ann Arbor, University of Michigan 1959).

[27] Mary S. Cavanaugh, "A Typology of Social Power" in A. Kakababse and C. Parker, Power, Politics and Organizations: A Behavioural Science View (John Wiley and Sons, 1984)

[28] Kotter, John, Power and Influence New York, The Free Press, 1985, pp. 31-50 Many of the ideas on pages 167-169 have been influenced by this book.

[29] Kanter, Rasabelle Moss, The Change Masters, New York, Simon and Shuster, 1983, p. 216