



Status in Management and Organizations

People go to extraordinary lengths to gain and defend their status. Those with higher status are listened to more, receive more deference from others, and are perceived as having more power. People with higher status also tend to have better health and longevity. In short, status matters. Despite the importance of status, particularly in the workplace, it has received comparatively little attention from management scholars. It is only relatively recently that they have turned their attention to the powerful role that social status plays in organizations. This book brings together this important work, showing why we should distinguish status from power, hierarchy, and work quality. It also shows how a better understanding of status can be used to address problems in a number of different areas, including strategic acquisitions, the development of innovations, new venture funding, executive compensation, discrimination, and team diversity effects.

JONE L. PEARCE is Dean's Professor of Leadership and Director of the Center for Global Leadership at the Paul Merage School of Business, University of California, Irvine. She has published nearly ninety scholarly articles and is the author of four books, including *Organization and Management in the Embrace of Government* (2001) and *Organizational Behavior: Real Research for Real Managers* (2009). She is a fellow of the Academy of Management, the International Association of Applied Psychology, the American Psychological Association, and the Association for Psychological Science.

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To Harry, my love

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Foreword

Although a great deal of an executive's behavior and success is driven by status needs, nevertheless, there has been a paucity of research on this topic. The purpose of this volume, as suggested by the editor Jone Pearce, is to create the research and conceptual foundation stones for a new field of enquiry, "a quest to learn more about how status influences organizational behavior." She has brought together some of the leading thinkers around this broad arena, from a number of countries (e.g., the USA, Canada, Germany, and the UK), as well as a senior psychologist for a think tank, the RAND Corporation. They explore how status differences are legitimated, the influence of status on markets, the role of status in new industries and ventures, when ascriptive status trumps achieved status in teams, status in the workplace, and developing status and knowledge management.

By highlighting a subject which has not received the attention it deserves, either conceptually or empirically, this volume is the standard bearer for future theory, research, and development in this field. The editor also highlights the importance of status scholarship for exploring strategic issues in organizations and, in some ways, as an integrative mechanism to engage with a number of the management disciplines as a focal point of research interest.

We feel that this book will make a substantial contribution to the literature in the field, and I would like to congratulate Jone Pearce and her contributor colleagues for a job extremely well done, which should influence an important neglected area of interest in organizational behavior.

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Preface

This book arose from a question debated under an ancient tree over a long lunch in the Buda Hills nearly twenty years ago: why did some managing directors work so hard to try to adapt their organizations to the new non-communist market realities while others just sat and waited? Imre Branyiczki and I concluded that it was all about status – its pursuit, its defense, and which particular people’s respect and admiration were sought. That conclusion led to a quest to learn more about how status influenced organizational behavior. I discovered that many others across the range of management and organization fields were also coming to the conclusion that status mattered for the problems they were investigating, but that their work was scattered across such a wide range of subfields that they could not easily find one another. With this volume I had two purposes. First, I hoped to gather together those doing the leading work in the diverse fields that address management and organizations to make it easier for all of us to learn of each other’s work on status. Second, I wanted to make it easier for those unfamiliar with status scholarship who are addressing problems in strategy, organizations, and organizational behavior to learn more about how status can help address their own puzzles.

I owe a debt of gratitude to many who helped make this book possible. First and foremost, the chapter authors graciously shared their best work, and worked to help to make their scholarship more accessible to those outside their own specialization. They are a credit to our profession. Most of us could attend a workshop in Chicago last summer where chapters were presented and discussed. I would like to thank the University of California, Irvine’s Center for Leadership and Team Development for its financial support of the workshop and for the wizardry of Melissa La Puma who made the workshop a success. My Dean, Andy Policano of the Merage School of Business, gave me that most valuable of gifts: time to think and write. Ann Clark

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Preface

provided invaluable assistance putting the manuscript together, and Harry Briggs helped keep me together throughout the process. Finally, our editors, Paula Parish and Cary Cooper, helped make this volume much better than it would have been. Thank you all.