Power and Influence in Business.

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Background

There have been many articles written relating to the impact of power and influence within an organizational (Deal & Kennedy, 2000; Johnson et al, 2008; Wood, 2010; Lines, 2007). It was Handy (1993) however, who categorized the styles of leadership in what he called "The Gods of Management". There is evidence to indicate that Handy has in fact missed an important group, which could be argued links to, what this report calls, the "culture of uncertainty". This group relates to those individuals who find themselves in positions well beyond their capabilities and/or behave in a continual confrontational nature (Sutton, 2007; Keashly & Jagatic, 2010). In keeping with Handy's theme, this report has classified these individuals as "Perses: god of destruction". It is a trait that is likely to be inherent in the other "gods" but can be suppressed by continual development or education (see figure 1.1).
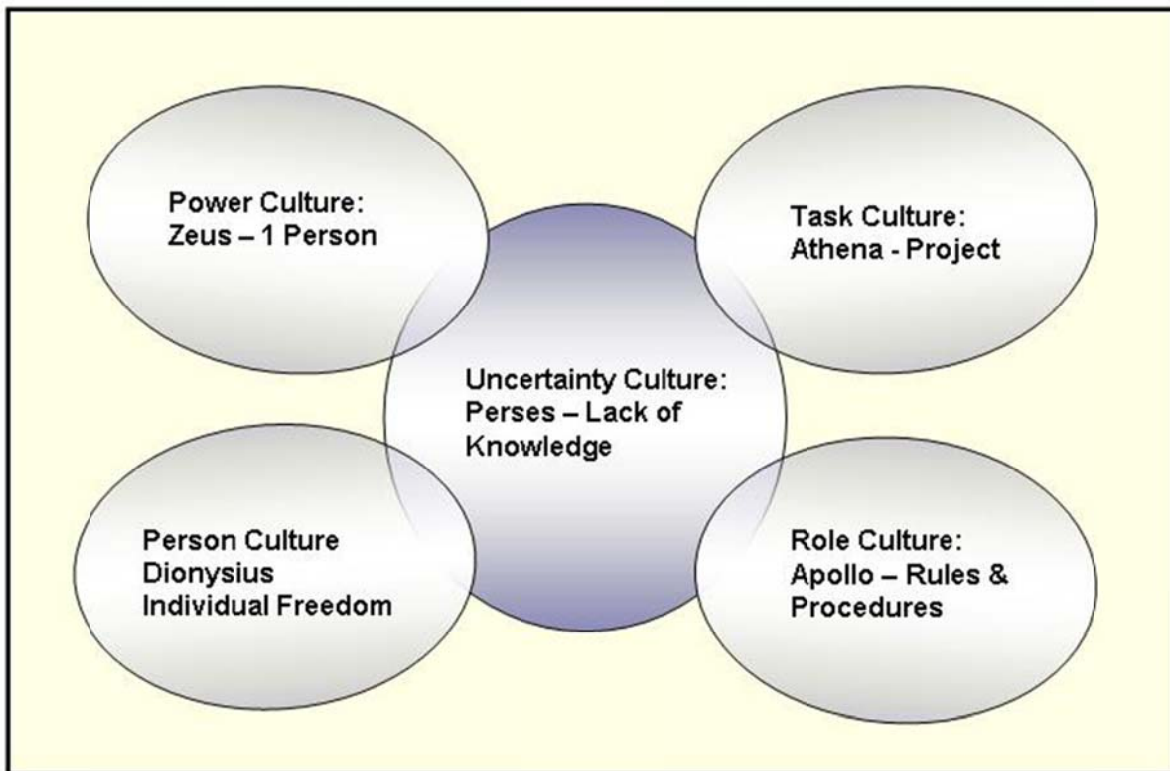

Figure 1.1: An adaptation of Handy's (1993) Gods of Management.

There is an argument that only those individuals with the influencing and/or perceived power within a company dictate the decision making processes. Are these individuals the CEOs, presidents, directors and vice-presidents? No, they often rely on individuals who run specific business units, categories or functions to provide leadership, technical competencies and guidance. This can result in a variety of sub-cultures being created within an organization. This is not necessarily a bad thing, because as Hofstede (2010) stated, there is no such thing as a universal management method or management theory across the globe.

The game of politics.

When faced with enormous business obstacles, an individual cannot simply demand that changes must be made. The adoption of Karl Weick's approach to disagreement (Weick, 1979) may be a better approach, but when dealing with individuals playing the politics game other tools and skills are required. Jones (1985) said that there can be no doubt that politics will occur in all companies at some level. He came up with four

management practices to reduce the impact:

- o Develop clear, measurable and weighted goals.
- o Link resource allocation, performance evaluations and rewards to these goals.
- o Develop wide participation in the goal setting.
- o Specify, evaluate and communicate underlying assumptions.

Unfortunately, executing these practices in isolation will not be enough. A variety of leadership techniques will be also be required if the implementation of the new marketing plan is to be a success. Table 1.1 illustrates how the adaptation of Goleman's 4 positive leadership impacting styles will be used to facilitate the process:

Style	Characteristics	Impact on Business
Visionary	**Inspires, believes in vision, empathetic, explains how and why individuals contribute to the dream**	**Use this to lobby and mobilize support in the business demonstrating that the new marketing plan will yield better results.**
Coaching	**Listens, helps people identify their own strengths and weaknesses, counsellor, encourages and delegates.**	**Use to educate the business and the team about the technical aspects of the plan, again demonstrating the benefits.** **Will also engage individuals to support the plan.**
Affiliative	**Promoting harmony, nice, empathetic, boosts moral, solves conflicts.**	**A key attribute need to "manage up" the business and avoid alienation of superiors which will be detrimental to the process and likely career prospects within the business!**
Democratic	**Superb listener, team worker, collaborator, influencer**	**Used to recruit other influencers who are sympathetic to likely achievements of the new plan: use their voice to help promote it.**

Table 1.1: An adaptation of Goleman's Leadership Styles Theory.

Another way of linking Golemans (2009) styles could be portrayed as what Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) call "Transformational Leadership": charismatic, energetic, enthusiastic, passionate and visionary individuals that drive positive changes in those that follow.

This may not be enough as the weakness with Goleman, Burns and Bass' concept comes to the fore when the manager tasked with implementing the objective has the wrong competencies (ie, that individual is a "Perses" type or god of destruction). Businesses need to ensure that managers are selected using "competency-based leadership" techniques because evidence has shown that companies that don't will fail to grow and prosper (Muratbekova-Touron, 2009).

In short, the successful implementation of the marketing plan will be achieved by encompassing the transformational leadership style with competency-based leadership qualities: see figure 1.2.
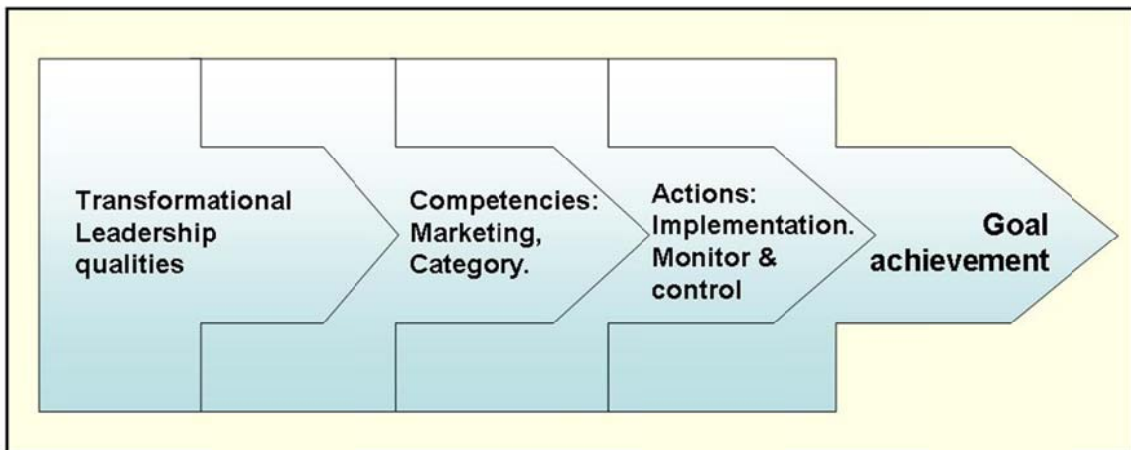
Figure 1.2: An adaptation of the relationship between qualities, competencies, actions and results. Based on J Horey et al (2004).

Conclusion.

It is clear that power and influence within an organization can have a major impact on how it is run and how plans are delivered. Motivation also plays an important part: it is the transformational leadership that will help encourage individuals to work collectively in achieving the ultimate goal, or as Maslow (1954) stated, create conditions in which people can satisfy their "self-actualization" needs.

Above all else, a certain level of competencies will be needed by organization's managers. So the creation of a structure that encompasses transformational and competency-based leadership qualities will be vital for the future success of businesses.

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