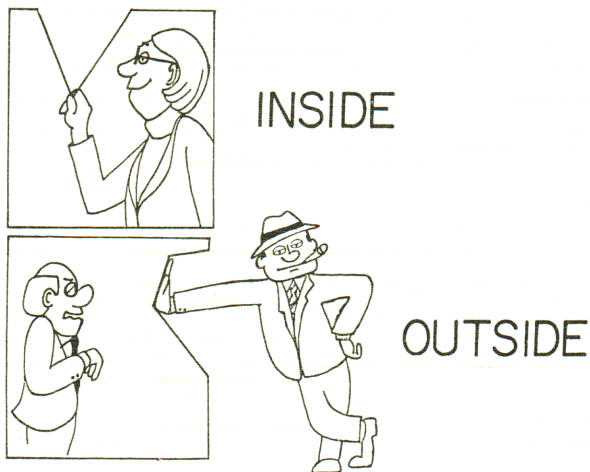


tions such as unions (industrial, government workers', teachers', etc.), church congregations, corporations, ethnic and racial organizations, and civic clubs may be regarded as power actors.

Often social power flows to the leader of an organization that has and exercises social power; occasionally organizations acquire social power from their leaders who are power actors.

Inside and Outside Communities

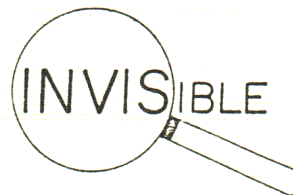


In the past, only local individuals or groups were considered community power actors. In today's complex, interrelated communities, nonresident individuals and outside organizations are also community power actors. Some individual, and many organizational power actors have significant social power in distant communities, as in the following examples:

- the corporate executive, who decides to locate a plant in another community;
- state or federal bureaucrats who allocate resources among different, and often competing, communities;
- the United States senator who can help or hinder the acquisition of resources, through contacts within the federal bureaucracy;
- the military planners in Washington, D.C., who establish and close down military installations around the nation.

Thus, it is crucial to determine the nonresident power actors because their role is often very important in community decision making.

Visible and Invisible



Many power actors are visible to those who are willing to look for them. They often occupy prominent positions of authority, though this does not necessarily mean all people in prominent positions are power actors. The visible community power actors act out their roles in public; they are members of commissions and boards, elected public officials, appointed public officials, or prominent executives and businessmen who seem to be highly involved in their community's public affairs.

However, some individuals have social power but shun publicity and avoid public roles and positions; consequently they are not visible to most people. They play quiet roles, stay in the background, or remain behind the scenes. Some examples would be the corporate executive who plays very low-key roles, the church minister who is often consulted for approval, and the large landholder whose opinion and approval is always sought. These individuals play crucial roles that are often overlooked. Thus, when considering the power actors of a community, consider those who work behind the scenes.

Summary

POWER ACTORS are the people who have and use social power in the community; they may be individuals or groups. Power actors can be local or nonresident; they may be visible or invisible.