

# Episode 55: Role of politics in the workplace.



Depending where you are in the world this question may have very different answers. I am going to assume you live in a country where there is free will around this question. So let's discuss the problem, the principle and the practice.

## 1. The Problem

Politics is one of those subjects that does not have right and wrong answers. The reality is that it's opinions, sometimes based on facts but mostly it's opinions. When you have power, your opinion is something your subordinates typically worry about. When others have more power than you, your opinion will be used to judge you. In business we should try and keep focused on our business and data. People become very emotional about things like politics. As a leader you don't want to put people in difficult positions for non-business reasons.

## 2. The Principle

In principle I believe religion, sex and politics are better left out of the workplace. They may come up in conversation when you are socializing but remember, if you have a beer in your hand and if you are around colleagues, in practice you are still at work.

## 3. The Practice

Clearly the subject of politics is going to come up at work. Some of you may work in businesses that are directly affected by political decisions. If this is the case, focus your comments on the business effects of those decisions. Articulate your case in terms of your customers or partners. Try to avoid making any business case that uses you as your example.

Bottom line: Some senior business leaders have strong political views and they bring them into work. When you are the most senior in your company, you can make a choice, but until then, focus on the job not your personal opinions.