

## 3.2 EMPOWER MODEL

Empowerment is the cornerstone of competing for political power and enforcing political interests against the opposition of other stakeholders. The focus is on the acquisition and understanding of *political logic*, *political language* and *political ethos* by the power actor, whereby the term power actor includes both the individual and the organization (see Chapter 3.1). For the homo consultans, empowering involves equipping people and institutions for the game of power chess, giving them an understanding of the game that includes the rules but goes beyond merely memorizing formal laws and norms. The ultimate goal of empowerment is to develop a politically strategic way of thinking and a corresponding course of action (see Chapters 2.3 and 2.5.1 as well as our comments on governmentality in Chapter 2.5.2). For these responsible tasks, the consultant not only needs a diverse set of tools and techniques, but must also display true empathy for the client and undertake a realistic assessment of the latter's abilities. In the following, we first outline the range of topics and tasks associated with the key concept of empowering and then take a look at the concrete tools and techniques associated with it.

### 3.2.1 Political Logic

The notion “political logic” might seem abstract and dry to some readers, evoking associations of mathematical deduction, formal modeling or syllogisms. However, as before, we use the expression logic in its original, broad meaning as a collective term for the fundamental mechanisms, laws and functions of a specific subject area, here: politics in the representative democracy of the twenty-first century. Political logic is divided into four building blocks: system logic, decision logic, organization logic and communication logic.

System logic provides the answer to a simple and fundamental question: *how does the political system of a state or a community of states really work?* Accordingly, it includes, *firstly*, constitutional or international treaties such as the German Basic Law, the American Constitution or the EU Treaty of Lisbon; institutional orders (governments, parliaments, courts, administrations, etc.) at national, supranational, regional and local levels; the distribution of responsibilities; and the inter-institutional interconnectedness of powers. These are the major points at which the power relations between the executive, legislative, judiciary and administration are adjusted. They determine whether the political system has the character of a parliamentary or presidential democracy, whether political decisions are controlled by a powerful interventionist constitutional court or not, whether the regional units of a state enjoy much or little autonomy, whether the population is

immediately involved in legislation through direct democratic instruments or whether legislation lies exclusively in the hands of elected representatives, etc. In short, the institutional framework of the political system determines *who* decides *what*, and to *whom* the decision-maker is accountable. We are thus concerned here with the positional fabric of power after Popitz, as introduced in Chapter 1.2.

*Secondly*, system logic includes the formal and informal procedures within this institutional order, such as the development of a law from its first draft through the passages and readings in the appropriate chambers to its execution and promulgation or the quorum and conditions for a referendum. Here it is worthwhile to distinguish between the nominal procedure and the *de facto* procedure. For instance, the German Federal Parliament (Bundestag) decides on the passing of laws by parliamentary majority and is thus nominally the legislator of the Federal Republic of Germany, but *de facto* only a very small number of legislative drafts originates from the parliamentarians. It is rather the case that the majority of such drafts are developed by specialist departments in the ministries (often with the involvement of state-level bureaucrats to ensure the smooth passage of the law through the German Federal Council – Bundesrat). They are then submitted to the Cabinet and only presented to Parliament for discussion in plenary session after an internal consensus has been formed.<sup>6</sup> Things are quite different in the United States, for example, where every elected member of the House of Representatives and every member of the Senate serves as his or her own political entrepreneur with a large staff, with whose help he or she takes legislative initiatives and prepares for the detailed work in the committees. Such central differences, which are depicted in Winfried Steffani's classic typology of parliaments (debating parliaments, working parliaments, debating working parliaments),<sup>7</sup> cannot be inferred from the formal constitutional system alone. They are part of lived and traditional political practice, and just as important as the formal institutional order.

The *third* aspect of system logic is best described as the system goal. It stands for the fundamental, historically conditioned guiding principle behind the respective institutional and procedural order. The system goal gives the answer to the why-question of the political system, i.e. explaining why it is structured as it is and not differently. In Germany, for example, the political system is structured in accordance with lessons learnt from National Socialism and from the failure of the Weimar constitution. Hence political power is not be concentrated in the hands of

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6 Cf. Meier, Dominik (2017b): Germany, in: Alberto Bitonti and Phil Harris (eds.), *Loibyng in Europe*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 159-170.

7 Cf. Steffani, Winfried (1979): *Parlamentarische und präsidentielle Demokratie. Strukturelle Aspekte westlicher Demokratien*, Opladen: Westdeutscher Verlag.

one public official nor fragmented to the extent of incapacity. This double specification is the key to understanding the basic structure of the Federal Republic of Germany and the functioning of its institutional and procedural rules. In comparison thereto, the US system goal is to restrict as much as possible the exercising of power by the state institutions and to protect the population from excessive government intervention and ostensibly ideological policies – even at the cost of paralyzing the apparatus along party lines. The blockade potential is intentional, for it is purposely and purposefully built into the institutional and procedural order. A noteworthy device in this regard is constituted by the filibuster, a powerful legislative measure dating back to ancient Rome, as the senator Cato the Younger typically obstructed the passage of legislation by delivering long-winded speeches. In modern times, the technique is just as (in)famously employed in the US Senate, as the senatorial rules permit senators to speak for as long as they wish and on any topic they desire, unless “three-fifths of the Senators duly chosen and sworn” (normally 60 out of 100 senators) close the debate by invoking cloture in accordance with US Senate Rule XXII.<sup>8</sup>

A deep understanding of system logic is indispensable to power chess. The logic of the system determines how power is distributed in the political system and how it is exercised, and it thus establishes *starting points* and *channels* for the enforcement of interests. The rules of each variant of power chess are based on the logic of the systems concerned. For example, for a presidential, central-state democracy such as the Fifth Republic of France, where the powers of the National Assembly are extremely limited in relation to those of the head of state, there are different rules for starting line-ups and moves than in a parliamentary, federalist democracy, such as the Austrian one. While in the Fifth Republic the decisive political struggles take place in Paris – more precisely in the Élysée Palace – and the power formations are formed in concentric circles around the president, the Austrian field is decentralized and characterized by competition between the federal government and the states. Anyone who does not know about these differences between the system logics of the communities has no chance to participate in power chess; understanding such features is a prerequisite for being able to make any meaningful moves and bring about decisions.

The second building block of political logic, closely linked to system logic, is decision logic. It answers the follow-up question: *According to which principles are decisions made in the power field of representative democracy?* The focus here, however, is not knowledge of the majority rule in parliamentary votes or the

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8 Cf. Arenberg, Richard A. and Dove, Robert B.: (2012): *Defending the Filibuster: The Soul of the Senate*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

supermajority rule in the Council of the EU (both of which are elements of system logic) but the rationale and justification structures of political decision-making.

We can best illustrate this building block by comparing economics and politics. For example, in a business enterprise, the decisions of CEOs are aimed directly at improving production efficiency, opening up new customer groups and markets or optimizing business collaboration – but the fundamental, unifying purpose is always to increase profits or, for stock companies, to increase stock market prices.<sup>9</sup> Profit is the ultimate goal of the private sector – a goal from which all other goals are derived. Political decisions in democracies, on the other hand, are always geared towards the ultimate goal of the common good, more precisely, the protection and promotion of the common good (see Chapter 2.4). The various measures taken by political decision-makers (laws, regulations, directives, international agreements, institutional reforms, etc.) appear to be heterogeneous in their functions, insofar as they relate to, for example, combating unemployment, increasing internal security, protecting the environment or improving the level of education – but the underlying justification principle is the same: the well-being of the community as a whole. All decisions must be justified by demonstrating that their immediate goals are effectively and efficiently linked to this ultimate goal.<sup>10</sup>

This results in two major consequences for political decision logic. *Firstly*, political decisions should not give the impression that they only serve the wishes of a particular interest group or even a single actor. Anyone in democratic power chess who is (justifiably) suspected of practicing clientele politics or nepotism, generally has no chance of success. Therefore, it is not surprising that, first, all interest formations of the political power field always and with great pathos take

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9 Incidentally, this also applies to most entrepreneurial measures in the area of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). Numerous studies have shown that the effective public implementation of social or ecological projects by companies leads in the medium term to an increase in profits and, not least because of this, is increasingly becoming part of the corporate philosophy of large corporations; see the much-cited essay by Orlitzky, Marc, Schmidt, Frank L. and Reynes, Sara (2003): Corporate Social and Financial Performance: A Meta-Analysis, *Organization Studies*, 24 (3), pp. 402-441.

10 On the function of the common good as a unifying principle of political justification, see Blum (2015): p. 26.

up the cause of the common good;<sup>11</sup> and second, that in public debates regular attempts are made to attribute opponents with the pursuit of certain particular interests. This principle does not apply only to parties. It also applies to companies, for example, if they act as political power actors and influence politics. Business lobbying without a credible public interest is hardly possible today. The conclusion to be drawn from this specificity of political decision logic is therefore not to appeal to the common good *sui generis*, but to make a *convincing* appeal – a credible orientation towards the interests of the general public and not (only) the preferences of a particular social formation. This fact – the recognition of the need to aggregate interests in politics and connect them across societal divisions – explains why, for example, actual committee work in the US Congress or in parliamentary legislative bodies is conducted on the basis of bipartisan consensus, even though elections and votes are generally validated in accordance with the principle of majority rule. Here, too, the principle of the common good is applied, which we discuss in more depth in Chapter 3.2.3 as a component of political ethos.

The *second* consequence is that decisions cannot be made permanently against public opinion. The principle of democratic popular sovereignty gives citizens a high degree of freedom in determining the common good. In representative systems, although political decision-making authority is delegated to elected representatives, these representatives act as political trustees and are nevertheless responsible to the sovereign people. It is therefore necessary for political decision logic to take citizens' fears and concerns seriously and to do justice to them either through better policy mediation or substantial course corrections. Politics that does not take this requirement of decision logic seriously is technocratic. It is inspired by an elitist self-image and the belief that the public interest is fundamentally better understood by politicians than by the common citizen; which often leads to political disenchantment and a loss of confidence. A particularly drastic example of technocratic policy is provided by the gradual increase in power of the European Central Bank (ECB) in the course of the euro crisis from 2010, as well as the establishment of the influential European Stability Mechanism (ESM), which is largely independent of democratic control. To prevent a collapse in currency, both institutions are authorized to intervene in the budgetary policies of the member states (via bond purchases and loans tied to austerity regulations), undermining the budgetary rights of national parliaments. The effect is, as the political scientist

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11 Cf. Neidhardt, Friedhelm (2002): Öffentlichkeit und Gemeinwohl. Gemeinwohl rhetorik in Pressekommentaren, in: Herfried Münkler and Harald Bluhm (eds.), *Gemeinwohl und Gemeinsinn*, Vol. II: Rhetoriken und Perspektiven sozial-moralischer Orientierung, Berlin: Akademie Verlag, pp. 157–177.; and Blum (2015): pp. 7ff.

Wolfgang Merkel described with a touch of disillusionment, “a humiliating disempowerment of democratic self-determination.”<sup>12</sup> This applies in particular to the financially dependent debtor countries: “formal institutions of democracy such as elections, parliaments or governments are degraded in the debtor countries to mere facades, politics is being decided outside of the affected countries.”<sup>13</sup> This style of policy is likely to be responsible for the fact that the proportion of citizens who trust the EU has been below the 50% threshold for years.<sup>14</sup>

The third building block, *organization logic*, is closely linked to system and decision logic. The thematic spectrum of organization logic can be condensed into a question, as before: *How are political organizations actually structured?* While system logic describes the relationship of the institutions to one another and specifies decision logic, defining the justification principles according to which these two act together, organization logic describes the internal perspective of the actors. On the one hand, this includes the formal, hierarchical structure of the bodies and positions and the corresponding responsibilities, as well as the rules of conduct of the members and the rules governing the workflow. On the other hand, it involves the informal mechanisms of decision-making, programmatic orientation and the allocation of resources and offices. Both aspects define the action spectrum of the organizations. They determine which internal processes they have to go through in order to perform specific maneuvers in power chess and which strategic powers they can mobilize. Accordingly, a knowledge of organization logic is necessary in order to develop an understanding of the rules governing the moves made by the actors – and thus of their strategic and tactical options.

The formal aspects of organization logic are reflected in the basic texts of the organizations. This includes the rules of procedure of Congress as well as the charters of the respective political parties and the statutes of the associations and trade unions. All of these regulations establish, with a meticulousness that may surprise a layperson, how meetings are convened, decisions are made and minutes are

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12 Merkel, Wolfgang (2013): Ein technokratisches Europa ist nicht überlebensfähig, in: Cicero online from 08th April 2013, [online] <https://www.cicero.de/innenpolitik/de/mokratieverlust-postdemokratie-so-ist-es-europa-nicht-mehr-wert/54106>, retrieved on 21.12.2017. See also, although less critical, Selmayr, Martin (2015): Europäische Zentralbank, in: Werner Weidenfeld and Wolfgang Wessels (eds.), *Jahrbuch der europäischen Integration 2015*, Baden-Baden: Nomos.; pp. 113-126.

13 Cf. Selmayr (2015)

14 Cf. In this regard, Standard Eurobarometer, [online] <http://ec.europa.eu/commfrontoffice/publicopinion/index.cfm/Survey/getSurveyDetail/instruments/STANDARD/surveyKey/2142>, retrieved on 21.12.2017.

taken, and how people are elected to or removed from office. The penetration of formal organization logic is a challenging task that requires, not least, detailed knowledge of organizational charts and structure plans, such as the hierarchy of decision-making in a federal administrative authority from the minister to the secretaries of state to the individual head of unit. In comparison, the informal aspects of organization logic are much harder to pin down because they are not on paper, but are constituted by unofficial discussions, shared values or implicit understandings in the organizations. They can only be understood through years of first-person experience and through interaction.

The *last* building block of political logic is communication logic. Here, the question of the conveyance of contents and positions is in the foreground: *What is communicated how in the power field of politics?* Understanding and penetrating the logic of communication means understanding both the range of communicative channels and knowing what mechanisms these channels obey and what their opportunities and risks are. This knowledge is central to power chess, because in representative democracy the exercise of power is always linked to a communicative *ex ante* duty to provide reasons or to *ex post* accountability. All democratic systems – whether presidential or parliamentary, centralist or federalist – differ from dictatorships in that rule is carried out in a space of public discourse. In this space citizens are recognized as fully fledged communication partners, i.e. as the recipients and providers of reasons. The concomitant obligation to communicate extends not only to governments, parties and representatives of the judiciary and administration. It affects all actors of the political cosmos, i.e. private global players, church representatives and chief activists of environmental organizations. Those who cannot or do not want to communicate their actions are subject to the suspicion that their interests cannot withstand public scrutiny and are incompatible with the common good. Therefore, the crucial point is not whether power actors should act communicatively to enforce their interests, but only at what time and with what means and arguments they need to do so. At this point, there is a major overlap with the second key issue of empowerment: political language. As we discuss this in more detail below, we limit ourselves here to the basic structure of communication logic, its channels and paradigm shifts.

As a result of the ongoing digital revolution, political communication has already undergone far-reaching and profound transformation processes (see our remarks on data power and the mass media in Chapters 2.3.2 and 2.5.3). Therefore, this topic is one of the most discussed aspects of political logic in the current

debate.<sup>15</sup> The communication logic of the democracies of the twenty-first century is characterized by a significant dichotomy: analogue versus digital. Until the 1990s, political communication and analogue communication were equivalent: anyone who wanted to convey content (electoral programs, trade union demands relating to industrial policy, boycott calls, appeals for refugees) distributed flyers, printed placards, broadcast radio spots, placed articles in newspapers, scheduled TV interviews or held press conferences. Political communication took place in a media cosmos with clearly defined news cycles, a numerically limited and professionally trained group of journalistic gatekeepers and relatively little interaction between addressees and broadcasters.

These parameters are obsolete in the age of social media, such as Twitter, Facebook, Reddit, WeChat or Instagram, the globally networking 24/7 messaging platforms, and of course, the digital communication technology of instant messaging and e-mail correspondence. This does not mean that, e.g., newspapers, magazines, radio and classical television have lost all importance; however, they have lost their gatekeeper function. So far, it is only certain that the times of a purely analogue political communication culture are irretrievably over. However, the new communicative cosmos is fluid and characterized by continuous technological disruptions. Reliable forecasts are proving extremely difficult in light of increasingly rapid innovation cycles. Peter Köppl, in discussing the digital paradigm shift in communication culture, aptly points out that society and politics, media and communication are subject to constant change. He thereby cites the exploding user rates of social media services, the penetration of smartphones and tablets among the population and the omnipresence of an online existence. By virtue of the active use of social and digital media, today every normal company is basically a media company. Power and communication monopolies are thus being successively eroded.<sup>16</sup>

The effects of digitization on political communication culture can be summarized in three points. *First*, the number of communicators has increased exponentially. Due to the low technical and logistical hurdles, every citizen and every interest group – no matter how small – can participate in the digital discourse and potentially reach not only an audience of millions but also influential decision-makers by simply setting up a Twitter account, a Facebook profile or clicking on the comment columns of news sites such as *Spiegel Online* or *NewYork-Times.Com*. The forerunners of this development were the Latin American democ

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15 For an excellent overview of the challenges and opportunities of digitization for political communication, see Köppl (2017).

16 Köppl (2017): p. 1.

racies (such as Argentina and Ecuador), where heads of state were the first to engage in regular verbal and political debate via, for instance, Twitter; something that is now becoming a general phenomenon.<sup>17</sup> Secondly, the pace of political communication has accelerated dramatically. In times when the majority of the population are connected to the Internet via smartphones at any time, and only a fraction of a second is needed to post or comment, political power players are under pressure to steadily increase the pace of their messages, arguments and responses, for they loathe having to go on the defensive or – even worse – sink into communicative insignificance. Closely related to this is the third effect: a dramatic increase in the total volume of communicative content. However, this quantitative increase is not accompanied by a corresponding qualitative increase. The combination of a higher cycle rate and an ever-increasing number of channels harbors the very real danger of an increasing lack of substance on the one hand and the dissemination of unproven claims, so-called fake news, on the other. Added to this is the element of ever-increasing volatility of opinion. Many political social media trends, such as the movement #OccupyWallStreet of 2011, often receive national and international attention and approval for a very short time, only to disappear through the cracks in the pavement just as quickly and with no lasting effect. Hashtags do not guarantee lasting success. Nevertheless, some more recent trends are exhibiting the potential to be more longstanding and effective, notably the “MeTooDebate”. This actually dates back to the work of the Afro-American social activist Tarana Burke, who started the movement in 2006 to battle against the sexual harassment of women. With the Harvey Weinstein affair, which rocked Hollywood in October of 2017, the hashtag #MeToo was initiated with incandescent force by the Italo-American actress Alyssa Milano, and it began illuminating the problem on various levels, and with varying substantive depths, around the world.

At this juncture, the great challenge of political communication logic in the twenty-first century democracy can be summed up. It is important to broadcast your own messages to the targeted audience rather than being obliterated by the mass of news alerts and pop-ups, but it is also necessary to efficiently filter through all the opinions and information what is relevant to your own interests. A basic rule of political power chess here is not to succumb to the temptation of empty content or fabricated truths. In the digital as in the traditional, analogous communication cosmos, there has always been a principle – to which we return in our discussion of political language and political detail – lies have short legs. As we discuss in our section on the strategic potency of mediation in Chapter 2.5.2,

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17 Cf. Gimlet Media (2015): *Favor Atender* [Podcast], [online] <https://gimletmedia.com/episode/25-favor-atender/>, retrieved on 20.1.2017.

in politics it is arguments and clear language that convince. Anyone who continually relies on falsehoods and bullshit (see Chapter 2.4) will sooner or later be unmasked and no longer taken seriously in the political discourse space. These insights must also be reflected in the political language of power chess players.

### **3.2.2 Political Language**

The language of politics has as bad a reputation with many people as the game of power chess of which it is a part. Even policymakers repeatedly flirt with this *cliché*. Among them, the former Prime Minister of the Soviet Union, Nikita Khrushchev, to whom the following statement is attributed: “Politicians are the same everywhere. They even promise to build a bridge when there is no river.”<sup>18</sup> With all due respect for Khrushchev’s self-irony, his statement remains a caricature. When political language – not just the language of politicians, but of all of the protagonists of the political power field – relies only on breezy promises, vague assertions, lies or empty phrases, then any political system runs the risk of imploding. This is all the more true for democracy. Democratic legitimacy and stability are based on the actors directly or indirectly involved in decision-making – whether public institutions, political parties, economic and civil society interest groups, scientific institutions, etc. – publicly presenting their positions and interpretations of the common good in a clear, verifiable and consistent manner. If this normative and functional requirement remained consistently unfulfilled, the result would be such a massive loss of confidence in the system and the elites that the collectively authorized norms would no longer be worth the paper on which they are written. Reality is therefore more complex, and it is a central political task to make this reality understandable and manageable. We therefore outline below the key language requirements in the democratic contest of interests.

Political language, similar to jurisprudential language, business language, the various scientific languages and even the language of football, is a linguistic field with its own *vocabulary* and *laws*.<sup>19</sup> Translating political statements into another language, and vice versa, is not only essential to establish a communicative ex

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18 As quoted in New York Herald Tribune (22th August 1963).

19 We could speak here of a ‘language game’, following the language philosopher and logician Ludwig Wittgenstein ; see. Wittgenstein, Ludwig ([1953] 2001): *Philosophical Investigations*, translated by G.E.M. Anscombe, Hoboken: Blackwell. The Wittgenstein metaphor of a game that combines the specialized use of language with a practical aim (in politics, for example, the exercise and legitimization of power) fits in well with our analogy of politics as strategic-tactical power chess.

change between the various power fields of the community – such as economics, religion, science and culture (see Chapter 2.3) –, it is also often extremely demanding. Those who do not master the special vocabulary and the rule canon of the political language will either not be understood in the political discourse or, sometimes worse, will be misunderstood.

Political vocabulary can be subdivided into three categories: firstly, institutional vocabulary (e.g. Congress, President, draft, bill and hearing); secondly, interaction vocabulary, which designates political interactions or linguistic acts (e.g. scandal, resolution, compromise, demand, agree, discuss) and, finally, departmental vocabulary which comprises the jargon of the respective subject areas.<sup>20</sup> The latter includes, for instance, the terms of digital and economic policies, such as Industry 4.0 and Open Access, or fiscal terminology, such as liquidity management or fiscal stimulus. Mastering this vocabulary involves knowing its *denotation and connotation* – knowing what the expressions refer to and what associations are linked with them. It also means understanding the many abbreviations used by day-to-day decision-makers to save time and exclude non-insiders from discourse (see our discussion on bureaucratic terminology as a power technique in Chapter 2.5.2). Anyone who cannot decipher the various abbreviations and acronyms will have difficulty reading political documents in the first place.

The corresponding rules of political language can be determined by three main aspects or levels: *content, mediation and formalization ability*. In democratic competition, it is not always those who have the best ideas and justifications on their side who prevail; but it is certainly the case that those with no valid arguments will lose sooner or later. The success of political charlatans is always fragile and short-term and does not detract from the veracity of this principle. This indicates the central feature of political language: arguments. The importance of arguments for political language becomes clear when we recall the function of this language form: it should not only inspire and mobilize, but also convince. It should therefore satisfy basic human strivings for meaning and justification, for orientation and rationale, as discussed in Chapter 1.3. This gap can be filled only by arguments, because only they can challenge human beings and take them seriously as rational political subjects – as the providers and recipients of reasons. Arguments are constantly being demanded, questioned, rejected and reformulated in the political discourse, by opponents, allies, the media and the public alike. If leaders from politics, business or civil society have no arguments, then they have virtually nothing to say.

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20 Bazil, Vazrik (2010): Politische Sprache: Zeichen und Zunge der Macht, *Politik und Zeitgeschichte*, (8), pp. 3-6.; p. 3.

Arguments are necessary for convincing political language. However, they are far from sufficient. Not all arguments are good arguments. Obviously, when discussing the quality criteria of arguments, we must leave out the material, substantive side. The substantive plausibility of a labor market policy or a climate policy argument is a question that falls within the domain of economists or meteorologists. We focus here on the formal side. The corresponding quality criteria were already mentioned in Chapter 2.4, introduced as part of our discussion of the legitimacy criteria of political power. Thus, we can now draw on that discussion. *Firstly*, the arguments must not be knowingly based on misinformation or mislead addressees by omitting relevant facts. *Secondly*, they must not be bullshit in the sense of Harry G. Frankfurt, pretending to communicate meaning in meaningless word cascades, where in truth there is none. *Thirdly*, the individuals or organizations that produce the arguments must scrutinize them to the best of their knowledge and ability for logical consistency, plausibility, falsifiability and transparency.

These three stipulations are not primarily ethical obligations in the context of political language; such obligations are dealt with in Chapter 3.2.3 in terms of the ethos of the political. Instead, this is primarily about the rules of prudence that concern political discourse. Thus if a politician presents untenable economic forecasts, the CEO of a chemical company ignores better knowledge and classifies a pesticide as environmentally friendly, or the representative of an association insists against all medical evidence that tobacco products do not damage people's health, then they are disregarding their due diligence obligations and will lose their credibility – and not only in the short term. In the worst case, the resulting reputational damage and the loss of trust can, as in the case of the cigarette industry, continue in the long term and provoke the most devastating counter-reactions. The same is true of the commandments: Thou shalt not lie, do not bullshit. Both forms of pseudo-arguments are associated with such a high risk of detection that their use is not a valid move in power chess.

However, the high priority given to arguments by no means implies that political language should not *emotionalize*. On the contrary, persuasive rhetoric addresses the passions of the listeners as well as their reason and judgment (see also our discussion of rhetoric and mediation in Chapter 2.5.2). It polarizes and provokes, it shakes up and carries its audience along, but it also soothes and pacifies. Without an emotional component that either enters into or actively challenges the state of mind of the addressees, political language (and thus its argumentative side) becomes technocratic and boring. The challenge in this context is threefold: to support one's own position with formal and substantively plausible arguments; to

connect with the passions of addressees through targeted and appropriate emotion-alization; and finally, to connect both elements – logos and pathos – in the content of political language.

The second level, mediation, concerns the way in which the arguments must be communicated to the addressee in order to fully communicate their persuasive power, i.e. to establish rational insight as well as empathic understanding. Firstly, any form of linguistic communication is either *oral* (speech, interview, public debate, informal conversation, etc.) or *written* (textbook, newspaper article, position paper, dossier, e-mail, instant message, etc.).<sup>21</sup> Both basic forms and their specific formats have certain advantages and disadvantages. Complex arguments cannot be adequately summed up in a tweet. Although point-blank position papers are compact and concise, they rarely produce emotional storms of enthusiasm. Interviews pose the danger of questions being posed that the power player did not want to address. And so on.<sup>22</sup> Secondly, the vocabulary of linguistic mediation moves on a continuum between *specialist expert discourse* (complex sentences, technical terms) and *lay discourse* (simple sentences, no technical terms). It is obvious that the use of vocabulary and the balance between professional and everyday language are crucial. If in the course of a civil society dialogue about an infrastructure project a developer bombards the audience with technical terms on planning approval procedures and spatial planning, for example, this will not lead to understanding and approval but to confusion and alienation. On the other hand, someone who is a political expert in a judicial committee hearing on the subject of crime prevention is well advised to use the department-specific vocabulary (repeated delinquency, predictive validity, false positives and negatives, etc.) in order to do justice to the complexity of the subject discourse and the methodological prerequisites of the interlocutors. In short: optimal positioning on both axes is crucial for the ability to mediate political language.

This depends on four factors. The first is the status of the *sender or communicator*. What position does he or she have? What position is he or she occupying in political space? Which linguistic conventions and rules are linked to his or her

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21 It is an interesting question whether facial expressions and gestures, for example the raised index finger, the salute or demonstrative eye rolling and frowning, but also Winston Churchill's Victory V and Angela Merkel's Rhombus, are linguistic forms of expression in a broader sense. We do not want to deepen this topic here. In any case, it is clear that these comprise an essential part of power symbolism and therefore often accompany political speech acts in a deliberate staging. See Chapter 2.2.

22 A good introduction in this regard is provided by Girneth, Heiko (2002): *Sprache und Sprachverwendung in der Politik*, Hamburg: De Gruyter.; pp. 83ff.

function? A certain political vocabulary is incompatible with the official status and political position of certain offices. Thus an active Chief Justice of the US Supreme Court, for example, is not normally heard utilizing street talk. On the other hand, this canon of communications does not apply at all to candidates for the office of US President. Moreover, in the Trump Era, it is quite evident that, even subsequent to winning a verbally venomous campaign, the victor can feel free to extend his raw, even rude rhetoric or to appropriately modulate his dog-whistle politics.

Incidentally, the term *dog-whistle politics* refers to an already well-established form of political messaging which utilizes coded language.<sup>23</sup> The code words are aimed at receiving resonance from a specifically targeted, desired and often very loyal subgroup. Actually, the term is of a pejorative nature given the perceived deceptive intent on the part of the speaker who is allegedly employing such techniques, for example, to surreptitiously stir up racial or ethnic sentiments. Indeed, the analogy is clearly being made to a dog whistle, a simple device whose high-frequency tone is heard by canines, while being inaudible to humans. Of course, in the modern political realm, the whistle is received and amplified by the media and political opponents as well. Thus, the rallying cry made to one's own base can thus run the risk of inciting the 'other side' and, for example, fueling a movement such as '#NeverTrump.'

The second factor is the *status and role of the addressee(s)*: are they knowledgeable participants in a political discourse or laypersons? Is the addressed group big or small, heterogeneous or homogeneous? Addresses given by heads of state and government to all their citizens often feature pictorial comparisons, short sentences, repetitions, memorable slogans and the renunciation of foreign words. This form of communication not only ensures that the messages are comprehensible to the maximum number of people without political education. It also overcomes the problem of low attention spans through redundancy and conciseness.

The third factor is the *complexity of the content*. Are the arguments logically sophisticated or simple? Do they require specialist knowledge or are they comprehensible without such knowledge? In Germany, for example, the Council of Economic Experts, an advisory council focusing on macroeconomic development, and somewhat informally referred to as the "Five Economic Wise Men" (*Die fünf Wirtschaftsweisen*), faces the challenge of preparing highly complex economic policy topics for both the public and experts. It overcomes this problem by subdividing its reports into a generally comprehensible shortened version accented by

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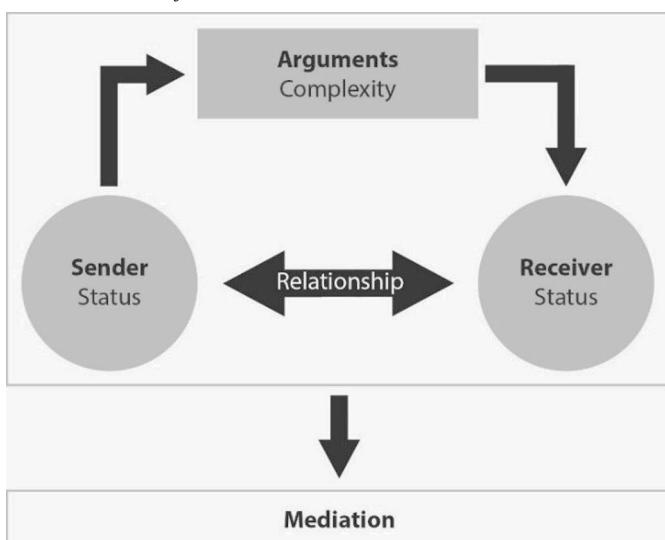
23 For the origin and meaning of the term cf. Safire, William (2008): *Safire's political dictionary*, revised edition, New York: Oxford University Press.; p. 190.

keywords (“Strong Upturn in 2017”, “Increasing Risks in the Financial System”, “Stability for the Euro Area”, etc.), and a specialist supplement.<sup>24</sup>

Finally, the fourth and last factor is the *relationship between the sender and the addressee* in the concrete situation. Is the relationship formal or informal? Are they in a hierarchical or equal relationship? Are they allies or opponents? For example, the mediation between an association representative and a group of members of parliament who have known each other for years follows categorically different rules to the mediation between a newly appointed government spokesperson and a host of critical journalists.

The correct mediation strategy is – to use a mathematical analogy – a function of the four factors: sender and recipient status, complexity of content and relationship. The balancing of these four factors against each other, however, cannot be solved schematically by a formula. This is rather a question of political competence, which is acquired through continuous practice as well as through training and coaching (see Chapters 2.5.1 and 3.2.3). This too is part of political empowering.

Figure 10: Factors of Political Mediation



24 Cf. Sachverständigenrat zur Begutachtung der gesamtwirtschaftlichen Entwicklung (2017): Für eine zukunftsorientierte Wirtschaftspolitik. Jahresgutachten, [online] [https://www.sachverständigenrat-wirtschaft.de/fileadmin/dateiablage/gutachten/jg201718/JG2017-18\\_gesamt\\_Website.pdf](https://www.sachverständigenrat-wirtschaft.de/fileadmin/dateiablage/gutachten/jg201718/JG2017-18_gesamt_Website.pdf), retrieved on 21.12.2017.

The third main aspect of political language is formalization ability. In this, political language differs greatly from a range of other forms of language, also those from other significant power fields such as the language of religion or culture. It must be possible to translate or condense political linguistic acts – both spoken and written – into the formal diction of the law and administration. However, the emphasis here is on formalization *ability*. Not every political sentence must be couched in legalistic or administrative language. Indeed, that would impact extremely negatively on its general understandability and communicability. But the meaning of its content and the corresponding arguments must be compatible with the appropriate specialist language. There is a decisive reason for this: the principle of the political is the authorization and enforcement of collectively binding standards of behavior and the establishment of standards of legitimacy (see Chapter 2.3.3). Political actors set the rules of social interaction and thus intervene, at times significantly, in the lives of citizens and organizations – ranging from global software companies to local associations of beekeepers. It must therefore be possible to verify the legality and check the legitimacy of political action, even to the extent of an abstract and concrete judicial review in the constitutional courts.

In terms of mastering the political language, the criterion of formalization ability first and foremost implies an adequate fundamental understanding of legal terms and their relationship to policymaking. This does not mean that either the power consultant or the clients must undergo legal training, nor does it mean that they should assess politics only from a legal perspective. Jurisprudence is there to support politics, not the other way round. The focus is rather on the practical consequence that the legal dimension must always be considered in political language, viewed as a possible complication and risk, and included in consultancy activities.

### **3.2.3 Political Ethos**

The acquisition of the political ethos is the third task of empowerment. It deepens the basic understanding of power chess (the ‘board’) by complementing political logic and language with the responsibilities and duties to which the power actor and the power consultant – *homo consultandus* and *homo consultans* – are equally subject. When we speak of political ethos, we do not mean mere law-abiding or political correctness. The former goes without saying. Compliance with the laws of the liberal constitutional state is essential for participation in democratic power chess and needs no further elucidation at this point. The latter, moreover, has nothing to do with ethics for us. Political correctness is a linguistic power technique with which interest formations influence the accepted vocabulary of the political language and claim sovereignty over the common good. There is much to say

about the effects of political correctness and its prohibitions and bans on public discourse. However, we want to leave said subject at this point.<sup>25</sup> By political ethics, we mean instead the unwritten but always implicitly presupposed values and norms of action to which all actors of democratic power chess – both persons and organizations – are committed. They form the counterpart to the legitimacy conditions of the institutions that we described in Chapter 2.4.

Thus understood, the political ethos is based on three fundamental values or virtues: *truthfulness*, *trustworthiness* and *common-good orientation*. These values do not comprise an (exclusive) purpose in themselves. They are a prerequisite for power actors to be able to credibly communicate their political positions, to forge lasting alliances and to mobilize various groups of people to assert their strategic interests. They are therefore the normative prerequisites of a fair and efficient democratic contest, on which the constitutional state depends but which – to return once more to Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde – it cannot guarantee.<sup>26</sup> This guarantee must be assumed by the protagonists of the political power field itself. It is an integral part of lived democratic culture, and it can only be sustained through continuous practice, tradition, reflection and, not least, through voluntary self-control.

The first core value, *truthfulness*, does not require power actors and power consultants to be beyond any doubt. To err is human. If errors are reflected upon rationally, and not just reactively, they even offer an important opportunity for assessing and improving one's own strategic ability (see our discussion of strategic failure in Chapter 2.5.2). Being truthful rather means that the political statements and actions of individuals and organizations must coincide. The principle of truthfulness is the convergence of discourse and practice in power chess. The relevance of this value becomes particularly apparent when it is trampled upon: in bigotry. An impressively notorious example from the recent past is the devastation of Hamburg's Schanzenviertel by left-wing radicals in July 2017. Thousands of activists invaded the district on the occasion of the G20 summit in Hamburg, carrying as a matter of course slogans like 'peace' and 'justice' on their banners. The divergence between the activists' claim to moral superiority over the summit participants and their actual actions led to a massive loss of solidarity among leftists, and not only in Hamburg. The conclusion is simple: you cannot plausibly support pacifism with a Molotov cocktail in your hand, you cannot genuinely preach global solidarity and plunder shops and businesses. Of course, this lack of truthfulness is not a political rarity, and it is certainly not specific to the leftist scene either. Its

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25 See also e.g. Braun, Johann (2015): Die offene Gesellschaft und ihre Grenzen, *Rechts-theorie*, 46 (2), pp. 151-177.

26 Böckenförde (1967): p. 93; see also Chapter 2.4.

effects, however, are devastating: political disenchantment, cynicism and apathy. Anyone who assumes that political actors always say one thing and then do something else ultimately turns away from politics. Truthfulness, on the other hand, creates credibility and the assurance of expectations: addressees of political communication can rely on the fact that decision-makers' deeds will actually correspond with their words.

The significance of truthfulness also extends to the closely related principle of sincerity. This is of immense importance for consultancy and policy design alike. For example, when a consultant realizes that a client is facing a serious strategic mistake but conceals that insight (for example, to avoid the displeasure of the client), the consultant is failing to live up to his or her responsibilities and ethos. The principle of sincerity – expressing one's well-founded opinion even at the risk of criticism and resistance – does not mean that *homo consultans* should patronize *homo consultandus* or relieve clients of decisions. *Homo consultans* always remains only the consultant and service provider of *homo consultandus*, he or she is an actor with their own goals and interests. This dual and potentially conflictual task is best described as a tightrope walk between rebellion and humility. This tightrope walk must also be achieved by deputies or parliamentarians and the representatives of associations. Both groups of actors have a mandate to shape politics on behalf of their constituents and members. In doing so, they have a duty not only to disclose unpleasant truths to their political clients, but even – at least temporarily – to act contrary to their clients' current opinions, if a long-term policy goal so requires. At the same time, they remain accountable to their clients. If they continually fail to take their concerns, wishes and beliefs seriously, then they are no longer actually representing them.

The second basic principle, *trustworthiness*, is fulfilled when an actor's positions and actions are coherent and stable over time. To put it bluntly and polemically, anyone who today campaigns as an environmentalist for emission reduction and climate protection, tomorrow enters into consultancy for a coal company, and finally the day after tomorrow works for a solar power producer, is untrustworthy. If you politically support such actors, you always do so at the risk of them suddenly changing their point of view at any time.

It is important in this context to bear in mind the difference between truthfulness and trustworthiness. Those who are not truthful can nonetheless consistently represent the same position over a longer period of time – however they never or rarely put this position into practice. Those who are not trustworthy may always do what they say, the problem is that they always change their position. In short: non-truthful persons are bigoted, untrustworthy persons are unprincipled. This does not mean, however, that actors should never change their position in the

course of their political biographies. Nobody could plausibly accuse the German Ex-Minister of the Interior Otto Schily, who gradually transformed himself from a radical left-wing RAF (Red Army Faction, a far left terrorist group founded in 1970) sympathizer to a Law and Order politician, of undermining his trustworthiness. Schily's change of heart is the result of a gradual development process for which there are convincing reasons. The situation is similar with respect to retired four-star General Colin Powell, former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, US National Security Adviser and Secretary of State. Powell entered the world stage as a staunch interventionist and member of the neo-conservative Bush administration and – after the experience of the Iraq war and the so-called “War on Terror” – left it as an enemy of war and supporter of the Democrats. Upon hearing that President George W. Bush was “sleeping like a baby” on the eve of war with Iraq, Powell countered: “I’m sleeping like a baby, too. Every two hours, I wake up, screaming.”<sup>27</sup> A lack of trustworthiness exists precisely if there are no convincing content-related reasons for such fundamental changes in political positions and if these changes of position do not occur gradually but suddenly.

Trustworthiness is as crucial for political success and for the integrity of the entire democratic contest as truthfulness. Those who lack credibility cannot forge stable and sustainable alliances, mobilize citizens to their ends on a lasting basis, convey credible messages or develop and implement long-term political strategies. Only trustworthiness creates constancy and predictability in political power chess.

The third and final principle of the political ethos is the *common-good orientation*. In determining this basic value, we can refer to the findings of Chapter 2.4 where we discussed the key concept of the common good in detail. A common-good orientation is not a commitment to a – supposedly – objective moral good that exists independently of the factual interests of the population or in relation to a list of universal policy goals (for example, full employment, integration of foreigners, social equality). Such so-called substantialist or material concepts, which determine the content of the common good *ex ante*, are incompatible with the pluralistic interests of liberal societies and with the open-endedness of democratic decision-making. What constitutes the well-being of a community can only be established *ex post* – that is, in view of the always provisional result of the democratic contest of ideas, which is contained and limited by the procedural norms, the political culture and the interpretive horizons of the formations of interests.

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27 Kaplan, Fred (2004): The Tragedy of Colin Powell: How the Bush Presidency destroyed him, in: Slate from 19th February 2004, [online] <https://slate.com/news-and-politics/2004/02/the-tragedy-of-colin-powell.html>, retrieved on 21.12.2017.

However, if the common good is not an objective, content-wise predetermined quantity, then from what should the power actor and the power consultant draw orientation? What is the fixed point of the common-good orientation? The answer to this difficult and rarely-discussed question has two complementary parts. *First*, the common-good orientation requires unconditional respect for and defense of written and unwritten democratic procedural norms and principles. Because the common good does not precede the democratic decision but emerges from it, only democratic policymaking can serve the common good. In addition to a series of obvious commandments and prohibitions (recognition of election results, no bribery of elected officials, no intimidation of the opposition, respect for press freedom, etc.), this also includes the protection of democratic order. Anyone who denies citizens political rights on the basis of skin color, origin or religion, for example, is not a democratic opponent that must be recognized as a competitor in the competition of ideas, but is an enemy of democracy. You do not owe it to enemies to enter into discussions and argumentative debates; they must be combated by all means of the rule of law. This is the principle of defensive democracy.

The *second* part of the answer refers to the adjective ‘common’ as part of the compound “common good.” The common good is the well-being of the community as a whole, not the well-being of a single and politically victorious formation of interests.<sup>28</sup> The inclusive character of this guiding principle must be taken into account by all power actors and interest groups when articulating their concerns. Here, the homo consultans has a duty to make clear to clients the immense importance of the common good for the representation of interests. To be oriented towards the common good means considering the legitimate and potentially conflicting interests of other social groups in the development of political goals and revising one's own position should there be good reason to do so. The opposite of the common-good orientation is selfish particularism. Selfish policymaking, the ruthless pursuit of particular interests at the expense of others, is incompatible with the common good.

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28 See Claus Offe's (2001) essay “Wessen Wohl ist das Gemeinwohl? “ (“Whose good is the common good?”) The insight that the common good concerns the good of the community as a whole, rather than merely that of a subgroup, is basically just the starting signal for a series of other problems: Is this community identical to the totality of all its members? If so, are only Pareto-optimal decisions of benefit to the common good? (See the position of Neidhardt (2002).) If not – and that seems the more likely answer – how should the community be determined? These questions are still awaiting their answer through political theory. However, we cannot go deeper into the subject here.

This unwritten basic norm of our democracy is regularly expressed in the statesmanship of newly elected heads of government. For example, Angela Merkel declared after her election victory in September 2009 that she wanted to be “the Chancellor of all Germans” – not just of the CDU voters. The same gesture is also found in statements made by civil society and economic interest groups on politically contested topics. Environmental lobbyists, such as Greenpeace or WWF, insist, for instance, that the gradual transition of electricity supplies to renewable sources not only protects the environment but is also good for the economy, creating jobs and strengthening Germany's market leadership in future technologies.<sup>29</sup> Drug and medical device manufacturers, in turn, always seek to ensure that their economic interests in gaining the authorization of certain products and the objective of improving public health coincide. In all these and similar cases, the challenge, of course, is not to represent such statements as mere lip service, but as sincere declarations of intent. The accompanying question concerning how much compromise the common-good orientation requires and how willing one must be to critically question and modify one's own interests, has always been a bone of contention for democratic practice and theory.<sup>30</sup> We also do not claim to provide a final answer, but are content to outline the nature of the problem.

In any case, the importance of the common-good orientation for successfully controlling the match in power chess should have become clear. Power chess is indeed a game that revolves around the enforcement of political interests through skillful positioning and strategy building – but these interests must firstly comply with the democratic rules of the game and, secondly, be compatible with other interests (i.e., not purely selfish). If not, the power actor may be excluded from the game or face the devastating accusation of clientism and pursuing a politics of vested interests (see Chapter 3.2.1). As with the other core values of the political ethos, truthfulness and trustworthiness, the common-good orientation is not only a commandment of ethics, but also of political reason.

### **3.2.4 Tools and Techniques of Empowering**

With the political logic, the political language and the political ethos, the central tasks of empowering are outlined. If actors have internalized these three elements of power chess, they have understood the ‘board’. They master the mechanisms and rules of the political game. However, this raises the question of which tools

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29 Cf. <https://www.greenpeace.de/themen/energiewende/energiewende-mit-plan> and <http://www.wwf.de/themen-projekte/klima-energie/energiepolitik/energiewende/>.

30 An excellent introduction into this subject is offered by Fung et al. (2012).

and techniques the homo consultans can use to provide their client, the homo consultandus, with such a scheme of thinking and the corresponding competencies. We now want to explain this essential component of the power leadership curriculum.

The skills of empowerment have three aspects: training and coaching, organizational consulting and navigation.

The terms *training* and *coaching* are often thrown together in our everyday language. The reason for this is that both tasks (whether in sports, in business or in politics) are mostly carried out by one and the same person. Nevertheless, a clear distinction is worthwhile. To illustrate this, let's take a look at soccer. Here, training sessions are those intervals between the individual games in which soccer players work on their fitness, practice standards and moves, review game records for mistakes and opportunities, and so forth – all under the guidance of their trainer. Coaching, however, takes place *during* the game from the well-known coaching zone on the sidelines; here, the soccer manager (to avoid the confusing terms of trainer or coach) gives instructions in real time, provides feedback and criticism to individual players, makes tactical changes, substitutes players and cheers on the team.

The situation in political power consultancy is very similar. During training, the power consultant prepares the client for involvement in the political arena. First, he or she provides a fundamental understanding of the political logic of the community (system logic, decision logic, organization logic and communication logic), its institutions and mechanisms. Since the focus here is on the acquisition of practical competence and not theoretical knowledge, this mediation usually has an interactive (and not a lecturing) format. In workshops or in planning games, consultants and clients discuss the detailed structure of legislative processes, the implementation of EU directives or the procedures of a ministerial conference. Second, training includes the acquisition of communication skills, the command of political language in speech and writing. This aspect of empowerment covers a wide range of topics and methods. It ranges from the internalization of principal abbreviations to the different types of salutations for persons of certain high offices ('the Honorable' or 'His / Her Excellency' etc.) to the construction of political texts of various types (dossiers, agreements, laws, regulations, etc.) to rhetorical training in front of cameras. And it also includes, as addressed in Chapter 3.2.2, the process of translation between policy language and the language of business or science, for example. The third aspect of the training is to create an understanding of the political ethos, as well as of the narrative of the community and its value. The latter poses crucial challenges for homo consultans with regard to international clients, such as global conglomerates or foreign trade organizations.

These power actors operate in dozens of states without necessarily being familiar with their cultural specifics (for example, the relevance of data protection to German politics or the importance of personal ties for political and economic relations in China). Thus in addition to translating, homo consultans must act as a cultural mediator.

Coaching then takes place while accompanying the homo consultandus throughout his or her politically relevant activities, both *internally* and *externally*. The former includes, for example, strategy meetings with the supervisory board of the company or the management level of the association concerned, but also, e.g., the internal professionalization and reorganization activities of an NGO. The latter covers a wide range of external communications – from public statements to appearances at specialist conferences to individual discussions with decision-makers. The power consultant is always on hand to provide the client with feedback on position papers, correspondence or speeches. He or she is present at key talks – not to whisper suggestions from the sidelines, but to assess the capabilities of the client *in actu* and to align further training to the client's performance and mediation skills. Last but not least, homo consultans also has the task of familiarizing clients with political events (parliamentary evenings, specialist conferences, party congresses, festivals, etc.), with the relevant actors and their goals, interests, power resources and special features. The power consultant acts as a mentor and pilot for the political field.

While training and coaching aim to make individual persons (or smaller groups) fit for power chess, *organizational consulting* focuses on optimizing institutional structures. Of course, the structure and focus of organizational consulting will vary according to which goal of power leadership – political leadership or lobbying leadership – is the focus. For ministries, departments and other agencies, this includes, e.g., the development and implementation of time- and resource-saving hierarchies or processes to enable increased responsiveness to challenges and crises. For parties, political organizational consulting may aim to establish a campaign center (a so-called 'war room') to prepare for the next election campaign and communicate messages successfully and sustainably to voters. In the case of private sector actors, the focus is on establishing or optimizing interest representation structures to assess the impact of projected changes in regulation on business development, to appoint contact persons for decision-makers and to take on board criticism from the political sphere. Despite these different emphases, political organizational consulting always has the same basic objective: the formation of teams, the creation of decision-making and communication and cooperation structures, and the establishment of working rhythms for effective and efficient

action both internally and externally, allowing the development and implementation of political strategies in a purposeful manner.

Successful organizational consulting requires the homo consultans to have a clear analytical view of the *actual state* of the organization on paper (organizational charts, flowcharts of work and information processes, etc.) and their strategic powers (organizational capability, mobilization capability, network capability, mediation capability, fame, financial potency and willingness to make a sacrifice, see Chapter 2.5.2). However, sensitivity to internal power relations, rivalries, mutual sympathies and animosities, and the dominant mood is also required. The most sophisticated restructuring plan is worthless if it fails because of the insulted vanity of a longtime member of the board, because of the self-image of the membership base of an NGO or because of the reluctance of a bureaucratic staff to abandon proven working methods. Homo consultans cannot deal with these challenges through political know-how and substantive expertise; what is required here is empathy and knowledge of human nature, that is, people skills, and not least a realistic assessment of his or her own limitations. Here we encounter, as highlighted in Chapter 3.2.3, the balancing act between rebellion and humility. The power consultant has a duty to keep the client's deficits in mind (always with a sense of proportion and respect) and to suggest solutions; but he or she cannot relieve power actors of the responsibility to recognize their deficits and accept the solutions.

The third aspect, *navigation*, was already mentioned in our comparison of the power consultant with a political pilot. Pilots are so well acquainted with a body of water that they can show the captain a safe course or, better yet, several alternative courses to the destination port – past shoals, stormy areas and treacherous currents. Analogous to this, the challenge of navigation for the homo consultans involves, *first*, elucidating the structural risks and opportunities of the political system with regard to the client's goals; and *second*, indicating which paths through this system can lead to these goals and the challenges connected to these various paths. Providing this orientation concerning the strategic constants of power chess is particularly (but not only) relevant to international clients, who are sometimes far removed from the system logic and day-to-day politics of the community and understand their political positioning as part of a global, transnational strategy. This area of responsibility thus includes the concrete, application-oriented clarification of central questions concerning the political system logic, such as: What decision-making power do regional and national governments have in relation to a policy field that is significant for the actor? What is the relationship between the EU decision-making level and the governments of the Member States – and what steps need to be taken at national level to gain influence in the EU?

Which institutional stages does a relevant law go through from its conception to proclamation – and what channels of influence exist at these stages? Above all, what are the effects of these structural specifics on the interests of the actor? The relationship with the aforementioned training is obvious. While the latter is aimed at developing a political mindset on the part of the client, navigation is about using this mindset for orientation in the power field. Safe navigation builds upon successful training.

Navigation as a consulting task is not to be confused with strategy development. The latter is the identification of the ideal causal path (maximum chance of success, minimum costs) to a specific and clearly defined strategic goal, taking into account the strategic environment, i.e.: time horizon, variables and constants (see Chapter 2.5.2); it falls within the scope of condensing (see Chapter 3.3). Navigation is thus the prerequisite for successful strategy development as well as for organization and coordination. By defining the political terrain and its institutional, procedural paths, it lays the foundations for power consultants and power actors to develop and implement a political strategy. Still, another component is indispensable for this: the collection and analysis of information on political, legal and societal developments and topics, and on actors who are relevant to the interests of the client. This core element will be described in more detail in the following section under the second major concept of power leadership – condensing.

### 3.3 CONDENSING

In the previous section, we outlined the key concept of empowering and the conditions that exist for an understanding of the board in power chess. The focus there was on the internalization of the strategic constants of the overall political field: political logic, political language and political ethos. Now we turn to the concept of condensing the position analysis of power chess. In order to develop game strategies and take control of the game, the power actor must be able to understand specific constellations on the board and to evaluate them in terms of their goals. Such constellations can be assigned to one political subarea or several subareas – we also speak of an *arena* – of the entire field (e.g. transport and infrastructure policy, health policy and digital policy).<sup>31</sup> These arenas consist of four main elements: *firstly*, political actors or stakeholders, their interests and the balance of

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31 A short note on the terminology. The term *arena* denotes the concrete political action space in which a power actor moves. Within this action space, numerous policy fields or political subdivisions (consumer policy, tax policy, youth protection policy, health