



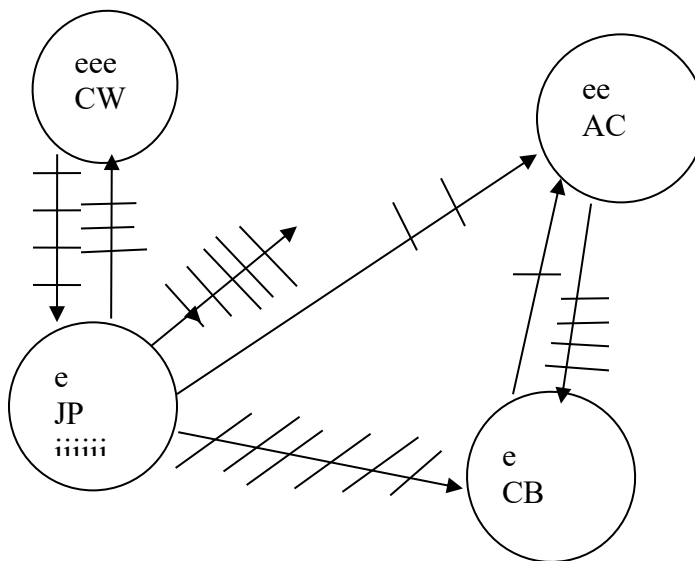
Analyzing Power Dynamics and Member Influence to Be Prepared for In-Session Discussion

One of the most important political skills for leaders is to be able to develop their social awareness and to diagnose the relative interpersonal influence of others. The following assignment (and next session discussion) will allow you to gain practice in using a powerful tool to understand influence based on what people say and do in discussions.

The tool is called a *Sociogram*. A Sociogram is a graph of the communication patterns in a discussion. It should be able to provide clues to relative influence because research shows that more influential people tend to,

- Talk more often
- Participate more frequently
- Interrupt others more often

For the next session, make a Sociogram of a meeting you attended. For each person in the meeting draw a circle with that person's initials. Draw an arrow from the speaker to the person spoken to for the first communication. For subsequent communications from the same speaker to the same other, place a mark on the arrow. If someone speaks to the group, draw the arrow from the speaker to the center of the group. Every time a speaker interrupts another place an "i" below the speaker's initials. Every time a speaker encourages or supports another place an "e" above the speaker's initials. For example,



Come to the session prepared to discuss who spoke more and why. Who spoke the least, and why. Who had the most influence in the meeting, and why? Whose ideas or comments were ignored, and why? Does your Sociogram accurately represent influence in this group, why or why not?