

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction		1
Chapter 1	The Golden Keys of Economic Realities Assessments	5
Chapter 2	Surprise! Here I Am What Are My Resources?	15
Chapter 3	Why Do I Feel Like I Don't Belong? Hidden Rules of Class Resources	35
Chapter 4	You Don't Know Me Integrity and Trust Resources	49
Chapter 5	It's About the Money Financial Resources	55
Chapter 6	What's This Battle About? Emotional Resources	59
Chapter 7	It's Not Necessarily About Intelligence Mental Resources	71
Chapter 8	I Think I Can, I Think I Can Spiritual Resources	81
Chapter 9	Mirror, Mirror, on the Wall Physical Resources	85
Chapter 10	Who Takes Care of Me? Whom Do I Take Care of? Support System Resources	89
Chapter 11	They Can Make You, They Can Break You Relationship Resources	95
Chapter 12	Why Won't You Do This? Desire and Persistence Resources	101
Chapter 13	Hand in Glove—or Square Peg? Organizational Fit	107
Conclusion		109
Research Notes		113
Appendix A		115
Appendix B		123
Bibliography		127
About the Authors		135

Purpose of the Book

A key facet of work life is the unspoken rules of an organization; in the research these rules often are referred to as “organizational culture.” Much has been written about that. This book looks at a subset of organizational culture—the influence of social class and the mindsets that come with class.

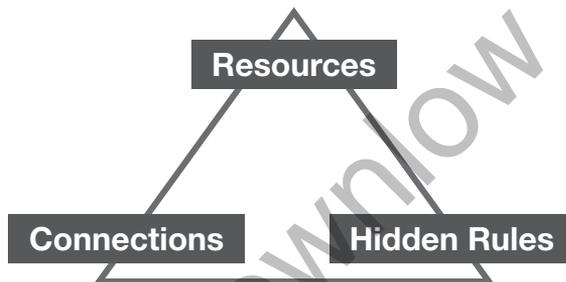
The purpose of this book is twofold: to understand the unspoken class issues related to (1) supervision and (2) promotion. The chart on pages 44 and 45 identifies the organizational demands at each level of the hierarchy and the understandings and mindsets that the individual must bring to each organizational level.

This book provides tools for the following:

1. Identification of an individual’s strengths and weaknesses by looking at his/her resources.
2. An understanding of how economic class influences opportunities to develop resources.
3. An understanding of how economic class influences—often subtly yet significantly—behaviors that show up in the workplace. (Many of the behaviors an individual uses come out of the economic class in which he/she was raised because survival demanded it.)

4. An understanding of how the levels of an organization reflect the hidden rules of class.
5. Tools that will help you develop employees to function at the level of the organization to which you either have promoted them or at which you expect them to function.
6. Tools for yourself that will assist with your own promotion to the level you wish to achieve.
7. Tools to determine for whom training dollars will have the most payoff.

Here is a mental model that we initially might use:



In this oversimplified triangle, an individual brings to an organization three things: resources, connections (relationships), and hidden rules. The organization also has those three things: resources, connections, and hidden rules. The successful fit of the individual into the organization is largely determined by how well these three elements from the individual mesh with those of the organization.

It's important to note that most supervision comes from mid-management types of positions, which generally follow the hidden rules of middle class. This book has no intention of judging one class as better than another. Rather, different realities demand different types of behaviors that, in turn, generate hidden rules. The ability of an individual to fit into a work environment and be productive in that environment is crucial to understanding and experiencing workplace success.

This book's principal objective is to identify and describe a number of issues that are alive in the workplace—but that seldom have been articulated previously. *Hidden Rules of Class at Work* is not meant to cover all variables in the work setting. Its *raison d'être* is more modest. The book is simply intended to look at how issues of class determine one's ability to survive in the workplace—and to offer the tools necessary to move to a different level of the organization if one so desires.

In 1995 I (Ruby Payne) wrote a book titled *A Framework for Understanding Poverty*. The book was written primarily for educators who were trying to deal with social-class issues in the public schools. Several of the participants in the workshops who have a spouse in the corporate environment asked if such a book also could be written for people in business.

Subsequently I teamed up with my cousin, the late Don Krabill, who owned companies in the United States and England, and we prepared this book.

About the Research Study ...

Hidden Rules of Class at Work is based on a research study that Don and I did. We developed the resource quotient as an assessment instrument and distributed it to about 250 business people in the United States, targeting mid-management positions or higher. A total of 111 surveys were returned, two of which were incomplete.

The Krabill/Payne Resource Quotient instrument is reliable. Using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha Scale, the instrument scored .8384 for reliability. (A score of .70 or higher is considered to be very good for this type of instrument.) The Spearman-Brown formula gives the Krabill/Payne quotient an even more impressive score of .8955 for reliability. (For more details about our research, see Appendix A, along with brief summaries at the end of Chapters 3–12.)

Each chapter gives the research findings for a particular aspect of the instrument, as well as cites other studies that corroborate our findings (see also Research Notes for more of the latter). In addition, each chapter offers interventions that an individual can use to build or strengthen particular resources.

This book is not intended to be “the” definitive statement on the very large topic of resources in the workplace. Rather, its aim is to begin the discussion of how class-related factors and hidden rules impact—often in surprising and significant ways—the working environment in North America.

The Workplace Model

Hidden Rules of Class at Work is one of three books (see graphic below) that are part of the Workplace Model as represented in this visual. You can read more about the model in Appendix B.



The Golden Keys of Economic Realities Assessments

TO BEGIN TO UNDERSTAND the information in this book, it will be helpful for you, the reader, to take the following quizzes and make the following self-assessments.

Could you survive in an unskilled-labor job?

(usually is minimum wage or slightly higher)

- ___ 1. I know how to physically fight and can hold my own in a fight.
- ___ 2. I know where the best local bars are.
- ___ 3. I will quit on the spot if the boss makes me mad.
- ___ 4. I can go without work for periods of time and survive.
- ___ 5. I know how to file for unemployment.
- ___ 6. A phrase I use is: "I was looking for a job when I found this one."
- ___ 7. I often must take personal phone calls during work time.
- ___ 8. At work I openly discuss my sex life and the fights I have with family members.
- ___ 9. If I'm interested sexually in someone at work, I make comments and openly pursue the person.

- ___ 10. I know how to ask for an advance on my paycheck.
- ___ 11. I will openly discuss the disagreements I have with my boss or the flaws I see in my boss.
- ___ 12. I often use casual speech (register) at work.

Could you survive in beginning supervision?

(usually involves responsibility for a group of people without final say about hiring and firing)

- ___ 1. I can work side by side with the crew to get a job done without losing the authority I have.
- ___ 2. I know how to stay out of the discussion when everyone else is complaining about the boss.
- ___ 3. I can anticipate what my boss will want or need.
- ___ 4. I can respond to written reports in writing.
- ___ 5. I know how to settle most disagreements or work out compromises without going to the boss.
- ___ 6. I can decide appropriately which “incidents” the boss needs to know about and which ones he/she doesn’t need to know about.
- ___ 7. I can teach newly hired workers how to do their tasks.
- ___ 8. I know how to avoid work assignments from bosses other than my own.
- ___ 9. I know how to deal with “you’re one of them” comments from the workers I’m supervising.

Could you survive in mid-management?

(usually involves salary duties and supervisory responsibilities)

- ___ 1. I know how to sort through paperwork and address the paperwork that has priority.
- ___ 2. I know which volunteer efforts are most important to the company.

- ___ 3. I know how to manage the corporate structure above me.
- ___ 4. I understand the difference between the written goals of the company and the “real” goals.
- ___ 5. I know how to work the politics of the administrative structure so that the goals of my department can be met.
- ___ 6. I know which bosses and secretaries (administrative assistants) control the company’s actual power structure.
- ___ 7. I participate in professional development and training programs.
- ___ 8. I use a time-management system or planner.
- ___ 9. I make business calls from my car phone or cell phone.
- ___ 10. I know how to work the company expense accounts so that virtually all of my travel is reimbursed.
- ___ 11. I can bite my tongue when the boss makes me mad.
- ___ 12. I know how to set up meeting agendas to meet both my department’s needs and to achieve my personal goals.
- ___ 13. I know the patterns of promotion within the company.
- ___ 14. I know which subjects can and cannot be discussed at meetings.
- ___ 15. If I have personal problems, I don’t discuss them openly at work.

Could you survive in a corporate executive position?

(usually involves salary, bonus, corporate perks, stock options, and responsibilities that are reported to a board of directors)

- ___ 1. I know how to negotiate a contract with the appropriate perks for my position (i.e., corporate car leases, cell phones, laptops, office furniture, club memberships).
- ___ 2. I use corporate residences when I travel.
- ___ 3. I travel first class or business class—or by corporate jet.

- ___ 4. My spouse understands how important his/her social role is to my prospects for promotion.
- ___ 5. I participate in one of these sports: sailing, golf, or tennis—or an exotic sport/activity (i.e., one that requires considerable money, such as scuba diving or hot-air ballooning).
- ___ 6. I know the best restaurants and clubs in several cities around the world.
- ___ 7. When traveling, I have favorite hotels in which I know the concierge, who advises me on the latest developments in restaurants, clubs, and resorts.
- ___ 8. I can get tickets to football bowl games, baseball's World Series, NCAA Final Four basketball games, etc., at the last minute.
- ___ 9. I can select the best wine(s) by maker and by year.
- ___ 10. I can read a corporate financial statement, spot the omissions, and figure company worth in a short period of time.
- ___ 11. Whether I "use" or not, I know how to discreetly purchase cocaine and other designer drugs.
- ___ 12. I understand how important my political, social, and financial connections are to the well-being of the corporation—and spend considerable time maintaining these networks, as well as developing additional connections.
- ___ 13. I know how to develop and protect my corporate turf.
- ___ 14. I know which charities and political causes the corporation supports.
- ___ 15. I have collegial relationships with several members of the board of directors.
- ___ 16. I understand the imperative nature of both short-term profits and long-term goals.

- ___ 17. I know how to avoid participating in the bribery systems of other countries.
- ___ 18. I use my connections to establish business liaisons in other countries.
- ___ 19. I know how to enhance corporate financials so that our corporation is seen in the best possible light.
- ___ 20. I know how to protect and secure personal and corporate data.
- ___ 21. I know how to destroy data, and I know which data should be destroyed.

Could you survive as a self-made millionaire?

(first-generation wealth)

- ___ 1. I have a high energy level.
- ___ 2. I have the ability to make connections.
- ___ 3. I can delegate.
- ___ 4. I have an innate, “gut” sense about people and/or ideas.
- ___ 5. I can multitask—manage several tasks or projects simultaneously.
- ___ 6. I can prioritize my time.
- ___ 7. I can give up relationships for a period of time in order to more effectively build my company.
- ___ 8. I identify and use the tools of analytical measurement that track company progress, particularly during periods of fast growth (i.e., percentages vs. numbers).
- ___ 9. I can live for long periods of time with financial uncertainty, lack of recognition, *and* lack of sleep.