

basic elements of individual coaching and training, and also consulting and positioning for organizations and institutions.

The second buzzword, *condense*, describes the procurement, filtering and prioritization of information as well as its classification and evaluation through analysis tools such as stakeholder mapping or topic identification. The aim of this informational counseling process, which we present using our tried-and-proven four-phase model, is to provide continuously updated and condensed knowledge of the political arena. This knowledge enables consultants and clients to share a common, accurate assessment of external opportunities and threats as well as of internal strengths and weaknesses, and it culminates in the strategy development process based on risk and scenario analysis.

Under the third and last keyword, *influence*, we discuss the task and methods of strategy implementation: team composition, project coordination, planning and organization of political formats and stakeholder dialogues, alliance formation, mobilization and campaigning. Political influencing, the concrete exercise of power in the field of politics through interaction with organizations and persons, is the actual litmus test for the empowering and condensing which precede it. Accordingly, we discuss the practical challenges that arise in this context – from political event management, to sensitive communication with clients and stakeholders, to strategy evaluation – challenges that all power consultants face continually in everyday political life.

The conclusion of the book is a reflection on the ever-growing relevance of globalization for the power consultant and the discipline of global governmental relations. We outline what it means to conceive and coordinate political strategies across national borders and what organizational requirements exist on the part of *homo consultans* and *homo consultandus*. The future of power consulting lies in the political, economic, technological and informational networking of the global power field. The most important challenge for *homo consultans* is to make this power field manageable by constantly optimizing tools and methods.

0.3 METHODS

The chapters on the logic of power, *The Nature of Power*, *The Concretions of Power* and *The Practice of Power*, are all linked to one another by a common methodology. Our analysis and presentation methods are based on the combination of five complementary elements: political theory and philosophy, anthropology, historiography, praxeology and practical experience. The selection is not eclectic. We deliberately chose this set of methods to render the full breadth of the

phenomena of power comprehensible and explicable – from general definition and basic principles to the presentation of the power leadership curriculum.

Political theory and philosophy have the fundamental function of developing the definition of power and its conditions of legitimacy, especially with regard to the common good. To avoid Western-centric prejudice and to make the most of the intellectual achievements of human history, we seek dialogue with Western and non-Western writers of the past and present: from Lao Tzu to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, from Al-Mawardi to Ernst Fraenkel. In this way, we avoid a dogmatic commitment to doctrinal schools of thought and the paradigms associated with them. In the end, according to our methodological credo, every approach has to demonstrate whether it can open up the logic of power in theory and practice.

We refer to the discipline of cultural and sociological anthropology in order to explain the universals of power, that is, the factors that apply regardless of culture and epoch. Thus, referring to authors who dominate the discourse, such as Aristotle and Arnold Gehlen, we clarify which determinants characterize humans as *zoon politikon*, technicians and deficient beings, and what effects these anthropological constants have on the relationship between humankind and power. Of course, we assume that something like a general anthropology is indeed possible and meaningful. Without generalizable statements about the nature of humankind, no generalizable statements about the nature of power are possible; both aspects are necessarily linked.

Historiography has the key role of vividly demonstrating the phenomenon of power at the interface of universality and contingency. In our presentation, we refer to both historical and contemporary examples of specific techniques, laws, challenges and dilemmas of power – from ancient civilizations such as the Sumerians, Persians and Romans, through the medieval empires of Europe and Asia to the immediate present. On the one hand, these vignettes make it clear that the basic logic of power in every culture and every era of action is always the same and runs through the course of world history. On the other hand, they also illustrate that power always goes through a process of cultural-historical coding and contextualization, which is why its mastery requires both an understanding of the universals of power and the peculiarities of each context. This approach to our topic is not just illustrative. It also yields practical resources by benefiting from the experiences of previous generations and by using history as a textbook of power.

Finally, the method of praxeology comes into its own where power, as the object of analysis, becomes socially concrete and politics should be rendered tangible and experienceable in everyday life. With the term ‘praxeology’, we refer to a method borrowed from sociology and cultural studies, a method with which the

powerful social structures and factual power relations of a community are developed from the convergence or divergence of political discourse and practice. In short, the praxeological perspective compares the statements and actions of political actors – individuals and organizations alike – and contextualizes the reproduction or discontinuation of political processes, rituals, institutions and symbols. Behind this method is the insight that power and domination exist only in and through their practical-discursive implementation in collective human action and therefore must be either repeatedly confirmed or modified and revised from one moment to the other. Through its organizational performance, praxeology creates orientation in the power field of politics and sharpens the eye for the essentials.

The foundation for all these methods of course must be experiential knowledge or familiarity with the struggle for power and influence gained from many years of consulting activity. Any theory – whether in philosophy, political science, sociology, theology or history – remains merely an abstract reflection if it is not supplemented by first-person, immediate experience with the logic of power. Therefore, this presentation feeds not least on decades of personal learning in the counseling of various people and organizations in the political power field, countless successes and failures in the co-shaping of democratic processes and a never-fading enthusiasm for the grand zero-sum power game.