Dear Office-Politics,

What should I do now?

BY FRANKE JAMES

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Staff won’t obey rules…
I feel like a dictator.

Dear Office-Politics
the game everyone plays

I was told to fix my hair because it’s all “wild” looking…

Dear Office-Politics
the game everyone plays

I know nothing about office politics and have made some horrible mistakes…

I have had firsthand experience with a backstabber…

Please help!

We have one coworker whom the bosses dote on and she can do no wrong…
Franke James

“No shortage of gumption and political acumen”
TORONTO STAR

“There is apparently one woman whom the government can’t shut up”
THE GUARDIAN UK

“The attempt to silence Franke James has, instead, ensured that both her work and her message are recognized around the world.”
VANCOUVER OBSERVER

“It’s not nice to fool with Franke James.”
DON MARTIN, CTV POWER PLAY

“Franke James isn’t afraid to take on anyone, from the Harper government to big corporations.”
STEPHEN EATON HUME
The Office-Politics Advisers

Franke James, MFA
Dr. John Burton
Erika Andersen
Timothy Johnson
Dr. Rick Brandon
Marty Seldman
Jennifer G. Bezoza
John A. Challenger
I just want to keep my head down and work.
POLITICS IS ABOUT INFLUENCE

“When I talk about office politics, one of the things I hear most often is... ‘Oh, I don’t get involved in that sort of thing.’ Politics is a dirty word, but this dirty word is limiting their careers.

Politics is about influence, and when managers stay out of politics, they allow someone else influence over their careers. Managers need to get involved, and they need to learn how to ethically jump into the fray.”

John W. Burrows, Ph.D.
McCombs School of Business
University of Texas at Austin
MY MOTHER’S 4 POLITICAL TIPS

1. Read between the lines.

2. Listen to what people say. (But watch what they do)

3. Put yourself in the other person’s shoes.

4. Never feel sorry for yourself.
EVERYONE PLAYS OFFICE POLITICS

“Even though some companies are less political than others, none have repealed the laws of human nature. Even in the Girl Scouts of America, we hear there are lots of politics. If there are no politics, check the people’s pulse in your company since they are probably dead!”

Rick Brandon, Ph.D., Office-Politics Adviser
“Office politics crosses all cultures, and respects no boundaries. It seeps into organizations of all shapes and sizes. Neither gender can claim greater prowess, or ignorance of office politics. It gets under everyone’s skin. You can’t escape it. But you can (and should) learn to play the game.”

Franke James, Creator
Dear Office-Politics Game
POLITICS IS ABOUT PERSONALITIES

I AM STRESSED BY MY COWORKERS
How do I put an “office princess” in her place?

HA!
THAT’S JUST SO...
Dear Office-Politics

The NewGuy hired

I’m hated

is

I’m fired

The NewGuy
A HIGHLY OPINIONATED SNOB
WHO GLOWERS AND SULKs AND SPIES

THE OFFICE CRAB
THE BENEFITS OF PLAYING OFFICE-POLITICS

- Talk openly about touchy and taboo topics
- Exercise your ethical muscles (so you don’t get blindsided)
- See how others make “ethical decisions”
- Gain insights that help you spot minefields
- Increase your sense of empathy (and find new solutions)
- Get better at managing the air-waves
- Pack the tools with you for regular use.
THE OFFICE-POLITICS EVALUATION GRID

The Advice-seeker evaluates the advice given by the other players based on the 4 categories below.

1. THE TV NEWS TEST:

2. THE OTHER PERSON’S SHOES

3. POWER ANALYSIS

4. COMPANY’S BEST INTERESTS
Dear Office-Politics: Game Rules

Game Play:

1. *Dear Office-Politics* is played in rounds just like a card game.

2. Divide into groups of four to six players.

3. For each round, there is one player who is the Advice-seeker and who reads the Office-Politics Dilemma aloud.

4. The remaining players act as Office-Politics Advisers and offer their advice on how to solve the problem.

5. Go clockwise around the table until each player has had an opportunity to be the Advice-seeker. (Of course, you can continue to play and add more rounds as desired.)
Dear Office-Politics: Game Rules

Playing the Game:

1. **Read the Dilemma:** The Advice-seeker reads the dilemma aloud.

2. **Offer Advice:** Each Office-Politics Adviser offers their solution.

3. **Score the Round:** The Advice-seeker rates the advice given using the Office-Politics Evaluation Grid on the next page.

4. **Win the Game:** After each player has had the opportunity to be the Advice-seeker at least once, tally up the score totals to see who “won”.

The winner snags the title “Office-Politics Adviser.”
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