“Good Leadership And Getting On Top Of Office Politics”

Patrick Kim Cheng Low

E-Leader CASA Berlin
5 June 2012
One view

Office or organizational politics involves actions by individuals, teams, or leaders to acquire, develop, and use power and other resources in order to obtain preferred outcomes (Hellriegel and Slocum, 2011: 293; Nye, 2004; Cross, Parker and Cross, 2004).
Another view of office politics?

It is all about **people**!
“A clever person turns great troubles into little ones and little ones into none at all.” (Chinese proverb)
One must be a gentleperson (junzǐ)
Stand by one’s values!

Speak correct & be trustworthy!  
Don’t have melon-sweet lips and bitter gourd heart!

Practice “Ti” (Brotherhood)

Make things happen!  
Be a silent achiever, (s)he does not brag, bragging or boasting attracts enemies.
Low (2010: 42) has also argued that the leader gets soft power when (s)he stands for his or her values, has moral courage and represents what a leader stands for. The gentleperson (junzi) stands tall, and understands what is right and ethical. (*The Analects*, IV verse 16). In another verse, *The Analects*, XII: 4 (Lau, 1979: 113):

Ssu-ma Niu asked about the gentleman (junzi).

The Master said, ‘The gentleman is free from worries and fears.’

‘In that case, can a man be said to be a gentleman simply because he is free from worries and fears?’ The Master said, ‘If, on examining himself, a man finds nothing to reproach himself for, what worries and fears can he have?’”
Getting On
Top of Office
Politics, the
Confucian
Angle

- Be brave enough to be big-hearted
- Be a good planner
- Learn and apply
- Do one’s best
- Forge on, be hardy and resilient
- Be careful and prudent
- Know when to retreat, relax or retire (when to advance)
- Stand by the values Held
- Speak correctly and be trustworthy
- Be daring enough to listen and promote teamwork/spirit
- Make things happen
- Be decisive or have no double standards
- Be brave enough to be big-hearted
- Do one’s best