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It's All Politics: WINNING IN A WORLD WHERE HARD WORK AND TALENT AREN'T ENOUGH

Kathleen Kelly Reardon Ph.D.

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"Finally! A book that elevates the concept of workplace politics to where it belongs—the top of the list of skills needed for sustained success."

—Leis P. Frankel, Ph.D., author of NICE GIRLS DON'T GET THE CORNER OFFICE and NICE GIRLS DON'T GET RICH

IT'S ALL POLITICS

**Winning in a World
Where Hard Work and
Talent Aren't Enough**

KATHLEEN KELLEY REARDON, PH.D.

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Kathleen Kelly Reardon Ph.D. : It's All Politics: WINNING IN A WORLD WHERE HARD WORK AND TALENT AREN'T ENOUGH before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised It's All Politics: WINNING IN A WORLD WHERE HARD WORK AND TALENT AREN'T ENOUGH:

3 of 3 people found the following review helpful. Elite education and mentorship all compressed in a book By Jeffrey Deutsch You've gone to school or maybe work with That Guy or That Girl. The one who ballet dances through the

social minefields, while you make do with a pogo stick. You wonder if he or she was raised by a family of political virtuosos. What the *heck* does he or she know that most folks don't? You need this book. Dr. Reardon gives actionable advice, including strategies for handling situations such as your boss getting a paramour who doesn't seem to like you, a peer personally attacking you or someone whose power needs to be reduced or shifted. And she goes right down to the nitty-gritty, like "Most changes of topic require an appropriate transition or an apology for changing the subject. These considerations are *not* superfluous; they are crucial to advancement in any organization." [Emphasis original] She gives specific, concrete examples, right down to the actual wording of lines you could use -- with different assertiveness levels for various temperaments (not to mention for different political contexts!). For example, if someone seems to be giving you subtle mixed messages, you can say "I'm not sure I completely understand what you're saying" if you want to draw him/her out some more, or "Should I take what you said to mean that I need to change my ways?" if you want to get more direct (and are more sure of your interpretation). She also makes clear that some issues -- like your boss dating a co-worker who's not completely in your corner -- just can't be solved, only managed: "In business, some problems are chronic, and if you can work your way around them, you're doing well." This book is really Part II of a pair, so first get *The Secret Handshake: Mastering the Politics of the Business Inner Circle*, devour and digest it and then read this one. If you were lucky enough to grow up with parents and maybe a few other adults who taught you organizational politics inside and out... well, that just means you got to save a few bucks toward a pizza instead of buying this book. 22 of 23 people found the following review helpful. Excellent guide to office politics but a bit plodding here and there. By Jonathan Groner Reardon's topic is winning at office politics -- getting along and rising to the top in a corporation or similar organization by understanding human interactions. This book will be useful to anyone, particularly a new employee or a recent college graduate, who is trying to figure out how things really work on the job. She correctly identifies all white-collar employees as "politicians" and points out that office politics is inevitable. Some people will win and some will lose. Her case studies are fascinating -- particularly the ones that involve responding to nasty e-mails or coping with putdowns by practitioners of "negative politics." To her great credit, Reardon emphasizes that there are times when merely "getting along" is not the right answer and when courage, integrity, and risk-taking are essential. And she gives appropriate weight to issues of personal style: some people face problems head-on, while others defer them; some are "in your face," while others avoid confrontation. There are places where Reardon's expository energy seems to slow and the book plods along. But soon, the reader is caught up in another case study or interesting e-mail exchange and the book picks up strength again. 0 of 0 people found the following review helpful. It's like I found the hidden treasure. By Veronica Willis If you want to know why things happen on the job the way that they do with staff, this book is a must read to all your questions. I read the first chapter and all I kept saying is "OMG". It's like I found the hidden treasure. Because my hard work and talent was acknowledged by superiors, rage, deceit and betrayal grew in my coworkers against me. I tried to find out why this was happening. I kept searching the internet for answers and this amazing book came up. I've read the reviews and purchased it. Now I see the light in a whole new spectrum and I understand why my coworkers behave the way they do towards me. It's all politics and you definitely need to know it so you can learn how to deal with situations if or when your under attack. This book will not disappoint you. It is a must read.

From *It's All Politics* Like business in general, politics is not a spectator sport. You cannot afford to be apolitical at work if you have any aspirations for advancement. The only way to avoid politics is to avoid people -- by finding an out-of-the-way corner where you can do your job. Of course, it's the same job you'll likely be doing for the rest of your career. In any job, when you reach a certain level of technical competence, politics is what makes all the difference with regard to success. At that point, it is indeed all politics. Everyday brilliant people take a backseat to their politically adept colleagues by failing to win crucial support for their ideas. Sometimes politics involves going around or bending rules, but more typically it's about positioning your ideas in a favorable light, and knowing what to say, and how and when to say it. Keep in mind that people benefit from perpetuating the image of politics as something you either know or you don't. Ignore them. Political acumen is largely learned from observation. And then it's a matter of practice, practice, practice. When a journalist suggested that golfing great Gary Player was very lucky, he replied: "It's funny, but the more I practice, the luckier I get." The same is true of politics. An indispensable guide to mastering the ins and outs of office politics -- the single most important factor in getting ahead in your career. As management professor and consultant Kathleen Reardon explains in her new book, *It's All Politics*, talent and hard work alone will not get you to the top. What separates the winners from the losers in corporate life is politics. As Reardon explains, the most talented and accomplished employees often take a backseat to their politically adept coworkers, losing ground in the race to get ahead -- sometimes even losing their jobs. Why? Because they've failed to manage the important relationships with the people who can best reward their creativity and intelligence. To determine whether you need a crash course in Office Politics 101, ask yourself the following questions: Do I get credit for my ideas? Do I know how to deal with a difficult colleague? Do I get the plum assignments? Do I have a mentor? Do I say no gracefully and pick my battles wisely? Am I in the loop? Reardon has interviewed hundreds of employees, from successful veterans to

aspiring hopefuls, examining why some people who work hard and effectively at their jobs fall behind, while those who are adept at reading the office tea leaves forge ahead. Being politically savvy doesn't mean being unethical or devious. At heart, it's about listening to and relating to others, and making choices that advance everyone's goals. Like it or not, when it comes to work, it's all politics. And politics is all about knowing what to say, when to say it, and who to say it to.

From Publishers Weekly Showing how to break complex office politics down into its simpler emotional parts, USC management professor Reardon eschews canned advice and cuts to the neediness and manipulation that define many workdays. Using hyper-realistic, no-nonsense sample dialogues that contain everything from colleagues who blindside to shoot-the-messenger bosses, she demonstrates how to shade language, alter timing and shift tone in a plethora of complex situations. More long-term advice includes engaging in advance planning, forming relationships and developing prepared responses to common situations, but Reardon freshens these chestnuts by treating them as the very difficult tasks they really are. The consistent use of an intentionally cheesy single character throughout the book, "Reginald Strongbrow," illustrates the path of a person from political naivete to astuteness. While acknowledging that political strategy and intuition do not come naturally to most, Reardon's behaviorist approach and realistic expectations ring true and are carried off with a directed sensibility. (June) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. Praise for *It's All Politics*: "In her new book, *It's All Politics: Winning in a World Where Hard Work and Talent Aren't Enough*, Reardon provides practical techniques to help break down office politics. Her no-nonsense approach focuses on gaining political intuition and advancing in the workplace." --U.S. News World Report