

What are *you* doing about political polarization?

Your constituents would like to know.

Value Relating

5 February 2018

[RECIPIENT NAME]
[RECIPIENT ADDRESS]
[CITY ST ooooo]

Mr./Ms. [NAME],

Thank you for agreeing to receive this unique tool for overcoming political polarization. As discussed by phone, here is your

Free SVOR Assessment

Just as we said we'd do, we used your political expressions to determine your apparent inward political strengths and vulnerabilities. Then assessed your potential opportunities and risks in the political realm. We trust you will find this information helpful for your public service goals.

SVOR Summary

In case you are new to SVOR, it's another version of SWOT, or "strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats." While usually applied to entities, it can provide an illuminating window helpful to your political aims.

	Good	Not-so-good
Your <i>internal</i> situation	Strengths Where your needs routinely resolve, you model strong leadership. Your satisfied needs anchor your capacity to serve others.	Vulnerabilities Where your needs remain painfully unresolved, your leadership appears weak. Your unmet needs compromise your capacity to serve others.
Your <i>external</i> situation	Opportunities You appeal to your base principally because you share their same psychosocial makeup. They connect with your rhetoric because they publically <i>need</i> similarly enough to how you <i>need</i> .	Risks You risk repelling your foes primarily because you don't share their same psychosocial makeup. They oppose your rhetoric because they publically need quite differently to <i>how</i> you <i>need</i> .

Please note the focus on needs. Missing from most discussions about politics is this definition: "**Politics is the art of generalizing how to agreeably address needs in differing social situations.**" Basically, we find political differences stem mostly from experiencing needs differently.

This SVOR tool can help you turn the *obstacles* of political polarization into the *challenges* of responding better to your constituents' needs. This in turn gives you *opportunity* to differentiate yourself from the field of other "politics as usual" contenders.

Relating better to your constituents starts with better relating to yourself and your situations, the good and bad. Let's start with your apparent strengths.

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Your apparent Strengths

You are *outwardly conservative*, because you're most likely *inwardly* focused on conserving the social cohesion of your deeper connections. You **need** cohesive relationships, much more than you feel a need for wider social inclusion. Needs come first. Your beliefs emerge after the fact to serve those needs, while resisting beliefs that may run counter to your prioritized needs.

You lean right because you **need** conservatism. You bond well with others who need conservatism. Together, you see the wisdom in safeguarding our individual freedoms, of smaller and more accountable government, and an economy efficiently incentivizing its individual producers.

In brief, you're **deep-focused**¹. You must prioritize the deeper needs of individual potential. Without you and others conserving individual rights, government may well creep beyond its constitutional scope, the economy stagnate from lack of incentivized production, and other needs suffer serious neglect. Why don't liberals see that? Championing individual rights presents as your biggest strength.

Your apparent Vulnerabilities

Your *outwardly guarded* political beliefs let you mask your *inwardly vulnerable* prioritized needs. It feels safer when others agree with your reasoned need for smaller government, than expose alone your raw fear of being smothered by the impersonal agents of a distant government force. Right?

Your pressing needs constrain your appreciation for contrary needs among your constituents. Your **deeper-focus** on individual rights can blind you from respecting their **wider-focus**² for needed social equality. Disrespecting their needs could plant seeds of your own undoing. Your wide-focused constituents take note.

Unfortunately, you're apt to denounce what they seek—like economic equality through wealth redistribution—as an alarming threat to your prioritized needs. It's less from *political reason* and more from *provoked need* that you vilify such liberals. You could instead respond to their underlying need in a way that complements your own **deep-focus** needs.

In short, your prioritized deep-focused needs blind you from their wide-focused needs. Instead of politically arguing with how they experience their needs—which fuels polarization—you now have opportunity to respect their needs, without compromising your own.

Your presenting Opportunities

Connecting with your constituents' varied needs gives you opportunity to stretch past ideological differences. You can spot needs your supporters experience a little differently from you, giving you opportunity to shore up any risk to unity.

¹ **deep-focus**: more attentive to *well-established social cohesion among a few* than expanding social equality for everyone; an orientation to one's naturally prioritized psychosocial needs.

² **wide-focus**: more attentive to *expanding social equality for everyone* than well-established social cohesion among a few; an orientation to one's naturally prioritized psychosocial needs.

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You have opportunity to appreciate your constituents on the left in a whole new light. Now you can connect with their softer inside of *inwardly experienced* delicate needs—like their fear of re-experiencing trauma from recent forms of once-privileged discrimination—without reacting to their *outwardly expressed* hardened ideology—such as their demand for government imposed limits on the private sector to help them avoid being trauma-triggered again.

Too often we push our opponents to guarded extreme positions, and then indulgently overlook our common values. You have opportunity to be more *loving* by *affirming* their needs ahead of disputing their ideological responses. You can take opportunity to *respect* how they prioritize their needs much as you prioritize yours.

They are *outwardly liberal* because they're most likely *inwardly* focused on liberating the marginalized differentness of their wider audience. They **need** social equality, much more than they feel a need for **deeper connections** you seek.

They lean **left** because they **need** liberalism. They connect well with others who need liberalism. They see a purpose in guarding against traumatizing hate speech, a larger and more robust role for government, and an economy effectively providing for all members of society. These needs resist political arguments to the contrary. Like you, they'll respond better to love.

In brief, they're **wide-focused**. They must prioritize the wider needs of being socially inclusive of all. *Their need naturally resists debate*. Without them liberating historically oppressed populations, government may well serve privileged interests at their expense, the economy widen the wealth gap, and other needs suffer serious neglect. Championing social inclusion of all presents as their biggest strength.

Your opportunity here is to demonstrate **love**. How? By affirming their painfully real needs. You get more mileage out of simply respecting their needs, without pledging you can do much about them. Like a good counselor, you listen more than you talk.

Instead of arguing with them how government already plays too big of a role in people's lives, you warmly concur with their need to avoid further trauma. Instead of trying to convince them they are better supported locally than by government institutions, you briefly share your own experience of handling trauma with a close-knit group of friendly (nongovernment) supporters, and how you've grown stronger from the frightening experience. Then get back to their story.

You first *affirm* their experienced need before *asserting* how to placate their pain. You meet them where they're at, not where you and your supporters prefer them to be. Give them time to reflect and internalize how they can personally experience a need resolving outcome.

Along the way, you humbly learn from them, yet never without compromising your core values. You don't have to convert them into becoming a **conservative**. You inspire them into respecting everyone's needs as they understand it, without a rush to policy changes, by modeling the same.

Once they feel you've listened empathetically to them, they're apt to listen better to you. You demonstrate much needed leadership by consistently delaying the gratification of easy political answers. In short, you *empower* them to overcome some of the political polarization within us all.

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Your presenting Risks

You **risk** sliding into political irrelevance

- if continually guarding your vulnerable needs behind hardened ideologies, and
- if failing to see how complex needs resist bending to relatively simple arguments.

You **risk** perpetuating political polarization

- if continually relying on sweeping generalizations that overlook specific needs, and
- if continually characterizing the worst about the other side as typical of them all.

Of course, change is not easy. But sometimes essential. The longer you remain stuck in polarized politics the more you **risk** losing

- your constituents' support/votes, and
- their trust in your leadership.

Fortunately,

- you're smart enough to turn this around, to turn risks into opportunities, and
- you're mature enough to mitigate these risks by connecting with their deeper needs.

The better you connect with each vulnerable need, and can intimately relate to it from all politicized angles, the better you can connect with self-described liberals.

Like you, their guarded *beliefs* mask their vulnerable *needs*. They feel safer when others agree with their reasoned need for government's protective role, and threatened by your opposing stance. They may not even realize their raw fear of being exploited by the historically more advantaged private sector. Political polarization ensures they'll never expose such vulnerable needs to you. Polarization adds too much pain they reflexively avoid.

Their pressing needs constrain their appreciation for contrary needs among your constituents. Their wider-focus on social equality can blind them from respecting your deeper-focus for needed individual freedoms.

Unfortunately, they're apt to denounce what you seek—like economic freedom through lower taxation—as an alarming threat to their prioritized needs. It's less from reason and more from provoked need that they vilify you. They could instead respond to your underlying need in a way that complements their own deep-focus needs, or continue to react in ways perpetuating conflict in the name of debating. Such debating defensively avoids the change we all need.

In short, their prioritized wide-focused needs (like social equality, minority protections, and economic efficacy) can easily blind them from your deep-focused needs. They may persist in politically arguing with how you experience your needs—which risks furthering polarization.

Let's be honest about where you have the most difficulty empathizing with another's approach to their need. Not only of those to your left, but also those further on the right. It's time to replace dysfunctional politics with something refreshingly new. Welcome to **Empower Politics**.

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Empower Politics and YOU

Why should anyone vote for you? **Empower Politics** not only frees you from the clutches of polarization, it can attractively differentiate you from status quo contenders.

Envision yourself gaining **competitive advantage**. You amass the wide appeal of being responsive to the needs on all sides, and the deep appeal of putting specific needs over generalized ideas.

- No compromise.
- No overreaching promises.
- No more polarization.

Simply dissolving polarized political hostilities with a new way of demonstrating your love to your constituents. It's called **Empower Politics**. Let's contrast it to politics as usual.

politics as usual

debating political ideas as if they are objective reasons all must accept

arguing beliefs with defensive certainty, masking subjectively experienced needs

reject others for not changing their minds after attempts of persuasion

generalizing what should be done, as if one-size-fits-all universally

demanding value for own team, denigrating non-team members

pain relieving focus over **need resolving**, typically more focused on continually relieving own pain and own group's pain

sliding into polarized opposites while taking little if any responsibility

hate the politically different

Empower Politics

listening for the delicate needs behind the hardened shell of political rhetoric

relating honestly and humbly the different but normal ways we experience our needs

embrace others after realizing their experience of needs cannot readily change

specifying what's best in each instance, respecting case-by-case situations

offering value to all in need, inspiring reciprocation to sustain value

need resolving focus over **pain relieving**, resolve all relevant needs that prompt the pain to alert of unmet needs in the first place

bridging dysfunctional polarization with one loving step at a time

love the politically different

Delve deeper into **Empower Politics** by taking the eCourse "[Defusing Polarization: Understanding Divisive Politics](#)."

Stepping Beyond Polarization

You just received the 10,000 foot overfly view. Let's get down to *specifics* in your political career. We offer a text-based exchange called **Stepping Beyond Polarization** to personalize this material for your specific needs. We're ready to go even deeper.

Reply by email [here](#) to learn more.

Let's change the world together. Let's transform politics from ugly dysfunctional polarization into something too beautiful for anyone to ignore. If you don't, who will?

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Question:

**What are you *doing* about
political polarization?**

Answer:

**You're empowering your constituents to
express and find the best way to resolve
their publically impacted needs, no
matter what their political leanings.**