

"An Ethical Approach to Office Politics"

presented by **Tim Johnson**

Author of *GUST: The "Tale" Wind of Office Politics*

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Sponsored by:

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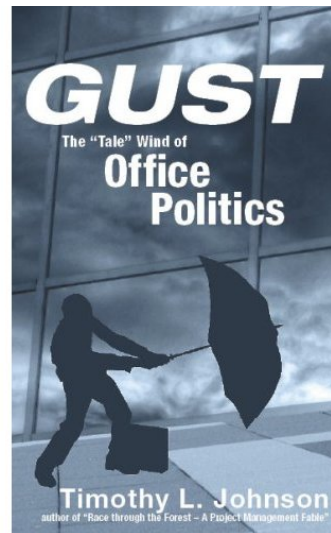
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American Women's Society of CPAs of Green Country



About the speaker:

Timothy L Johnson is Chief Accomplishment Officer of Carpe Factum, Inc. (Latin for "seize the accomplishment"). He has almost two decades of highly successful experience in project and program management, business solutioning, creativity, executive and management coaching, and strategic facilitation. His clients include Teva, Neuroscience, Harley-Davidson, ING, Principal Financial Group, Wells Fargo, and numerous small businesses and not-for-profit organizations. He is also an adjunct professor in the MBA program at Drake University in Des Moines, Iowa, teaching classes in Project Management, Creativity for Business, Leadership Development, and Managing Office Politics and University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, teaching classes in business analysis and systems thinking. His first book, **Race Through the Forest: A Project Management Fable**, was published in 2006. His second book, **GUST: The Tale Wind of Office Politics**, was released in April, 2007. His third book, **SWAT: Seize the Accomplishment**, is being released in January 2010. He also is a contributing writer for www.office-politics.com, an online advice column for office politics situations as well as www.iowabiz.com, an online resource for business professionals in Iowa.

NOTE: In exchange for waiving his normal speaker's fees, we have agreed to provide an opportunity for participants to purchase Mr. Johnson's book. He will be available for a book signing immediately after the program. His books may be purchased for \$10 each. (The "Dear Office Politics" book may be purchased for \$30 apiece.)

General Disclaimer: While OK Ethics sponsored this presenter, Mr. Johnson's observations and comments are his own views and opinions. They do not constitute the opinion or policies of OK Ethics or any of its members. Additionally, all OK Ethics presenters are respectfully requested to avoid profanity, preaching, politics and self-promotion during their lectures.

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What do you mean, "I started it"?

You've been there. You know you have. You're plugging along, doing your job, making progress, and then all of a sudden... BAM! You feel like the victim of a hit-and-run (and to some extent, you are). You've just been nailed by office politics.

Many will tuck their tails between their legs, chalk it up to a bad experience, and try to salvage what they can. Those who bother to investigate may hear the accusation that they themselves started the whole mess. This is where the real confusion begins. You ask yourself how one could be both the victim AND perpetrator of office politics.

In this economy and job market, it is an imperative skill to master the art AND science of office politics. Instead of "fight or flight," one must look at office politics as a process to be solved rather than as a fight to be won. And it can be solved ethically and morally.

During this presentation, Timothy Johnson will share the process of using GUST to understand your office politics situations better. You'll see how much control you have over the GAME, learn the importance of UNDERSTANDING the players and motives, determine the best STRATEGY for addressing your specific situation, and then figure out how to TAKE ACTION without compromising your integrity.

We all face office politics situations. From bullies who overstep their bounds to office prima donnas who think everything revolves around their egos, from passive-aggressive types to saboteurs, you'll see new approaches for framing and handling your office politics situations. The real value is learning how to treat office politics as a proactive strategic tool rather than a reactive weapon.

Tactics to compete with difficult coworker?

Dear Office-Politics,

I am writing on behalf of a close friend. “Jane” has asked me to help her find tactics to compete with a difficult coworker.

Jane has been in her job for two years. For the first year, she felt valued. Then another woman, “Laura,” joined Jane’s department. Jane’s work life has been deteriorating ever since.

Laura is something of an overachiever and, by what I hear from Jane (I do not work with them), a consummate politicker. Laura has ingratiated herself to their mutual superior, is chummy with many of their colleagues and appears helpful to and liked by all — except Jane. Laura gathers information on projects that are not her responsibility, including Jane’s. Laura shares in-depth with others while offering Jane only minimal, grudging (though civil) assistance. Laura communicates well with everyone, except for Jane, who receives offhanded and unapologetic notice of important activities, if any.

Jane feels Laura’s personal friendship with the manager results in a bias in Laura’s favor. Laura has begun to receive choice project assignments while Jane is feeling marginalized. Jane is concerned that she has fallen out of favor and may be at risk should any belt-tightening occur.

In short, Laura is well liked, competent and appears to have set her sights on Jane as the person to climb over on her way up. Jane has asked me how to fight back. Jane admits that she cannot match Laura’s seeming omnipresence or quantity of work. With this route closed, she sees two remaining strategies: strengthen and defend her own position, or expose and weaken Laura’s. I’ve offered what advice I can, but I’ve never been in someone’s cross hairs like this. Is the better course here to attack the chinks in her competitor’s armor? If so, how?

~ Concerned Adviser



Office karma: I wonder when will she get hers?

Dear Office-Politics,

I am in desperate need of your advice. I work in a small, family owned construction firm. One of the non-family members is a complete-bully-spy-know-it-all-done-it-all-backstabbing-wretch of a person. I believe in office karma, but sometimes (especially when it comes to this person) you have to wonder WHEN will she get hers?



This person is constantly watching, waiting for any little mistake. When she spots one, she immediately gets on her high horse and tells management how to do their jobs. Why they put up with her I will never know?!

If we were in a customer related industry, she would have been gone long ago. She can be extremely rude and racist; and sometimes they will chime right in with her. I have gone to management, but my concerns have fallen on deaf ears for five years now.

I love my job, but every day I am on guard. The office politics here have been taking a toll on me for quite some time. I have applied for other jobs and yet nothing happens. I feel so stuck. While the emperor here is spinning a new wardrobe every day, I just sit at my desk, mind my own business and do my job.

What is a person to do when you complain to management and:

- A. They don't care
- B. They see it only as a personality conflict
- C. They let her get away with it?

I have been documenting things for about a year now, and have considered seeking legal advice — but sometimes I don't know if it would do any good. Any advice you could provide would be greatly appreciated.

~ *Hard Worker In Need of Advice*



GAME

Resources
Information
People

UNDERSTAND

Snakes
Ostriches
Bears

Motives
Influence

STRATEGY

Roles
Approach
Character

Ethics Test 1: Bell

Book

Candle

Ethics Test 2: Mirror

Grandmother

Ethics Test 3; Beware the Utilitarian Pitfall

Evidence

TAKE ACTION

Support: You and Your Cause
Timing
Outcome
Passion