Negotiation and coalition building skills

11.201 GATEWAY: Planning Action

Xavier de Souza Briggs
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Many good planning ideas struggle for support, “will,” constituencies.

We care about negotiation, stakeholder analysis, process management, and related skills because they’re more and more important to “planning action.”

Coalition building is especially crucial for accomplishing important, contested things in the world.

A negotiation experience is valuable if you can reflect on it and draw useful lessons, but it’s easy to draw the wrong ones.
Preparing for Seeport

Analyzing multi-party, multi-issue situations:
- Our and their interests, priorities among those?
- Our and their no-agreement alternatives, aspirations? *Some can live without deal.*
- Our and their likely allies, adversaries?
- Potential agreements (“bundles”)?
- *Process:* Value of pre-meeting moves? Likely process leaders (influentials)?
Boston public housing re-analyzed

Multiple negotiations, levels, agents

- City hall
- Agents
  - Tenants
  - Factions
  - BHA
  - Units
  - Developer
The basics of join gain (win-win)

“Exploiting differences”: Trading away something we value less for something we value more (with someone whose values are the inverse):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ISSUE</th>
<th>Party A</th>
<th>Party B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>One</td>
<td>Values more</td>
<td>Does not value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Two</td>
<td>Values less</td>
<td>Values more</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## Imbalances and “Power”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantaged parties</th>
<th>Vulnerable parties</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seeport</td>
<td>Union</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Governor</td>
<td>Enviro League</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Federal DCR</td>
<td>Other Ports</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Key for vulnerable:* be proactive, block if necessary, avoid getting shut out

*Key for advantaged:* head off “blocking coalitions,” get a deal done (mega-project).
“Vulnerable” ≠ powerless

- “Resources” (structural advantages) do not ensure “resourcefulness.”
- Likewise, a lack of resources (or a structural disadvantage) calls for extra resourcefulness.
- Keys are: (a) savvy preparation “away from the table,” (b) getting to the table “early” (consider pre-meeting moves, avoid getting shut out by early side deals), (c) heading off or breaking up adverse coalitions while “at” the table, and (d) creating a “blocking” coalition if necessary.
Many bases for coalition building

“Politics makes strange bedfellows.”

- Shared interests?
- Shared positions (e.g., no deal)?
- Valuable trades?
- Common history?
- Common allies or enemies?
- Shared vulnerability?
Changing the game

- Trying to “win” at “their” game vs. change the game (“setup”).
- Ourtown: Issues and options not fixed, much room for creative framing and brainstorming.
- Changing the setup (issues, parties, rules and incentives) can be crucial politically but hard to accomplish (controversial, impractical).
### You in the process

#### Repertoire and “self-management”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT</th>
<th>APPLICATION TO SEEPORT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Inquiring effectively</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speaking clearly</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expressing strong feelings</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building relationship while making a good deal</td>
<td>?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Key lessons about getting things done

- **POWER.** Parties often have more power and coalition potential than they assume. Structure merely sets up possibilities and boundaries—key is “resourcefulness, not just resources,” and coalitions are often key.

- **COALITIONS.** Strong coalitions tend to be based on shared interests and/or values, but many bases are possible.

- **PROCESS PLANNING.** Keys to sequencing that let you create and claim value: carefully packaging issues, sequencing meetings, being proactive about both favorable and “blocking” coalitions.

- **YOU IN THE PROCESS.** Know and develop your strengths, know and develop your weaknesses—and look for partners to compensate. Need “bandwidth”