# MPA 709:
# INTERPERSONAL/INTERGROUP RELATION



# NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

COURSE
GUIDE

## MPA 709
## INTERPERSONAL/INTERGROUP RELATIONS

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**Introduction**

MPA 709 (Interpersonal/Intergroup Relations is a semester course work of two-credit hours. It is available for students taking the MPA programme in the School of Business and Human Resources Management. It is broken into 15 study units.

Groups operate in an open system. They relate with other groups. Generally, activities crucial to the group are those that entail interaction with people outside the group.

However, groups form because they are useful. In organizations, groups serve numerous functions. Some of these functions are indirectly beneficial, while others primarily benefit the group members.

This course enables us to understand the purpose of interpersonal relationship. Also, we shall discover the relationship between interpersonal contact and intergroup relations. The decision making of groups and managing their decision making will not be left out.

**Course Contents**

The course encompasses the concepts of the group, interpersonal and intergroup relationship, how groups are formed, how they function, as well as their cohesiveness, their place in decision making and productivity.

**Course Aims**

The aims of this course are to acquaint you with the workings of groups in the work place, and the interaction among persons and groups of persons. These aims will be achieved by:

- Explaining the concept of groups and their meaning in the work place,
- Identifying types of group,
- Proffering explanations of how groups are formed and their roles in the work place,
- Outlining how groups become cohesive and how they enhance performance,
- Explaining how group relationships can be managed, improved upon and evaluated,
- Highlighting how conflicts are managed in groups, and
- Detailing the benefits and contributions of groups in the work place.

## Course Objectives

At the end of the course, you should be able to:

- Explain what groups are and what they mean in the work place,
- Identify the various types of groups,
- Explain how groups are formed and what roles they play in the work place,
- List how groups become cohesive and how they enhance performance,
- Elaborate how group relationships can be managed, improved upon and evaluated,
- Explain how conflicts are managed within groups, and
- List the benefits and contributions of groups in the work place.

## Course Materials

- Course Guide
- Study Units
- Textbooks
- Assignment Guide

## Study Units

There are 3 modules and each is carrying 5 units in this course. You should study them very carefully:

## Module 1

Unit 1    Definitions of Workgroup and Group Dynamics
Unit 2    Interpersonal Dynamics

Unit 3    Types of Groups
Unit 4    Intergroup Composition and Roles (1)
Unit 5    Intergroup Composition and Roles (2)

**Module 2**

Unit 1    Group Formation and Group Building
Unit 2    Group Development
Unit 3    Group Cohesiveness
Unit 4    Intergroup Cohesiveness and High Performance Norms
Unit 5    Intergroup Decision and Commitment

**Module 3**

Unit 1    Managing Group Relationship
Unit 2    Guidelines for Group Productivity Meetings
Unit 3    Group Evaluation and Improvement
Unit 4    Group Conflict Management
Unit 5    Group Benefits and Contributions

The first module unit 1 to unit 3 defines the work group, group dynamics and interpersonal dynamics, and identify types of groups. Units 4 to five examine the composition and roles of groups, while module 2 units 1 to 2 explain group building and development. Units 3 to unit 2 under the last module 3 dwell on the issues of group cohesiveness and performance norms, decision and commitment among groups, managing relationship and productivity. Units 3 to 5 demonstrate how to evaluate and improve group performance, how to manage group conflict and the benefits and contributions of groups in the work place.

Each study unit should take you at least two hours of work and consists of Introduction, Objectives, Main Content, Exercises, Conclusion, Summary and References.  There are also Tutor-Marked Questions. You are expected to study the materials, ponder upon them and do the various exercises. You must also supplement these units with wider reading, visiting the Internet, visiting sundry working environments and above all, using other materials like magazines, journals, newspapers, academic/seminar papers and your own creative thinking.

You will notice that some units may be longer than others. This is due to the elements that make up the units. This should not make you spend shorter times on shorter units. Rather, you should use them as opportunities for wider and deeper individual work.

## Assignments

There are several assignments, at least two per unit, except for units 4 and 5 which cover one topic. Thus, you have not less than 25 assignments. If you tackle them in earnest, you would have created the platform for proper understanding of the course.

## Tutor-Marked Assignment

You are expected to apply what you have learnt in the course units in doing the tutor marked assignments. There is an assignment at the end of each unit. The completed assignments should be submitted to your tutor for grading.

## Final Examination and Grading

There will be a final examination at the end of the course.

## Summary

Course MPA 709 (Interpersonal/Intergroup Relations) further exposes you to the workings of the group, especially in the perspective of persons working together to achieve set goals, tasks and objectives. Upon successfully completing the course, you would have become conversant with how groups work and their importance in the work place.

Course Code                MPA 709

Course Title               Interpersonal/Intergroup Relations

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# MODULE 1

# UNIT 1        DEFINITIONS OF WORK GROUP AND GROUP DYNAMICS

## CONTENTS

1.0    Introduction
2.0    Objectives
3.0    Main Content
       3.1    Group Definitions, Characteristics and Theories
              3.1.1  Definitions
              3.1.2  Characteristics of Groups
              3.1.3  Why People Join Groups: The Dynamics of Group
                     Formation the Theories
4.0    Conclusion
5.0    Summary
6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0    References/Further Readings

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

The behaviour of people in group is an important domain of organizational behaviour  as it would afford us an opportunity to understand the larger set-up. This is because small groups invariably gravitate into larger groups, and also because the smaller the  group,  the more manageable and, therefore, ensures more effective study at least cost.

Groups range from a small intimate association of two people in a room e.g. room-mates, to large ones and ever more complex ones like political parties or even countries. Group activities, however, invariably afford individuals the opportunities of interacting with other members of the group in order to achieve group objectives and  goals. Peoples however, belong to different groups at the same time because of the complexity of our society.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the meaning of a group
- state the features of a group
- explain the dynamics of group formation

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Group Definitions, Characteristics and Theories

## 3.1.1  Definitions

A popular definition is the one that emphasizes commonality, i.e. something is common to members. Its features are that:

- Members share something in common;
- A collection of individuals with shared perception;
- Members share a common motivation or goal, e.g. for higher wages or salaries;
- Sharing of a common fate e.g. a basket ball team, debate team, etc;

Shaw (1971) defined a group as two or more persons who are interacting with one another in such a manner that each person influences or is influenced by another person.

Common sense would however tell us that every single individual who exerts minimal influence on each other or group e.g. several individuals in an elevator or at a bus stop, does not constitute a group. Small groups consist of at least two or more persons who must interact together in order to achieve a certain goal or objectives. Groups are therefore, collections of people who come together for some purpose and who are aware of their inter-dependence in achieving their set goals or purpose.

A group is a social unit consisting of a number of individuals who stand in status and role relationships to one another, stabilized in some degree at a given time and who possess a set of values or norms regulating their behaviour at least in matter of conscience to the group – Muzafer Sheriff (1968). By this definition, groupness is a matter of degree.

In psychology, a group is a number of people who:

(a)    Interact with one another; and
(b)    Are psychologically aware of one another.

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**FEATURES OF A GROUP**

The features of any group include the following:

(a)    Interaction among the members; this distinguishes a group from an aggregates;
(b)    A group endures, usually, for a reasonable period;
(c)    A group has developed at least a rudimentary group structure.

### 3.1.2  Characteristics of Groups

Some of the commonly stated characteristics of groups include: common perception,    common    fate,    common    goals,    inter-dependence, interaction and organizational        structure i.e. norms and procedures. We can enumerate group characteristics as        including the following.

• Members are aware of each other and have some common reaction to each other.
• Groups have mutually inter-dependent purpose in which the success of the other in achieving the goal.
• Each person in the group has a sense of belonging or membership, i.e. identifying with other members of the group.
• A group usually has high level of oral and informal interaction

In summary, whenever individuals with similar concerns, similar motives, similar frustrations, similar personal concerns for acceptance, for recognition, for stabilizing their perception of themselves encounter one another, a group emerges.

### 3.1.3  Why People Join Groups: The Dynamics of Group Formation and the Theories

The Propinquity Theory gives the most popular reasons why people join groups. That  is, individuals affiliate with one another because of spatial or geographical proximity, for example, students who sit together in a class rather than at different ends of a class are more likely to form a group. Employees working together in the same unit are also  likely   to form a group. This Propinquity Theory is, however, a weak theory because it does not explain some of the complexities of group formation.

Another theory was popularized by George Homans. In his book on *The Human Group*, Homans based his theory of group formation activities on interactions and sentiments. These elements are directly related to each other. The more activities   people  share;  the  more  interaction they would have and the stronger will be their sentiments, (i.e. how

much they like and dislike each other). The more the interaction, the more will be their activities together and the sentiments.

The major element is interaction. When people interact in groups with one another, it is not only because of proximity, but also to do some or all of the following and perhaps more:

- Solve problems;
- Attain some goal(s);
- Reduce tension;
- Share a balance, etc and
- Form very powerful groups.

### Balance Theory

This theory was popularized by Theodore Newcomb. His theory states that persons are attracted to one another on the basis of similar attitudes towards commonly relevant objectives and goals.

### OTHER REASONS WHY PEOPLE JOIN GROUPS

In addition to the theories specified above, some of the more practical reasons why people join groups include the following reasons; economic, security and social.

(a)    People join groups in order to satisfy some individual needs. Groups tend to satisfy some individual needs. Groups tend to satisfy the intended social needs of people e.g. need for affiliation.

(b)    An individual may join a group that is attractive and rewarding;

(c)    An individual would join a group if he values the goals of the groups

(d)    An individual would also join a group if he perceives it to be instrumental in satisfying a need outside the group.

(e)    People join groups for security.

### FACTORS THAT AID GROUP FORMATION

(i)     Propinquity:  Here, we refer to proximity contact (presence with others) and interaction (one person influences the other);

(ii)    Interpersonal attraction, which is a positive function of physical attractiveness;

(iii)   Attitude similarity;

(iv)    Personality similarity;

(v)     Economic similarity;

(vi)    Perceived ability of the other person in form of success or failure;

(vii)   Need compatibility e.g. need for power, for friendship, etc.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What are the characteristics of group work?

## 4.0    CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have been able to create an understanding of the meaning of   group apart from also identifying the features.

The unit concludes with the dynamics of group formation. The following were identified as factors that aid group formation: attitude similarity, personality similarity, economic similarity

## 5.0    SUMMARY

A group ranges from a small intimate association of two people to a large one, (even a more complex one, like political parties etc).  One of the distinct characteristics of a group is the ability of members to understand themselves and each member has a   sense of belonging.

Despite obvious reasons on why people join groups, the formation of such groups is very important to the organization constituting it. Factors that aid the formation are – attitude similarity, and personality similarity among others.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

What are the key features of a group?

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Hart, S. A. (1997).  *Interpersonal Dynamics Turn 'Group' into 'Team'.* Electronic News, pp.43, 48-49.

Lieberman, G. F. (1983).  *3,500 Good Quotes for Speakers.* New York: Main Street Books.

Bateman  and  Snell  (1999).    *Management:  Building  Competitive Advantage,* McGraw-Hill.

James, Freeman and Gilbert Jr. (2002). *Prentice.* Hall of India: Primat Limited and M-97, Connzught Circus.

## UNIT 2      INTERPERSONAL DYNAMICS

**CONTENTS**

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

Perhaps one of the most important, yet frequently over-looked, qualities of a group or team leader is the ability to understand the members of the group well enough to motivate each individual according to the member's unique and special needs.

Group leaders often expect employees to meet them on their level, rather than taking the time to understand and meet the group members on the employees' level. A group leader needs to understand group dynamics and communication styles in order to be able to develop employees to their full potential.

The foundation of personal and professional success lies in understanding others and realizing the impact personal behaviour has on those around. A powerful vocational tool to assist in understanding communication styles and motivation is the DISC personal profile (Carlson Learning Company, 1994), which will be discussed in details in this unit.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the concept of interpersonal dynamics
- explain the meaning of DISC personal profile

- identify and explain the components and traits of the DISC personal profile.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Concept of Interpersonal Dynamics, Disc-Personal Profile

In a group setting, there are usually diverse backgrounds, talents, strengths and weaknesses. The most challenging responsibility of a group leader is to combine all of  these strengths and backgrounds to accomplish a higher goal (Nutrick, 1993). A    leader's    level    of understanding of the interactions and motivations among employees is a primary indicator of potentials success (Ethen, 1997). In a group-oriented work process, the two major factors that are considered are the task at hand and the relationships in the group (Nutrick, 1993).

Relationship competence refers to a group's ability to solve conflicts, build trust and communicate effectively. The group will most certainly take their lead from the group leader regarding relationship interactions. Therefore, it is important for the group leader to be knowledgeable about interpersonal dynamics in order to mould the individual group members into a truly effective group unit (Hart, 1997). "CEO's who are skilled in understanding interpersonal relations and psychological needs will inspire their whole group by motivating each person through supportive insight, respect and recognition" (Hart, 1997).

Many have found that the most useful psychological tool in helping get the very most out of interpersonal work relationships is the DISC personal profile system (Carlson Learning Company, 1994). The personal profile system is designed to help individuals "Identify one's behavioural strength, increase one's appreciation of different profiles and anticipate and minimize potential conflicts with others". By understanding the four different personality types, it is possible to see why individuals function in certain ways. It is a tool to help leaders at all levels know what to expect from others and how best to motivate others.

## 3.2    Disc Personal Profile

DISC    stands    for    Dominance,    Influence,    Steadiness    and Conscientiousness (Carlson Learning Company, 1994). These are the major personality types associated with the DISC and everyone possesses at least a small amount of each characteristic. In reading the descriptions of the four personality types, one can often associate at least one personal friend or acquaintance who falls under each description.

### 3.3 Components of the Disc Personal Profile

### 3.3.1 Dominance

A person who is strongest in Dominance is primarily concerned with "dominating" others to accomplish results (Carlson Learning Company, 1994). Such a person likes to get immediate results, accept challenges, make quick decisions and take on authority. A dominant person is most comfortable in an environment of power and authority where the opportunity enlists for individual's accomplishment.

This type of person likes to be in charge of several things at one time and does not like to be under the control of anyone else. A positive aspect of the personality is that it has a plethora of ideas, can cause action, take authority and make quick decisions. However, this personality type is not oriented, does not have good follow-through and is often inconsiderate of others' feelings. Because of the dominant persons' characteristics, they need others who think things through and use caution in decision-making.

In order for persons with this personality type to be the most effective, they need to be assigned to difficult tasks, to recognize their need for others and to slow down and think through before acting. The "D" personality type is likely to say "let's get the job done now, or the fastest way".

In a company chain-of-command, the "D" most likely serves as a "figure head", such as a CEO President or ideas man.

### 3.3.2 Influence

A person who is strongest in influence is primarily concerned with influencing or persuading others (Carlson Learning Company, 1994). Such a person loves to be around other people and is concerned with making a good first impression. The influential individual talks a lot and typically livens up the mood. This personality type likes to be the centre of attention, and is usually up beat and positive.

The influential person is most comfortable in an environment that fosters the person's popularity and social recognition. Such a person functions best in a position that does not involve control or attention to detail, but rather places a great deal of emphasis on coaching and counseling others.

Positive aspects of the "I" personality include being very entertaining and optimistic, making a good impression, being out-going and showing a genuine concern for people. Unfortunately, people with this personality type also tend to wear their feelings on their sleeve, don't think things through and don't concentrate on the task at hand. Because of these negative tendencies, this personality type needs others who can concentrate on the task at hand with the ability to follow-through.

They also need others around them who are sincere and direct in their communication. In order to be more effective, the "I" personality type needs to have better management skills, more realistic judgement of others and to be more assertive with others. The "I" personality is likely to say, "who cares how we get the job done, as long as "I" get to see people". In the company chain, this person usually serves in a "people-person" position, such as a director of personnel or public relations.

### 3.3.3 Steadiness

A person who is strongest in steadiness is most likely to cooperate with others to get the job done (Carlson Learning Company, 1994). This personality type is notorious for performing a job function in a consistent, predictable manner. The steady person is patient and helpful to others and is able to calm people who are excited. This individual is excellent at creating harmony in the work place. The steady person is most comfortable in an environment that is predictable and contains minimal conflict.

This personality type needs to know what is expected, along with a step-by-step process of how to accomplish the desired goals. The most positive contributions of an "S" personality are being a good listener and being very predictable, helpful, loyal, specialized and patient. Weaknesses include a lack of self-worth, not being self-motivated, often reluctant to change and reluctant to make decisions.

Because of the steady person's characteristics this type of person needs to be surrounded by those who can adjust well to change, can apply pressure to others, can help prioritize tasks, and who are flexible in their work procedures. In order to have optimal effectiveness, the steady individual needs to be informed of upcoming change as soon as possible in order to be able to adjust.

Persons with this personality type need to be validated about job performances and need to know how the function they perform fits into the big picture and goals of the organization as a whole.

The "S" personality is likely to say, "what can I do to <u>help</u> get the job done?" This type of person is typically the "Operations Person" in the company.

### 3.3.4 Conscientiousness

Conscientiousness is scored highest in individuals who work diligently, focusing on quality and accuracy (Carlson Learning Company, 1994). The conscientious person gives great attention to detail, analyzing and weighing the pros and cons of every situation. This person is diplomatic in dealing with others and is usually methodical in approaching new situations. This personality type is most comfortable in an environment in which performance expectations are clearly defined.

Such a person is "at home" in situations that are reserved and business-like. Also, a conscientious person is likely to ask "why" questions. They are happy to do whatever is expected as long as they understand the reasons behind the request. This need to understand applies to rules as well. The conscientious person is a stickler to rules, but must have the freedom to analyse and decide if they make sense first. Positive aspects of the "C" personality include being details-oriented and analytical, having good follow-through, handling conflicts well, separating business from pleasure and having traits of diplomacy and loyalty. However, the C's weaknesses are that they are slow to make decisions, can be overly details-oriented, question authority, are not very forgiving, are not good at compromising, must have a reason for everything, and are overly self-critical.

Because of these characteristics, the conscientious person needs others who can make quick decisions and compromise with others.

This personality type also needs others who use policies only as guidelines rather than the "be all, end all" in decision-making. In order to optimize effectiveness, the conscientious person needs plenty of time to plan things out. This type of person needs specific job description and specific feedback on performance. Also, such a person needs to develop tolerance for conflict.

### 3.3.5 Analysis of Disc Profile Traits

The "C" personality is most likely to say, "lets get the job done <u>the right way</u>". This type of person is typically immediately under the "D" in the company chain of command and may carry the little of Vice-President or Assistant Manager. In group dynamics terminology, this personality type often fills the role of "unofficial leader".

Based on the characteristics of each personality type, there are some natural pairings of types that work well together. A D-C combination makes a great pair. The D is the ideal person, while C provides the follow-through. While the C is more independent and does not need the D, the D needs the C for success.

Likewise, D-S makes a good pair as long as the D is able to give very specific information regarding the task at hand. This is important because the S requires specific guidance.

S-C makes a good pair because they have a shared mindset. C wants quality, while S provides stability and takes instructions well.

In the same way that there are good pairings, there are also pairings that do not work as well. C's and I's conflict because a C often requires time alone, while an I needs to be around people.

Likewise, D and I naturally conflict. In fact, this can sometimes be the most volatile combination of personalities. While a D is non-emotional, bordering on anti-emotional, an I is almost entirely emotion-based, these differences can cause conflict under pressure. In a work setting, the personality types can often be identified by their approaches to meetings. A D hates meetings. D's feels like meetings are a waste of time. They could be doing something else that is important. An I, on the other hand, consider meetings a pleasure.

This is the time to share how everyone is feeling this week. An I tend to go off on tangents and absolutely should not be put in charge of leading a meeting. It is important to note that an "I" personality can get feelings hurt easily during a meeting because these individuals are so emotional.

The S likes meetings because it is an opportunity to find out what job is for the week. An S will follow the meeting itinerary unless there's a tangent. An S can go along with whatever is happening in the meeting. The C type runs the meeting regardless of whether this person is officially in charge or not. A C sets the itinerary, sticks to it and prioritizes. The C personality type will make as much time as necessary in a meeting if it accomplishes the goals at hand. A point of irony is that D and C work the best together. However, in a meeting situation, they become archenemies because the C can take all day while D would rather be doing something also.

It is important to understand the things that irritate each personality type and the things that revive them emotionally. D's are typically irritated by I's and by overly emotional situations, while I's are irritated when people fail to consider their feelings. S's are disgusted when others fail

to recognize their contributions, while C's get frustrated when others fail to give them the freedom to make decisions or fail to provide them with enough information to complete a task correctly.

While such things tend to get under their skin, other things can really fill their "emotional tanks". D's are fulfilled by idea generation and the opportunity to do something–anything. I's are stimulated by being around people and experiencing social interaction, while S's get rejuvenated by accomplished tasks that are given to them. A C's emotional tank is filled by being alone or having "down time" for introspection. Also, C's love feeling like they have got "better" at something, based on their own self-evaluation. Interestingly, D's and C's are naturally loners while S's and I's are not.

From a group leader's perspective, the most beneficial information to glean from the DISC profile is how to motivate each personality type.

To motivate a D, it is important to set immediate attainable goals that can be accomplished by use of a "quick fire" method. Be blunt and straight-forward as you cannot know a D's feelings with communication. And remember, long meetings do not motivate D.

In order to motivate an I, you must be emotionally involved. It is important to show an interest other than just "work-related". It is important to show the I emotion because this personality type equates emotion with importance.

The S requires clear and attainable goals and steps for motivation. Give the S confirmation and feedback regarding performance, but don't expect an S to go above and beyond. This personality does specifically what you ask.

Finally, to motivate a C, you must key into the person's competitive desire, challenge the C to be "better". Give this personality type all the information needed, but allow such persons to make their own decisions. Give them leeway. The challenge is to set parameters, but allow C's to come up with their own final product.

The DISC profile (1994) is a useful tool in determining which of these characteristics are stronger and which are weaker in a given individual. It is a quick assessment tool in which the person being evaluated chooses the word that is most descriptive and least descriptive of the individual for 28 different groups. After completing the assessment, one can derive a profile of the individual. The DISC assessment offers explanations of each profile.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

1.      What is Dominance in the DISC personal profile?
2.      What are the basic features of Dominance in DISC personal profile.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

The most useful psychological tool in helping get the very best out of interpersonal and team relationships is the DISC personnel profile system. DSC stands for Dominance, Influence, Steadiness and Conscientiousness.

Apart from analyzing the distinctive features of DISC personnel profile system, we concluded the unit by looking at the characteristics of each personality type and some of the natural pairings of types that work well together.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

At the end of this unit, we have been able to explain interpersonal dynamics and identify the DISC personnel profile.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the basic significances of DISC personal profile to:

1. An organization
2. An individual.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Hart, S. A. (1997). *Interpersonal Dynamics Turn 'Group' into 'Team'*. Electronic News, pp.43, 48-49.

Lieberman, G. F. (1983). *3,500 Good Quotes for Speakers*. New York, Main Street Books.

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James, Freeman and Gilbert Jr. (2002). *Prentice*. Hall of India, Primat Limited and M-97, Connzught Circus.

## UNIT 3        TYPES OF GROUPS

**CONTENTS**

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

A group is defined as two or more people who interact and influence each other towards a common purpose. Traditionally, two types of group have existed in organizations: formal and informal.  Today, however, groups exist that have the characteristics of both.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the differences between formal and informal groups.
- explain the differences between high performance groups or super groups
- explain the meaning of self-managed groups.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Types of Groups

## 3.1.1  Formal and Informal Groups

Formal groups are created deliberately by managers and charged with carrying out specific tasks to help the organization achieve its goals. The most prevalent type of formal group is the COMMAND GROUP, which includes a Manager and all Employees who report to other Managers. In some organizations that want to de-emphasize hierarchy, the tiles may change. For instance, at NCR, the Managers of command groups are

called "COACHES" and the group members are called "ASSOCIATES".

Another type of formal group is the "COMMITTEE, which generally lasts a long time and deals with recurrent problems and decisions. For instance, your university or college probably has a committee for students affairs to deal with recurring issues that involve students lives. While members of this committee may come and go, the committee remains in place over time.

## 3.2    A Quality Circle

A quality circle is a kind of group. At Reynolds Metal Company's (MC) Cook sheet   and plate plant, based on MC Cook, Illinois, quality circles have been a significant      component of a quality program that has dramatically improved productivity and  quality   since   1981.   In   a program called Cooperative Hourly and Management  Problem  Solving (CHAMPS), quality circle groups meet for an hour weekly to  discuss work, related problems, investigate the causes, recommend solutions and take        corrective   action.   When   a   group   has   completed   its investigation and identified a       solution,   it   makes   a   formal presentation to the plant management and staff.

Some formal groups are temporary. They may be called TASK FORCES OR PROJECT GROUPS. These groups are created to deal with a specific problem and are usually disbanded when the task is completed or the problem is solved. For instance, President Clinton formed a project group, headed by Hillary Rodham Clinton, to formulate a proposal for a national health care plan.

Informal groups emerge whenever people come together and interact regularly. Such groups develop within the formal organizationally structure. Members of informal groups tend to subordinate some of their individual needs to those of the groups as a whole. In return, the groups support and protect them. The activities of informal groups may further the interests of the organization. Saturday morning soft ball games, for examples, may strengthen the players' ties to each other or a group of women may meet to discuss various actions that can make the organization a better place for women to work.

The following example is a case in point. In 1990, female employees at the telephone giant, NYNEX Corporation (USA) formed mentoring circles to assist women in moving up the corporate advancement ladder. NYNEX women created these informal groups independently and outside management auspices. The groups encourage, recognize and strengthen the bond of women at all levels of the company. The

NYNEX employees turned to the group format because there was a shortage of female upper-level managers to serve as mentors. However, participants believe the group process is actually better than one-on-one mentoring. In the circles, which have a minimum of eight participants and a maximum of twelve, the mentored women have an increased exposure to different ideas and an increased network.

### 3.2.2  High Performance Groups or Super Groups

Some groups today have characteristics of both formal and informal groups.

**Super Groups or High Performance Groups** of three to thirty workers drawn from different areas of a corporation are an example. Initially called "self-managed work groups", "cross-functional groups" or "high performance groups", the second kind of groups were dubbed super groups by Fortune magazine in May 1990 and the name has stuck.

At Federal Express, super groups figured out how to solve a billing problem and wound up saving the company $2.1 million a year. At one of General Mills cereal plants in California, super groups run the factory during the night shift without the help of a manager.

Super groups are also becoming important to small businesses such as advertising agencies. At one time, it was technology that distinguished advertisers. According to Bill Westbrook, a judge for the one-show advertising awards, the advertising industry is now moving away from technology towards strategy. With the expansion of the entertainment and communication network to 500 channels, Lee Garfinkel of Lowe and Partners explains that advertising is becoming a more appealing industry. Some agencies are therefore adopting strategies that include the creation of super groups consisting of top directors, copy writers and art directors.

What sets super groups apart from other formal groups is that they ignore the tradition of "chimney hierarchy" – a strict up-and-down arrangement with workers at the bottom and managers at the top - that is, often too cumbersome to solve problems workers deal with every day. Well run super groups manage themselves, arrange their work schedules, set their productivity quotas, order their own equipment and supplies, improve product quality and interact with customers and other super groups.

### 3.3    Self Managed Groups

Super groups that manage themselves without any formal supervision are called SELF MANAGED GROUPS OR SELF MANAGED WORK GROUPS. These groups usually have the following characteristics:

- The group have responsibility for relatively whole tasks
- The groups have the power to determine such things as work methods, scheduling and assignment of members to different tasks.
- Group members each possess a variety of task-related skills.
- The performance of the group as a whole is the basis for compensation and feedback.

The presence of such groups in industry means individual strategies for completing tasks are replaced by group methods for job accomplishment.

As with super groups in general, this participative approach is seen in both manufacturing and non-manufacturing organizations within the United States. For example, in Washington Industries and Chapared Steel, it is routine for security guards to enter orders and run ambulances; for supervisors to hire and train their own staff, and for supervisors to determine operating procedures for new equipment.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

1.    What is a Quality Circle?
2.    What is the meaning of a Project Group?
3.    State two characteristics of a Self-managed Group

### 4.0    CONCLUSION

In this unit, we looked at the difference between formal and informal groups and groups that have the characteristics of both, i.e. the super group or high performance group. In addition, we discovered that super team that manage themselves without any formal supervision are called self-managed team.

### 5.0    SUMMARY

Formal group are created deliberately by managers but informal group develop when people come together or interact regularly. A good example of formal group is the command group. Apart from looking at the super group, we ended the unit with some basic features of self-managed groups which are: the groups have responsibility for the basic

tasks assigned. Also, the group members possess a variety of task-related skills.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Write short notes on the following:

1.  Command Group
2.  Project Group
3.  High Performance Group
4.  Self-managed Group

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Bateman and Snell (1999). *Management: Building Competitive Advantage.* McGraw Hill.

Freeman James and Gilbert J. (2002). *Management,* 6th Ed. Prentice Hall of India.

Lieberman, G. F. (1983). *3,500 Good Quotes for Speakers*. New York, Main Street Books.

## UNIT 4        GROUP COMPOSITION AND ROLES (1)

**CONTENTS**

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

It is essential that the right people be assigned to a group. Each person should be selected based on his or her knowledge and expertise as well as other potential factors. For example, in some organizations, gender and ethnic diversity and geographic location are also important considerations when assigning group members.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- illustrate group composition and structure
- explain the meaning of group sponsors and functions
- explain the meaning of a group leader and to state its characteristics.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Group Composition and Roles

In addition to selecting the appropriate people, there are also key roles that are essential to the over-all group's success. Key roles includes: sponsor, leader, facilitator, gatekeeper, recorder, timekeepers, and devils advocate.

```
┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│              ┌──────────────────────┐                │
│              │    Group Sponsor     │                │
│              └──────────────────────┘                │
│          ┌───────────────┼───────────────┐           │
│          │  ┌──────────────────────────┐ │           │
│          │  │ Group Members            │ │           │
│          │  │ In many roles e.g.       │ │           │
│  ┌───────┴──┐│ Recorder etc.          ┌┴─┴────────┐  │
│  │ Group    ││                        │ Group     │  │
│  │ Leader   │└──────────────────────┘ │ Facilitator│ │
│  └──────────┘                          └───────────┘ │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
```
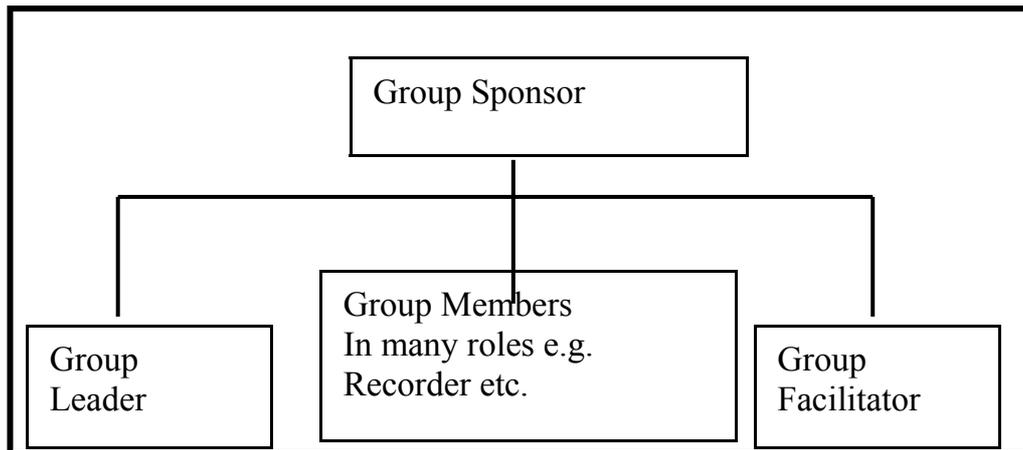
The figure above illustrates some important aspects of group organizational structure. Note that the group leader and group facilitator are on the same level as all other group members (i.e. a flat organization as opposed to the more common "hierarchical" organizations).

### 3.1.1  Sponsor

The sponsor oversees and supports the activities of the project groups. Typically, the sponsor is the manager (or instructor) who chose the project and appointed in groups; however, other people may be involved. Sponsors must have a stake in the chosen process; authority to make changes in the process under study.

Sponsors do not conduct the actual project; they guide the efforts of the project group. They appoint the project group and together with the group leader determine the project's boundaries. They make certain the project group has whatever reasonable resources it needs to be successful. Sponsors must adjust work loads to make time for the project; group members must not take on the project work in addition to their normal workload.

### 3.1.2  Duties of the Sponsor

Before the project, the sponsor should:

(a)     Identify the project to be studied
(b)     Determine any boundaries or constraints
(c)     Select the project group
(d)     Assign the Facilitator (if appropriate)

### 3.1.3  During the Project the Sponsor Should

(a)     Meet regularly with the project group leader
(b)     Develop and improve systems that allow group members to bring about change.
(c)     When necessary in the workplace, "run interference" for the project group, representing its interest to the rest of the organization.
(d)     Ensure that changes made by the group are evaluated; implement changes the project group is not authorized to make (in the work place).

The responsibilities of the sponsor are not finished until these changes are introduced, the improvements accomplished, or the new methods systematized and the project officially completed.

## 3.2     Group Leader

The group leader manages the group:  calling and, if necessary, facilitating meetings, handling or assigning administrative details, organizing all group activities and over-seeing preparations for reports and presentations.

The group leader should be interested in solving the problems that prompted the project, and be reasonably skilled at working with individuals and groups. Ultimately it is the leader's responsibility to create and maintain channels that enable group members to do their work.

Group leaders can be appointed by the sponsor or selected by the group itself. If the group leader is a supervisor or a manager in the project area of the workplace, he or she must take extra precautions to avoid dominating the group during meetings.  The leader leaves rank outside the meeting room, facilitating discussions and actively participating, but as an equal member of the group.

**The Group Leader**

-       Is the contact point for communication between the group and the rest of the organization, including the sponsor.

-       Is the official keeper of the group records, including: copies of correspondence, records of meetings and presentations; meeting minutes and agendas and charts, graphs and other data related to the project.

- Is a full-fledged group member. As such, the group leader's duties also include attending meetings, carrying out assignment between meetings and generally sharing in the group's work.

- Assists the group with immediately implementing changes that are within the bounds of the groups. Changes beyond these bounds must be referred to the sponsor or other appropriate level of management.

## 3.3    Characteristics of a Good Group Leader

i.      He is energetic
ii.     He is skilled at resolving conflict
iii.    He is well organised
iv.     He is experienced
v.      He is respected by group members
vi.     He is reliable
vii.    He is charismatic
viii.   He is intelligent
ix.     He is creative
x.      Possesses a sense of humour.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

1.      List the duties of a sponsor during the project stage.
2.      State five characteristics of a good group leader.

## 4.0    CONCLUSION

From the beginning, we looked at the structure of a group. We went further to look at the meaning of a sponsor as a significant aspect of group composition and the duties of the sponsor. We discovered that the group leader and group facilitator are on the same level as all other group members. Though we could not go through group facilitator as that shall be considered fully in part two (2), we looked at the meaning of a group leader and concluded by stating the characteristics of a good group leader.

## 5.0    SUMMARY

At the end of this unit, it was discovered that a team comprises the sponsor, facilitator, members etc. Each member of this group has a key role to play in ensuring the success of the project. Of more importance is the duty of the group sponsor and the group leaders who not only oversee, support and manage the activities of other project groups, but also ensure that proper guidance is given to project implementation.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

With the help of a diagram, briefly explain the roles played by the group's composition.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Covey, Stephen (1989). *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Ethen, T. (1997). "*Staying Focused and Effective*". Association Management, 49 (1), pp 45-48.

McNeill, Bellamy and Burrows (2000). *"Group Dynamics".* Introduction to Engineering Design, pp -10.

Carlson Learning Company (1994). *Disc Personal Profile System 2800 Series.* Minneapolis.

## UNIT 5        GROUP COMPOSITION AND ROLES (2)

**CONTENTS**

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

In the last unit, we looked at the structure of group composition and detailed roles of group sponsors and group leaders and their distinct functions. In this second part of Group Composition and Roles, we shall be looking at the members, group facilities and miscellaneous roles.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of group facilitators and group members.
- state the characteristics of a good group member
- state and explain miscellaneous roles played by group members.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Group Composition and Roles of Facilitators, Group Member and Other Miscellaneous Roles

### 3.1.1  Facilitator

The ideal facilitator has a combination of people, technical and training skills. In the work place, facilitators should be chosen from outside the process area being studied so that they are neutral to the project.

Facilitators attend group meetings but are neither leaders nor group members. They are "outsiders" to the group and maintain a neutral position.

One of their most important jobs arising from this neutrality is to observe the group progress, evaluate how the group functions and use these observations to help the group improve its process, how members interact with both inside and outside of meetings.

**The Facilitator**

-       Focuses on the group's process more than its product, and is concerned more with how decisions are made rather than what decisions are reached.

-       Works with the group leader between meetings to plan for upcoming meetings.

-       Continually develops personal skills in facilitating, group processes and planning, learns a variety of techniques to control digressive, difficult or dominating participants to encourage reluctant participants and to resolve conflict among participants. He learns when and how to employ these interventions and how to teach such skills to group members.

-       Helps project and designs and rehearse management presentations.

-       The facilitators plays an important role in the group. It is their responsibilities to ensure that the process runs smoothly. In many companies, this role is assigned to a person who is not familiar with or has a stake in the outcome (the product) of the process. Some organizations do not provide an unbiased facilitator for each group, in which case a regular group member must act as facilitator. However, it is sometimes difficult to both monitor the process and participate in it.

In classes (e.g. design courses), this role is often assumed by the instructor, at least for the "meetings" that take place in his/her presence.

Katzenbach and Smith (The Wisdoms of Groups) state that although a true facilitator is often needed to get a group started or to get a "stuck" group moving again, most often, a group member can offer effective facilitation.

## 3.1.2 Group Members

Group members are the rest of the people involved in the project. Not everyone who could contribute something worth while need be on the group. Project group members can always consult with experts and other staff as the project unfolds.

Group members are appointed by the sponsor. In the workplace group members are usually people who work closely with some aspect of the processes under study often representing different stages of the process and groups likely to be affected by the project.

They can be of various ranks, professions, trades, classifications, shifts or work areas (if the project cuts across division boundaries, so should group membership). In ECE 100, an American company, group members are selected based on computing skills and geographic location. Gender and ethnicity are also considered in order to create diversity in class groups.

**Group Members**

-        Should remember that management has indicated its support for the project by setting up the project at group. Therefore, group members should consider their participation as a priority responsibility, not an intrusion on their real jobs.

-        Are responsible for contributing as fully to the project as possible, sharing their        knowledge        and        expertise, participating in all meetings and discussions even on topics              outside their areas.

-        Carry out their assignments between meetings, interviewing other employees or            customers, observing processes, gathering dates, writing reports and so on. These    tasks    will    be    selected and planned at the meetings.

-        Should be open minded about others ideas, share information and contribute constructively to the group process.

## 3.2.1 Characteristics of a Good Group Member

(i)      Works for consensus on decisions
(ii)     Involves others in the decision-making process
(iii)    Influences others by involving them in the issue(s)
(iv)    Encourages the development of other team members
(v)     Respects and is tolerant of individual differences

(vi)     Acknowledges and works through conflict openly
(vii)    Considers and uses new ideas and suggestions from others
(viii)   Understands and is committed to group objectives
(ix)     Encourages feedback on own behaviour
(x)      Does not engage in win/lose activities with other group members

### 3.2.2  Miscellaneous Roles

There are a number of common cooperative learning roles that work well for groups in almost any situation. The roles should rotate with time. Assign as many as needed to cover all the members of the group.

These are listed here in the order of decreasing importance to the team.

**RECORDER** is the group maker who is responsive for assuming that the process (es) being used by the group is documented. This includes writing down all the important points of a discussion and preparing the minutes of a meeting. The recorder is also responsible for preparing slides and reports which the group needs.

**TIME KEEPER** has the responsibility of keeping the group moving so that the group finishes the task at hand.

**ENCOURAGER** has the task of giving encouragement to all the other group members. When a group member makes a contribution, the encourager can comment "good idea" or "nice thought" etc.

**DEVIL'S ADVOCATE** takes a position opposite to that held by the group to ensure that all sides of an issue are considered.

**GATE KEEPER** is a role sometimes taken by the facilitator or group leader.  The gate keeper has the responsibility of maintaining a balanced level of participation for all the members.

The gate keeper will encourage the silent members and try to hold back the verbose, dominant members.  A group functions when all members ideas and thoughts are heard; the gate-keeper helps ensure these.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

1.     List two basic functions of the facilitator.
2.     State four characteristics of a good group member.

## 4.0.    CONCLUSION

We continued from where we stopped in part one (1). In this concluding part, we looked at the facilitator and his basic functions in the group structure.  We also discovered that group members are appointed by the sponsor.

## 5.0    SUMMARY

In this unit, the roles of group members and group facilitators were identified. In addition other miscellaneous roles of group members were considered. It can be said that a facilitator, in addition to possessing technical and training skills, should maintain a neutral position to ensure success of the project embarked on. Likewise, the group members can ensure success of the project when they contribute their expertise, i.e. give constructive ideas, and work hand in hand. Miscellaneous roles should be shared dutifully among members of the group.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Differentiate between a group member and a facilitator.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Covey, Stephen (1989).  *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Ethen, T. (1997). *"Staying Focused and Effective".*  Association Management, 49 (1), pp 45-48.

McNeill, Bellamy and Burrows (2000).  *"Group Dynamics".* Introduction to Engineering Design, pp -10.

Carlson Learning Company (1994).  *Disc Personal Profile System 2800 Series.* Minneapolis.

**MODULE 2**

Unit 1      Group Formation and Group Building
Unit 2      Group Development
Unit 3      Group Cohesiveness
Unit 4      Intergroup Cohesiveness and High Performance Norms
Unit 5      Intergroup Decision and Commitment

# UNIT 1      GROUP FORMATION AND GROUP BUILDING

**CONTENTS**

1.0     Introduction
2.0     Objectives
3.0     Main Content
        3.1     Group Formation and Group Building
                3.1.1   Group Formation Activities
                3.1.2   The Passage of Time
                3.1.3   Five Issues to be considered in Group Building
                        3.1.3.1 Interdependence
                        3.1.3.2 Goal Specification
                        3.1.3.3 Cohesiveness
                        3.1.3.4 Roles and Norms
                        3.1.3.5 Communication
4.0     Conclusion
5.0     Summary
6.0     Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0     References/Further Readings

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

As a manager, you will naturally want your group to become an effective group. To accomplish this, it is imperative to understand how groups can operate as true and effective groups. Groups become true groups via group formation activities, passage of time and group building.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- list the various group formation activities
- explain the passage of time
- list and explain the five issues to be considered in group building.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Group Formation and Group Building

### 3.1.1 Group Formation Activities

If groups are to develop successfully, they would engage in various activities, including:

- **Forming:** Group members attempt to lay the ground rules which eventually shape or form their behaviour.
- **Storming:** Hostilities and conflict arise, and people get positions as a result.
- **Norming:** Group members agree on their shared goals and norms and closer relationships develop.
- **Performing:** The group channels its energies into performing its task.

### 3.1.2  The Passage of Time

A key aspect of development is the passage of time. Groups pass through artificial periods, or times, when they are particularly open to formative experiences.

The first critical period is the forming stage, i.e. at the first meeting, when rules, norms and roles are established that set long-lasting precedents.

A secondary critical period is the initial meeting and a deadline (e.g. completing a project or making a presentation). At this point, the group has enough experience to understand its work; it comes to realize that time is becoming a scarce resource and must "get on with it", and there is enough time left to change its approach if necessary.

Without these activities, groups may get off on the wrong foot from the beginning and members may never revise their behaviour in the appropriate direction.

### 3.1.3  Five Issues to be considered in Group Building

Group building exercises are very important in the development of task-oriented teams that will work together on a complex project for an extended period of time. Experiences designed to facilitate group development should be focused on some, if not all, of the following five issues:

### 3.1.3.1   Interdependence

Each group member's outcomes are determined, at least in part, by the actions of the other members. The structure of the group task should be such that it requires co-operative interdependence. Functioning independently of other group members, or competing with them, will lead to less than optimal outcomes for the entire group. The group building task should also have a cooperative interdependent structure. Tasks that require the successful performance of sub tasks by all group members are called divisible and conjunctive tasks. The group building exercise should be structured such that the group members become aware of, and experience, their interdependence.

### 3.1.3.2   Goal Specification

It is very important for group members to have common goals for group achievement; in addition, group members must communicate clearly about individual goals they may have. Some group building sessions consist entirely of goal clarification (specification) exercises. Shared goals is one of the definitional properties of the concept "group". A simple, but useful, group building exercise is to assign a newly formed group the task of producing a mission and goals statement.

### 3.1.3.3   Cohesiveness

Groups are cohesive to the extent that membership in them is positively valued; members are drawn toward the group. Task-oriented groups involve both social cohesiveness and task cohesiveness.

Social cohesiveness refers to the bonds of interpersonal attraction that link group members. Although a high level of social cohesiveness may make group life more pleasant, it is not highly related to group performance. Nevertheless, the patterns of interpersonal attraction within a group are a very prominent concern. Group building exercises that have a component of fun or play are useful in encouraging attraction bonds to develop.

Task cohesiveness refers to the way in which skills and abilities of the group members mesh to allow effective performance. Exercises that require the application of the skills that will be necessary for completion of the group assignment, but require them in a less demanding situation, allow the group members to assess one another's talents. Such experiences can lead to consideration of the next issue, the development of group members roles and of the norms that govern role enactment.

### 3.1.3.4   Roles and Norms

All teams develop a set of roles and norms over time. In task oriented teams, it is essential that the role structure enables the team to cope effectively with the requirements of the task. When the task is divisible and conjunctive (i.e., divisible into subtasks), as are most of the important team tasks, the assignment of roles of members who can perform them effectively is essential. Active consideration of the role structure can be an important part of a team building exercise. Task roles may be rotated so that all team members experience, and learn from, all roles. It is important that the norms governing the assignment of roles is understood and accepted by team members.

Norms are the rules governing the behaviour of team members, and include the rewards for behaving in accordance with these rules (or normative requirements), as well as the sanctions for norm violations. Norms will develop in a team, whether or not they are actively discussed. There are common norms that govern most teams; however, a team building assignment in which those common norms, as well as some that are specific to a team, are discussed and accepted is useful.

### 3.1.3.5   Communication

Effective interpersonal communication is vital to the smooth functioning of any task team. There are many ways of facilitating the learning of effective communication skills.  Active listening exercises, practice in giving and receiving feedback, practice in checking for comprehension of verbal messages, are all aimed at developing communication skills. It is also important for a team to develop an effective communication network; who communicates to whom; is there anybody "out of loop?" Norms will develop governing communication. Do those norms encourage everyone to participate, or do they allow one or two dominant members to claim all the "air time?" Team building exercises can focus on skill development, network design, and norms, but even when the exercise is focused on another issue, communication is happening. Watch it! Shape it!

3.1.3.4. and 3.1.3.5 adapted from McNeill, Bellamy & Burrows, *Introduction to Engineering Design. 2000*

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

1      State two group formation activities.
2      Explain the meaning of goal specification.

## 4.0    CONCLUSION

The formation activities of a group are forming, storming, naming and performing. However, there are some basic issues we considered in group building, some of which are interdependence, goal specification and cohesiveness.

## 5.0    SUMMARY

These issues are not intended to present a series of team building exercises. Rather, they are intended to help you evaluate the potential effectiveness of an exercise. Team building is not a silver bullet for fixing dysfunctional teams, or assuring that all of your teams will work well. Team building exercises can be helpful in developing effective task-oriented teams, if they are selected to enable teams to explore the issues identified in this unit.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Differentiate between social cohesiveness and task cohesiveness.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

McNeill, Bellamy and Burrows (2000). "*Group Dynamics – Topics for Expert Table*". *Introduction to Engineering Design.*

Freeman, James and Gilbert, J. (2002). *Management,* 6th Ed. Prentice Hall of India.

Bateman and Snell (1999). *Management:    Building Competitive Advantage,* McGraw Hill.

# UNIT 2    GROUP DEVELOPMENT

**CONTENTS**

1.0    Introduction
2.0    Objectives
3.0    Main Content
    3.1    Stages of Group Development, Phases in task Performing Groups and Group Maintenance
        3.1.1   Stages of Group Management
            3.1.1.1 Forming (The Orientation Stage)
            3.1.1.2 Storming (The Conflict Stage)
            3.1.1.3 Norming (The Cohesion Stage)
            3.1.1.4 Performing (The Task Performance Stage)
            3.1.1.5 Adjourning (The Dissolution Stage)
        3.1.2   Recurring Phases in Task Performing Groups
        3.1.3   Group Maintenance
4.0    Conclusion
5.0    Summary
6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0    References/Further Readings

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

Groups, like individuals pass through predictable, sequential stages over time. Tuckman (1965) labeled the stages of group development as forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify and explain the stages of group development
- explain the phases in task performing groups
- explain group maintenance.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Stages of Group Development, Phases in task Performing Groups and Group Maintenance

### 3.1.1   Stages of Group Management

#### 3.1.1.1   Forming (The Orientation Stage)

Members of newly formed groups often feel anxious and uncomfortable. They must interact with other individuals whom they do not know well and begin to work on tasks which they may not yet completely understand. Their roles in the group and the procedures for interaction may be unclear as well. As members become better acquainted, some of the tension may dissipate. Members will begin to become more comfortable with their roles.

#### 3.1.1.2   Storming (The Conflict Stage)

The polite interaction of the orientation stage may soon be replaced by conflict. False conflicts occur when members misunderstand or misinterpret each other's behaviour. Contingent conflicts develop over procedural or situational factors (such as meeting times, places or formats). These two types of conflict are relatively easy to resolve, whereas escalating conflicts, a third variety, may cause more serious problems for the group. Escalating conflicts may begin as simple disagreements which then lead into the expression of more fundamental differences of opinion. Such conflicts may be characterized by venting personal hostilities and the expression of long-suppressed emotions or ideas. Although conflicts may damage or destroy a group, most researchers agree that conflict is a natural consequence of group membership and that it may, in fact, strengthen the group as they accept and constructively resolve their differences.

#### 3.1.1.3   Norming (The Cohesion Stage)

During the third stage, group conflict is replaced by a feeling of cohesiveness. Groups experience a sense of unity or group identity. Membership stability also characterizes this stage. Members are highly involved and turn over is low. An increase in member satisfaction also happens at this time. Not only are members pleased with the group, they themselves may experience higher self esteem and lower anxiety as a result of their participation in the group. The internal dynamics of cohesive group changes as well. Individual members are more likely to

accept or be persuaded by group norms. One negative aspect of this is that in some groups, dissent may not be tolerated during this stage.

### 3.1.1.4  Performing (The Task Performance Stage)

High productivity is most likely when groups have been together for some time. Whether the focus of the group is task-oriented or therapeutic, effective performance occurs late in the developmental life of the group. Although, as a rule, non-cohesive groups are less productive than cohesive groups, not all cohesive groups are productive. Some cohesive groups may have strong norms which encourage low productivity.

### 3.1.1.5  Adjourning (The Dissolution Stage)

Groups may adjourn spontaneously or by design. Planned dissolution occurs when the group has completed its task or exhausted its resources. Spontaneous dissolution occurs when members are unable to resolve conflicts, its members grow dissatisfied and depart or when repeated failure makes the group unable to continue. Either type of dissolution may be stressful. Members of successful groups may not want to end and when the dissolution is unexpected, members may experience a great deal of conflict or anxiety.

### TABLE CHARTING THE FIVE STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

|     | STAGE | MAJOR PROCESSES | CHARACTERISTICS |
|-----|-------|-----------------|------------------|
| 1.  | Orientation (Forming) | Exchange of information; identification of commonalities | Tentative interactions, polite discourse over ambiguity, self discourse. |
| 2.  | Conflict (Storming) | Disagreement over procedures, expression of dissatisfaction, emotional responding, resistance | Criticism of ideas, poor hostility, polarization and coalition forming. |
| 3.  | Cohesion (Norming) | Growth of cohesiveness and unity, establishment of roles, standards and relationships | Agreement on procedures, reduction in role ambiguity, increased "we feeling". |

| 4. | Performance (Performing) | Goal achievement; high task orientation; emphasis on performance and production | Decision making, problem solving mutual co-operation. |
|----|--------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| 5. | Dissolution (Adjourning) | Termination of roles; completion of tasks, reduction of dependency. | Disintegration and withdrawal; increased in -dependence, emotionality and regret. |

### 3.1.2  Recurring Phases in Task Performing Groups

As groups perform, even those that have reached the performing stage in Tuckman's (1963) model of group development, they must focus on both the task and group maintenance in order to be highly productive. When a group directs attention at its primary task, it is almost inevitable that fatigue, tension and conflict will develop.

Fatigue will set in if the task is demanding or boredom will develop if it is too easy. Tension and conflict will develop when alternative approaches to task performance are suggested, or when alternative solutions to a group problem are put forward and discussed. As these products of a task orientation develop and increase, group productivity suffers. It is then important for the group to shift to a group maintenance orientation. This is accomplished by setting the task aside and focusing on the relationships between members, resting, reducing tension and resolving inter-personal conflicts.

In many groups, there is a "rush to performance" in which the stages of group development are side-stepped or truncated. It is most important to note that these stages of group development provide group members with the skills required during group maintenance activities. It is also important that members acknowledge the need to take time away from the task to deal with group maintenance issues. Two separate leadership roles may develop within a group, one person who directs task activities and another who is the group maintenance specialist.

### 3.1.3  Group Maintenance

At various points in a group's history, there may be a need for group maintenance requiring various levels of intervention. There are three levels of intervention:

- **Prevention**

Set the groups for success

- **Mild Intervention**

Inter-personal, group time
Private, non-meeting time conversation

- **Strong Intervention**

Private, non-meeting time confrontation
Personal group time

## SOME FUNCTIONS NECESSARY FOR TASK PERFORMANCE ARE:

- Analyzing the problem or task structure
- Suggesting solutions
- Asking for information
- Summarizing
- Delegating
- Refocusing group on task
- Pushing for a group decision

## SOME FUNCTIONS NECESSARY FOR GROUP MAINTENANCE ARE:

- Taking a joke
- Mediating a conflict between group members
- Encouraging all to participate
- Showing approval
- Suggesting a break from work
- Reminding members of norms and need for cooperation
- Encouraging and modeling positive effect for group members.

## THOSE UNWELCOME GROUP MEMBERS

Many faculties of institutions which hesitate to use groups are reluctant because not all groups work well or efficiently. Even faculty members who are committed to group work are regularly searching for ways to make students aware of processes that affect group productivity. Linda D. Lerner describes her strategy for making students aware of counter-productive behaviours in group situations. She has written short profiles designed to elicit very immediate and clear reaction from students.

Lerner had her students discuss these profiles in small groups. She asked them to consider questions like the following. Do you see yourself in any of these descriptions? What about other group members with whom

you have worked? What problems do they present to the group? And what are some strategies for dealing with these problems?

Suggestions that group offer for dealing with these behaviours can get compiled into a handout shared with all groups subsequently. This is an especially good preventive strategy. Learner gave the following classification:

**"Nola No-Can Meet"**

Here is the group member who can't make the meeting. No matter when the others schedule it. She's willing to contribute but she has a busy schedule and lots to do. The group should carry on without her and she will do her part as long as somebody lets her know.

**"Do-It-All Dottie"**

Dottie doesn't much trust other people and their ability to do things the way she thinks they ought to be done or up to her standards, so she does it all herself. If somebody offers to help she puts them at ease. It's no problem, everything is under control, and they should not worry. The less others in the group are involved, the happier Dottie is.

**"Seldom-See Steve"**

Nothing has seen or heard of Steve. He isn't coming to class, he hasn't tried to contact anybody else in the group and nobody knows how to get in touch with him. The project is just about due. What should the other members do about Steve?

**"Always-Right Artie"**

Artie definitely contributes to the group. His ideas are good and he's always ready to offer them. The problem: he doesn't cue very will to the ideas of others and he tends to force his solutions on the group. He takes charge and pushes the others in the direction that he thinks best, even though some in the group may not agree.

**"Quiet Quentin"**

Quentin is so quiet that the others often forget he is there, although he comes to the meeting quite well prepared. His ideas would really help the group, but unless they call on him, Quentin is unlikely to speak.

**TEN COMMON GROUP PROBLEMS**

The following are problems often encountered in groups:

(i)     Floundering
(ii)    Over-bearing participants
(iii)   Dominating participants
(iv)    Reluctant participants
(v)     Unquestioned acceptance of opinion as facts
(vi)    Rush to accomplishment
(vii)   Attribution
(viii)  Discounts and "plops"
(ix)    Wanderlust; digression and tangents
(x)     Feuding members.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

(1)     List the stages of group management.
(2)     List three functions necessary for group maintenance.

## 4.0    CONCLUSION

The stages of group development cannot be over-emphasized. The first stage of group development is the orientation stage, which is also called forming. Apart from the conflict stage, the norming stage and performing stage we also have the adjourning stage. We also looked at the recurring phases in task performing groups.

## 5.0    SUMMARY

Members of newly-formed groups sometimes feel uncomfortable, hence, the need for interaction. The polite interaction of the orientation stage may soon be replaced by conflict which can also eventually be replaced by a feeling of cohesiveness. This is also called the norming stage. We also looked at performing and adjourning stage the unit was concluded with a look at group maintenance.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

List five of the main problems common to groups and write brief notes on each.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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## UNIT 3      GROUP COHESIVENESS

**CONTENTS**

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

The solidarity or cohesiveness of a group is an important indication of how much influence the group has over its individual members. The more cohesive the group – the more strongly they are attached to it. They are not likely to violate its norms.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, the student should be able to:

- define group cohesiveness
- state and explain the four ways to improve cohesiveness
- explain the concept of task interdependence.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Definition of Group Cohesiveness and Ways of Improving It

### 3.1.1  Definition of Group Cohesiveness

Group cohesiveness also plays a role in small companies. Group cohesiveness is critical in helping the individual feel good about his or her contribution to the effort, noted James R. Idstein, controller of Kane Graphical Corporation (USA). When TQM was introduced at Kane, groups of between five and eight employees were set up to deal with specific problems and demonstrate the impact that groups could make. "We also made sure that our employees understood that no improvement is too small," revealed Idstein. "Over a period of time, they can make a major difference. The first group, the Job Information Group, worked on improving the clarity of forms used to process orders. Once the project was completed, the group's recommendations were accepted and immediately implemented." Kane continues to emphasize the importance of every group and every employee to TQM.

Highly cohesive groups often have less tension and hostility and fewer misunderstandings than less cohesive groups do. Additionally, studies have found that cohesive groups tend to produce more uniform output than less cohesive groups, which often have problems with communication and cooperation.

The Software Reusability Department of ARINC Research Corporation (USA) discovered that trust is the key to cohesiveness in groups. What this means is that cohesive groups cannot tolerate extremists, positive or negative. "Once of our most difficult realizations," recalled Risa B. Hyman, director of the department, "was that some talented individuals cannot flourish in a group-oriented environment. If group cohesion is not to be eroded, management must recognize such a mismatch and address the problem before group goals are jeopardized."

### 3.1.2  Ways of Improving Cohesiveness

When cooperation is especially vital – for instance, in meeting strategic goals – managers have four ways to improve cohesiveness: introduce competition, increase interpersonal attraction, increase interaction and create common goals and common fates for employees.

### 3.1.2.1   Introduce Competition

Conflict with outside individuals or other groups increases group cohesiveness. With this factor in mind, General Electric has developed a new program to train managers in creating and leading competitive work groups. Competition is also used at Nintendo, where creative director, Shinegeru Miyamoto often encourages creativity by dividing his 200 designers into opposing groups.

### 3.1.2.2   Increase Interpersonal Attraction

People tend to join groups whose members they identify with or admire. Thus, an organization may want to begin by trying to attract employees who share certain key values. Managers at Rosenbluth Travel, winner of a Tom Peters award as service company of 1990, use carefully worked advertisements and unique interviewing techniques (such as an impromptu baseball game) to discover associates who share a concern for consideration and service. More importantly, Rosenbluth follows through with training, seminars and policies that foster pride in meeting the common organizational goal of providing outstanding service.

### 3.1.2.3   Increase Interaction

Although it is not often possible for people to like everyone they work with, increased interaction can improve camaraderie and communication. Corporations such as Tandem Computers and Genetech, a biotechnology firm, hold regular beer parties to which all employees are invited. At Marke Norman Cosmetics, managers sponsor Saturday night movies and serve ice cream at a 1920s style movie emporium. In Huntsville, Alabama, Goldstar of America, Inc, occasionally closes down its plant early for volley ball games in a spirit of camaraderie as well as good-natured competition. This subsidiary of the South Korean firm Lucky Goldstar is noted for its success in encouraging parallel production groups to compete against one another. Hence, we see the interaction of two techniques for increasing cohesiveness (Competition and Interaction).

### 3.1.2.4   Create Common Goals and Common Fates

Several authorities have proposed that a group's effectiveness is a function of three variables; task interdependence, potency, and outcome interdependence.

### 3.1.3  Task Interdependence

This is the extent to which a group's work requires its members to interact with one another. A high level of task interdependence increases the group's sense of potency, which is the shared belief of a group that it can be effective.

### 3.1.3.1   Outcome Interdependence

Is this the degree to which the consequences of the group's work are felt by all the group's members?

Managers must first give each group a charter - a clear and achievable set of objectives. A strategic planning group, for example, might be charted to devise a five-year company plan. Because groups should be given flexibility in arranging their own affairs, the manager should concentrate on getting the charter right and not on details of how a group organizes itself. The members of the group should decide how much task interdependence their work requires. However, the members must believe the organization has given them sufficient resources - skills, money, flexibility to fulfill the charter.

In addition, managers must strive to create a sense of outcome interdependence. If the members of a group do not share some common fate, they will have little sense of belonging. Group bonuses or peer evaluation can help create this sense of common fate. Rewards do not have to take the form of money. In facts, recognition can be as strong or stronger as than money. For example, a group of managers at Honeywell (USA) won a $100million contract. Their reward? Their manager bought them all ice cream cones. Unusual, perhaps, but many engineers still keep the photos taken that day (Nurick, 1993).

*Determinants of work-group effectiveness.*
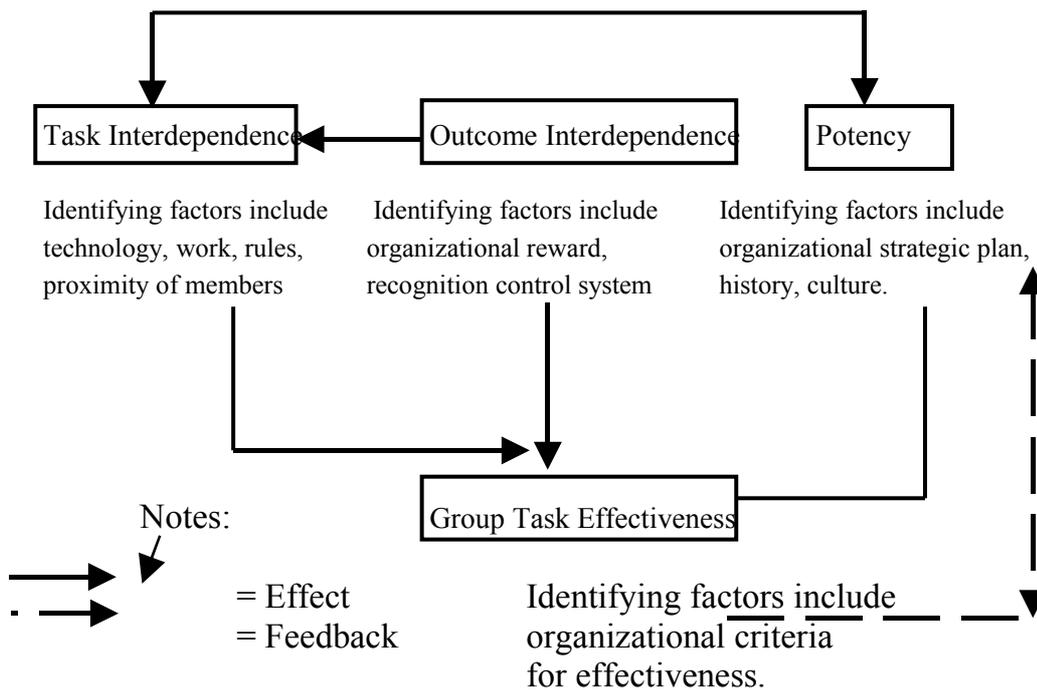


**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

(1)     Define group cohesiveness
(2)     State four ways of improving cohesiveness in groups.

## 4.0   CONCLUSION

Cohesive groups tend to produce more uniform output than less cohesive ones which often have problems with communication and cooperation. Though trust is the key to cohesiveness in groups, it cannot however tolerate extremists, positive or negative.

## 5.0   SUMMARY

In the last unit (i.e. Unit 7), cohesiveness was mentioned as one of the building blocks of group building. In this unit, we took an in-depth look at group cohesiveness, apart from the detailed definition of group cohesiveness.  Ways of improving cohesiveness include introduction of competition, increased interaction, increased interpersonal attraction and the creation of common goals and common rates.

## 6.0   TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

List the major ways of improving group cohesiveness. Explain how they work.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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## UNIT 4        BUILDING INTERGROUP COHESIVENESS AND HIGH PERFORMANCE NORMS

**CONTENTS**

## 1.0     INTRODUCTION

Some groups are better than others at ensuring that their members behave the way the group performs. Cohesive groups are more effective than non-cohesive groups at norms enforcement. But the next question is: do they have norms of high or low performance?

## 2.0     OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the meaning of build cohesive and high performance norms
- explain action steps that can help create cohesive and high performance norms
- explain the rewards of group performance.

## 3.0     MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1     Cohesiveness and High Performance Norms

## 3.1.1  Performance Norms and Group Performance

The highest performance occurs when a cohesive group has high performance norms. But if a highly cohesive group has low performance norms, that group will have the worst performance. In the group's eyes, however, it will have succeeded in achieving its goal of poor

performance. Non-cohesive groups with high performance norms will be effective from the group's start point.

However, they would not be as productive as they would be if they were more cohesive. Non-cohesive groups with low performance norms perform poorly, but they will not run things for management as effectively as cohesive groups can.

### 3.1.2  Building Cohesiveness and High Performance Norms

Managers should build group that are cohesive and have high performance norms. The following actions can help build such groups.

Recruit members with similar attitudes, values and backgrounds. Similar individuals   are more likely to get along with one another. Don't do this, though, if the group's task   requires   heterogeneous   skills   and inputs. For example, a homogenous committee   or   board   might   make relatively poor decisions because it will lack different   information   and viewpoints and may succumb to group think.

Maintain  high  entrance  and  socialization  standards.  Groups  and organizations  that  are  difficult  to  get  into  have  more  prestige. Individuals who survive difficult interview selection or training process will be proud of their accomplishment and feel more attachment to the team.

-        Keep the group small (but large enough to get the job done). The
         larger the group,     the  less  important  members  may  feel  like
         large contributors.

-        Help the group succeeds and publicize its successes. Be a goal
         leader who facilitates          success;  the  experience  of  winning
         brings the group closer together. Then, if you     inform  superiors
         of your group's success, members will believe they are part of an
         important,  prestigious  unit.  Group  that  get  into  a  good
         performance track continue to perform well as time goes on.
         Groups  that  don't,  often  enter  downward  spirals  in  which
         problems compound over time.

-        Be a participative leader. Participation in decisions get group
         members more        involved with one another, striving towards
         goals accomplishment. Too much autocratic decision making can
         alienate the group from management.

-        Present a challenge from outside the group. Competition with
         other groups makes  group members band together to defeat the

enemy. Some of the greatest groups in    business and in science have been completely focused on winning – competition.  But don't you become the outside threat. If group members dislike you as a boss, they will become more cohesive – but their performance norms will be against you, not with you.

### 3.1.3  The Rewards to Group Performance

To a large degree, groups are motivated just as individuals are – they do the things that are rewarded. Make sure that high performing groups get the rewards they deserve and that poorly performing group get relatively few rewards. Bear on mind that not just monetary rewards, but also recognition for good work, are powerful motivators. Recognize and celebrate group accomplishments. The group will become more cohesive and perform better to reap their rewards. Performance goals will be high, the organization will benefit from higher group motivation and productivity and the individual means of group members, recognised as such throughout the organization, will become a badge of honour.

But keep in mind that strong cohesiveness encouraging "agreeableness" can be dysfunctional. For problem solving and decision making, the team should establish norms by promoting an open, constructive atmosphere, including honest disagreement over issues without personal conflict and animosity.  Thus, the group can avoid group thought.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

List four stages or steps of building group cohesiveness and high performance norms.

## 4.0    CONCLUSION

Managers should build groups that are cohesive and have high performance norms by:

(a)    Recruiting numbers with similar attitudes, values and backgrounds background.
(b)    Maintaining  high entrance and socialization standards
(c)    Being a participative leader
(d)    Presenting a challenge from outside the group.

## 5.0    SUMMARY

In this unit, we looked at group cohesiveness and high performance norms. We stated that members with similar attitudes, values, backgrounds should be recruited.

We concluded with the fact that the performance of any group is a function of the group's motivation.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

List five key steps in building cohesive and high performance norms in groups. Explain each step.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Bateman and Snell (1999).   *Management: Building Competitive Advantage.* McGraw Hill.

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## UNIT 5    INTERGROUP DECISION AND COMMITMENT

**CONTENTS**

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

As a group works at a task, or at group maintenance functions, decisions must be made. The quality of group decision making and the extent to which a decision is accepted and implemented by group members is greatly affected by the decision making process.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the types of group decisions
- identify the degrees of commitment to consensus
- list the sources of power in groups.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Group Decisions, Commitment and Sources of Power

## 3.1.1  Six Types of Group Decisions

There are six key types of group decisions.

### 3.1.1.1   Unilateral/Authoritarian:

One person makes the decision and imposes it upon the group. Often, there is very little input from group members, and acceptance/commitment is low.

### 3.1.1.2   Handclasp

Two group members make a decision and impose it upon the group. This pattern sometimes looks participatory, but it still involves little input from the other members who will have a low level of commitment to the decision.

### 3.1.1.3   Minority

Several members make a decision and impose it upon the majority, who has been disenfranchised. In the hands of skilled practitioners, these men appear to be engaging in participatory decision making, but it is only a handclasp among a few members. Decision quality suffers because of lack of input from the majority and commitment to the decision is low among those outside the minority.

### 3.1.1.4   Majority

This is the popular "democratic" default option. When a group is unable to resolve a conflict, there is almost always a suggestion to "take a vote, majority wins". Majority rule has the illusion of fairness, but it cuts off discussion, thereby reducing decision quality. Furthermore, there is little or no commitment to the decision from the losing minority. The "loyal

opposition" is often a myth Super majorities of 2/3 or ¾ do not solve the problems associated with voting.

## 3.1.1.5   Unanimity

This solves the problem of commitment, but is very cumbersome because many people now have veto. The UN is a classic example.

## 3.1.1.6   Consensus

It can be defined as an agreed-upon decision by all group members that reflects full exploration of a decision issue and does not compromise any strong convictions or needs. Consensus is difficult to achieve but results in the best decision quality and the highest level of commitment to the group decision. A consensus decision <u>often</u> becomes new policy.

The search for consensus decisions is an important facet of groups. Consensus decisions are not based on the "lowest common denominator".

The alternatives are discussed and refined until a consensus is attained. That may mean that no one gets exactly what he or she wanted, but everyone is able to say, "I might take a different course of action if it were entirely upon me, but I commit my support to the plan on which we have all agreed".  Achieving consensus involves compromises on the part of all members, but it is each member's responsibility to present her/his position as effectively as possible. Only then does consensus lead to high quality decisions.

## 3.2.1  Degree of Commitment to Consensus

The explicit development and use of "social norm" for a group is the essential ingredient that makes consensus decisions differ from the "lowest common denominator"  "Forced" or "one-time" compromises which are common to the political process are not desirable and do not represent consensus decision.

Every group member (and the group sponsor) should be willing for the outcome of the consensus decision process to represent the future policy of the organization. There are degrees of commitment to consensus just as there are degrees of internalization for effective behaviour.

## 3.2.1.1  Low Level Commitment (Passive Acceptance)

You are willing to accept the decision but you do not feel very good about the decision. You work to implement the decision but your heart

is not really in the implementation. You do not actively support the decision with your colleagues and group members (but you also do not work to sandbag the decision).

### 3.2.1.2    Moderate Level Commitment

You feel good about the decision and work to implement it. Your general sense is much more positive than at the lower level but you may still not actively support the decision with candour.

### 3.2.1.3    High Level of Commitment (Active Acceptance)

You feel good about the decision, even when it is not the one you initially started out with.  You know that the decision is the best for the group and you actively work to get it implemented and accepted by other colleagues and group members.

One other thought: CONSENSUS is not about voting. If you are voting then you are not talking about consensus; you are talking about UNANIMITY. Consensus is an attitude or feeling and is something reached or achieved, never voted on. It sometimes happens that a decision is reached that is apparently a consensus decision – all group members appear to agree (at least, none are objecting), the issue appears to have been fully explored (at least no one is introducing any new information or concerns), and there seems to be no one compromising their convictions or needs (at least no one is complaining).

Unfortunately, when a group is fatigued, the focus of the group is wandering, or group maintenance is overdue, a state of Group-No-Think sometimes occurs. A No-Think decision can appear to be a consensus decision simply because group members are too fatigued to speak up regarding their concerns, or wish not to give offence, or believe that everyone else already agrees and they should just go along.

The following strategies can help overcome Group-No-Think:

(a)    De-emphasize status and power differences between members.
(b)    Encourage disagreement or clash of opinions.
(c)    Assign one member the task of being a devil's advocate.

### 3.3.1  Sources of Power in Groups

The ability of an individual to influence others within the content of a small, task-oriented group is determined by the power of that individual.

There are five sources of social power. Some are more effective than others.

### 3.3.1.1 Legitimate Power

This power results from the position the person holds. A designated or elected leader, a military commander, a manager, all have legitimate power, power that is inherent in the position. Generally, influence based on legitimate power will be accepted by group members; however, it is important that they accept the legitimacy of power hierarchy.

### 3.3.1.2 Reward Power

This power is based on the ability of the person to control important sources of reward and reinforcement. Salary, bonuses, time off, access of resources is all rewards that can be used to influence behaviour. Reward power is not usually well accepted by group members if the rewards are administered within clear contingencies and guidelines.

### 3.3.1.3 Coercive Power

This is the power to administer punishment for non-compliance. Fines, suspensions, undesirable assignments, verbal abuse, ridicule are all examples of punishment or coercive power. The application of coercive power usually leads to compliance, but also generates resentment, negative emotionality and dislike for the person who uses it.

### 3.3.1.4 Expert Power

This form of power is based on the knowledge, special skill, training or experience of the person. When a person's expertise is known to the group, influence within that area of expertise is well accepted. The use of expert power must find a balance between being haughty and being too humble. Bragging about your skills does not establish useful expert power; however, expert power cannot be used if no one knows about it.

### 3.3.1.5 Referent Power

This is power based on the person's attractiveness and qualities as a human being. It is called "referent" because groups members use this person as a point of reference in developing their own personalities.

Referent powers depend upon developing positive relationship with group members. It is not simply mutual attraction, but a relationship that includes a kind of mentoring and guidance that is possible because one person wants to learn from the other.

**The use of power in groups as an ongoing process**.

The sources of power that are most useful to leaders and facilitators are expert power and referent power. They produce influence and change in a positive way and minimize resistance and negativity.

Reward and legitimate power can also be used effectively and in a positive way. Coercive power can quickly produce the desired behaviour, but leads to other undesirable consequences.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

(1)    List three (3) types of group decision.
(2)    State three (3) of the sources of power.

## 4.0    CONCLUSION

The six types of group decision are very important in building commitment in the group.

In group commitment there are degrees of commitment to consensus just as there are degrees of internalization for effective behaviour. Some of these are low level commitment, moderate level commitment and high level commitment.

We concluded this unit with some of the sources of power in teams, which are legitimate power, reward power, expert power, referent power and coercive power.

## 5.0    SUMMARY

This unit critically analyzes the types of group decisions. Consensus was the last item discussed which is very important to the group procedures of decision making. It can be defined as an agreed-upon decision by all group members that reflects full exploration of a decision issue and does not compromise any strong conviction.

We discovered that consensus is a function of the degree of commitment by members of the group. Such commitments include low level commitment and moderate level commitment. The ability of an individual to influence others is a function of the person's sources of power which we also looked at. Apart from the legitimate source of power, the unit also examined referent power and expert power, among others.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Differentiate between low level commitment and high level commitment in assessing group performance.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

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## MODULE 3

Unit 1        Managing Group Relationship
Unit 2        Guidelines for Group Productivity Meetings
Unit 3        Group Evaluation and Improvement
Unit 4        Group Conflict Management
Unit 5        Group Benefits and Contributions

## UNIT 1        MANAGING GROUP RELATIONSHIPS

### CONTENTS

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               Lateral Relationships and Patterns of Work Relationships
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## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

Groups are open systems.  They are not closed systems functioning in a vacuum; they are interdependent with other groups. For example, in some organizations, major responsibilities include co-ordinating with other groups and policy groups. In others, groups are responsible for interfacing with other groups to eliminate production bottlenecks and implement new processes and also for working with    suppliers    on quality issues.  Thus, activities crucial to the group are those that entail dealing with people outside the group.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain how groups manage themselves outwardly
- explain the meaning of lateral role relationships
- identify the distinct patterns of group working relationships.

## 3.0.   MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1    Understanding Group Relationships, Managing Outward Lateral Relationships and Patterns of Work Relationships

### 3.1.1  Managing Outward Relationships

Several vital roles link groups to their external environment, that is, to other individuals and groups both inside and outside the organization. A specific type is a gatekeeper; a group member who stays abreast of current information in scientific and other fields and informs the group of important developments. Information useful to the group can also include information about resources, trends and political support throughout the corporation or the industry.

A group's strategy dictates the group's mix of internally versus externally focused roles and how the mix changes over time. Generally, group strategies include <u>informing</u>, <u>parading</u> and <u>probing</u>.

The informing strategy entails concentrating first on the internal group process to achieve a state of performance readiness then the group informs outsiders of its intentions.

Parading means the groups' strategy is to simultaneously emphasize internal team building and achieve external visibility.

Probing involves a focus on external relations. This strategy requires group members to involves frequently with outsiders; diagnose the needs of customers, clients and higher-ups and experiment with solutions.

The appropriate balance between internal and external roles depends on how much the group needs information, support and resources from outsiders. When groups have a high degree of dependence on outsiders, probing is the best strategy. Parading groups perform at an intermediate level and informing groups are likely to fail. They are two isolated from

the outside group on which they depend. Informing or parading strategies may be more effective for groups that are less dependent on outside groups, for example, established groups working on routine tasks in stable external environments. But for most important work groups of the future-tasks forces, new product groups and strategic decision-making groups tackling unstructured problems in a rapidly changing external environments-effective performance in roles that involve interfacing with the outside will be vital.

### 3.1.2  Lateral Role Relationships

Managing relationships with managers of other groups means engaging in a dynamic give-and-take that ensures proper coordination throughout the management system. To many, this process often seems like a strategies approach to building constructive relationships.

Different groups like different individuals have roles to perform.  As groups carry out their roles, several distinct patterns or working relationships develop.

### 3.1.3  Patterns of Group Working Relationships

### 3.1.3.1    Work Flow Relationships

The emerge as materials are passed from one group to another commonly receives work from one unit, process it and sent to the next unit in the process.  Your group then will come before some groups and after others in the process.

### 3.1.3.2    Service Relationships

These exist when top management centralizes on        activity to which a large number of other units must gain access. Common examples   are computing services, libraries and clerical staff. Such units must service other   people's requests.

### 3.1.3.3    Advisory Relationships

These are created when groups with problems call on centralized sources of experts' knowledge. For example, staff in the human resources or legal department advise work groups.

### 3.1.3.4    Audit Relationships

These develop when people not directly in the chain of command evaluate the methods and   performances  of  other  groups.  Financial Auditors assess the methods and technical quality of the work.

### 3.1.3.5    Stabilization Relationships

They  involve  auditing  before  the  fact.    In  other  words,  groups sometimes must obtain clearance from others, for example, for large purchases before they take action.

### 3.1.3.6    Liaison Relationships

This involves intermediaries between groups.  Managers are called upon to mediate in conflict between two organizational units.  Public relations people, sales managers, purchasing agents and others who work across organization  boundaries  serve  in  liaison  roles  as  they  maintain communications between the organization and the outside world.

By assessing each working relationship with another unit, groups can better understand whom to contact and when, where, why and how to do so. Co-ordinating throughout the working system improves, problems are  avoided  or  short-circuited  before  they  get  too  serious  and performance improves.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What do you understand by probing and parading?

### 4.0    SUMMARY

Human relationships have the power to defuse conflict and make it easier to resolve. Establishing personal relationships is often an integral component of peace building and reconciliation. Intractable conflicts are caused by damage on relationships. This unit  ends  with  some  distinct patterns of working relationships.

### 5.0    CONCLUSION

Protracted conflict strains relationships and makes it difficult for parties to recognize  that  they  share  common  needs  and  goals.  This  unit purposefully identified how to build a healthy relationship.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain how relationships can be managed in a group.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Ethen, T. (1997). *"Staying Focused and Effective",* Association Management 49 (1), 45-48.

Covey, Stephen (1989). *The Habits of Highly Effective People,* New-York; Simon & Scttuster.

Nurick, A. J. (1993). *"Facilitating Effective Work to Groups".* SAM Advanced Management Journal 58(1) 22 – 26.

## UNIT 2    GUIDELINES FOR GROUP PRODUCTIVE MEETINGS

**CONTENTS**

1.0    Introduction
2.0    Objectives
3.0    Main Content
       3.1    Uses of Agendas, Facilitators and Guidelines for Productive Meetings
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                     3.1.2.1 Have a Facilitator
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## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

Although individual group members perform assignments between group meetings, much of the group's work gets done when all team members are together during meetings. Many people dislike meetings; however, productive meetings enhance the chance of having a successful project. Just like other processes, meetings can be studied and constantly improved.

It is difficult to have productive meetings because few people know the rules and skills needed to such meetings. Indeed, the goal of having constantly improved meetings may be as hard for the group to reach as the improvement goals set for the project. The best way to have productive meetings is to follow the guidelines given below from the start of the project when the members expect to learn new ways of working together.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the use of agendas in having productive meetings
- explain the use of facilitators in productive meetings
- explain the structure of an effective meeting.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

### 3.1    Uses of Agendas, Facilitators and Guidelines for Productive Meetings

### 3.1.1  Use of Agendas

Each meeting must have an agenda, preferably one drafted at the previous meeting and developed in details by one or two members prior to the actual meeting. It should be sent to participants in advance if possible (If an agenda has not been developed before a meeting, spend the first five or ten minutes writing one on a flip chart).

An agenda should include the following information:

The agenda topics (including, perhaps, a sentence or two that defines each item and why it is being discussed), presented in a logical order so that items that need to be decided first are addressed first.

The process to be used in coming to a decision (e.g. brainstorming, affinity process, multi-voting etc) and not simply state "discussion….."

The presenters (usually the person who originated each item or the person most  responsible or knowledgeable about it).

A time guideline (The estimated time in minutes needed to discuss each item).

The item types (Does each item discuss or decision is just an announcement).

Agendas usually list the following activities:

(a)    Warm-ups: Short (five or ten minutes) activities used to free people's minds from the outside world and get them focused in the meeting.

(b)     A quick review of the agenda: Start each meeting by going over the agenda, adding or deleting items and modifying time estimates.

(c)     Breaks for long meetings: If the meeting lasts more than two hours schedule at least one short break.

(d)     Meeting evaluation: This is perhaps the most important item on the agenda although some of these elements may be unfamiliar, we encourage group leaders to introduce them at the first meeting and include them in all subsequent meetings. Group members will probably feel awkward at the first meeting anyway, and a new activity will not add much to that awkwardness. As members become more comfortable with the group, they will feel less self-conscious about these activities.

## 3.1.2.1   Have a Facilitator

Each meeting must have a facilitator who is responsible for keeping the meeting focused and moving. Ordinarily, this role is appropriate for the group facilitator; however, your group may rotate the responsibility among its members.

Among the facilitator's chief responsibilities are to:

-       Encourage compliance with the code of cooperation and other group norms;
-       Keep the discussion focused on the topic and moving along.
-       Intervene if the discussion fragments into multiple conversations;
-       Tactfully prevent anyone from dominating or being overlooked;
-       Bring discussion to a close.

The facilitator should also notify the group when the time allotted for an agenda item has expired or is about to expire. The group then decides whether to continue or postpone further discussion until another meeting.

## 3.1.2.2   Take Minutes

At each of the meetings one group member should record key subjects and main points raised, decisions made (including who has agreed to do what and by when) and items that the group has agreed to raise again later in this meeting or at a future meeting.

Group members can refer to the minutes to reconstruct discussions, remind themselves of decisions made or actions that need to be taken, or

to see what happened at a meeting they missed. ROTATE THIS DUTY AMONG THE GROUP MEMBERS.

### 3.1.2.3  Draft Next Agenda

At the end of the meeting, draft an agenda for the next meeting.

### 3.1.2.4  Evaluate the Meeting

Always review and evaluate each meeting, even if other agenda items go overtime. The evaluation should include decisions on what will be done to improve the meeting next time and helpful feedback to the group leader.  You may want to experiment with mid-meeting evaluations.

### 3.1.2.5  Adhere to the "100-Mile Rule"

Once a meeting begins, everyone is expected to give it their full attention. No one  should be called from the meeting unless it is so important that the disruption would occur even if the meeting was 100 miles away from the work place.

The "100-mile rule" will need to be communicated, perhaps repeatedly, to those who keep taking phone messages or would interrupt the group's work for other reasons.

### 3.1.3    Summary Structure of an Effective Meeting

### 3.1.3.1  Have a Detailed Agenda

The following are key attributes:

(a)     Issued in advance of meeting
(b)     Reassigned meeting roles
(c)     Agenda topics

(1)     A sentence or two defining the group, including a clearly articulate objective
(2)     In logical order of action

(d)     Presenters, resources required, assignments
(e)     Time guideline.

### 3.1.3.2  Use Quality Tools

(a)     Appropriate tools for the task at hand
(b)     Group trained in the use of tools

### 3.1.3.3    Comply With Group Norms

(a)    Is everyone participating?
(b)    Is no one dominating?
(c)    Are group roles being followed?
(d)    Is the group staying on task?
(e)    Is the group reaching consensus?
(f)    Are group members arriving on time?
(g)    Do the group members understand the decision tools being used?

### 3.1.3.4    Continually Check The Group's Effectiveness

(a)    Are we doing the right things?
(b)    Are we asking the right questions?
(c)    Are we tackling the right problems?

### 3.1.3.5    Continually Check The Group's Efficiency

(a)    Are we taking unnecessary steps?
(b)    Are we reinventing the wheel?
(c)    Are we spinning our wheel?
(d)    Are we looking for process related problems?
(e)    Are we using appropriate quality tools?
(f)    Are we straying from the agenda?

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

1.    What are the facilitator's chief responsibilities?
2.    List three activities included in the agenda.

## 4.0    CONCLUSION

A team might not be able to organize effective or productive meetings, without the following prescribed guidelines. The prescribed guidelines include the use of agendas, facilitators, taking minutes, drafting next agenda, evaluating the meeting and adhering to the "100-mile rule".

## 5.0    SUMMARY

This unit outlines the specific guidelines for group meetings. We started with   agendas, which are previously drafted guidelines or major issues before the actual meeting. Having a facilitator taking minutes and evaluating the meeting were discussed.  Finally, we outlined a summary of an effective meeting.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Carefully examine the importance of agenda and minutes books in a group meeting.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Nurick, A. J. (1993).  *"Facilitating Effective Work Teams"*. SAM Advanced Management Journal, 58(1), pp.22 – 26.

Hart, S. A. (1997).  *"Interpersonal Dynamics Turn 'Group' into 'Team'"* <u>Electronic</u> <u>News,</u> pp. 43, 48 – 49.

Ethen, T. (1997). *"Staying Focused and Effective"*.  <u>Association Management,</u> 49 (1), 45 – 48.

## UNIT 3      GROUP EVALUATION AND IMPROVEMENT

**CONTENTS**

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

It is not easy to evaluate the effectiveness of a group's work other than by the effectiveness of the actual solution produced and improvements made.  It is however important that the "health" of a group is regularly assessed. There are systems for evaluating group work and improvement which we shall examine in this unit.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the basic characteristics of an effective group
- identify the characteristics of an ineffective group
- state and explain the roles of groups in continuous improvement.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Characteristics of Effective Groups

The observable healthy indicators of an effective group are:

- participating, making a contribution and involvement in actions and through  this, achieving their personal potentials.

- Relationships are open.

- Group members trust, respect and support each other and they are prepared to adapt and be co-operative.

- Members listen closely to the views of other members of the group and have an open mind and maintain a positive attitude.

- Every member expresses his views, ideals and problems and all available means are used to support ideas.

- Members respect the operating procedures and principles of the group and they own the group process.

- There is clarity of focus on the project being targeted and members know what is expected of them.

### 3.1.1 Characteristics of Ineffective Groups

On the other hand, the usual characteristics of an ineffective group are:

- Poor leadership

- Cliques, defensiveness, closed minds and blame culture within the group membership.

- Downright hostilities, conflict, competition and lack of tolerance between group members.

- Members are not all participating in the activities of the group.

- Limited communication between groups and members. Hence members have a tendency to act on their own.

- Insufficient attention to the group process.

- There is no pride displayed in the group activity.

- Members feel they are being taken advantage of and the higher performers reduce    the efforts and those of the lowest performers.

Briggs et al (1993) described the aim of an audit based on a semi-structured interviewing methodology, of the quality improvement groups operating at  Staffordshire Tableware Ltd in relation to:

(a)     What groups were involved
(b)     The members of the group
(c)     How groups were operating

(d)     What projects were being tackled, and

(e)     How participants felt about the programme.

They went on to say that the information gathered and used to create a picture of group activity for use was: a historical record, prior to an expansion of the programme, a feedback tool to improve group effectiveness and to plot a course for future development of the group programme.

Some researchers have developed a "group fitness check" which consists of a  questionnaire completed by each member, the leader and the mentor of the group and then discussed and acted on by the group and the management if necessary.

The group fitness check is a diagnostic tool which helps a group to pinpoint strengths and areas for improvement of both the group and individual members to develop its effectiveness and efficiency. The idea came from a quality circle health assessment developed in the mid-1980's by Eric Barlow at Philips (Hazal Group).

### 3.1.2  The Role of Groups in Continuous Improvement

Groups have a number of roles to play as a component in a process of continuous improvement Groups can:

-       Aid the commitment of people to the principles of total quality management.

-       Provide an additional means of communication between individuals, managements and their direct reports, across functions and with customers and suppliers.

-       Provide the means and opportunity for people to participate in decision making about out how the business operates.

-       Improve relationships and knowledge, develop trust, facilitate co-operative activity and adjust to change.

-       Help to develop people and encourage leadership traits.

-       Build collective responsibilities and develop a sense of ownership.

-       Aid personal development and build confidence.

-       Develop problem solving skills.

- Facilitates awareness of quality improvement potentials leading to behaviour and attitude change.

- Help to facilitate a change in management style and culture.

- Solve problems

- Imbue a sense of accomplishment

- Improve the adoption of new products to the production line

- Improve morale

- Improve operating effectiveness as people work in a common direction and through        this generate  interaction and synergy.

In 1993, the American Society for Quality Control (ASQC) commissioned the Gallup  organization to assess employee attitude on group work,  empowerment and quality improvement.

The survey of 1,293 adults who were employed full time focused on a variety of topics including extent of participation in quality groups, employee feelings of empowerment and effects of technology and group work on empowerment.

It was found that there was a high level of employee participation in quality improvement group work and there was considerable evidence which pointed to the positive effects of quality and group work on employee empowerment.

It was also found that employees were very clear on the purpose of quality-related group work under its multitude of names and that those employees participating in such group work are also more likely to receive training than those who did not   participate.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

1.      State two characteristics of effective group
2.      List the key roles of groups in continuous improvement.

## 4.0   CONCLUSION

In this unit, we discovered the basic characteristics of effective and ineffective groups. Groups have a number of roles to play as a component in a process of continuous improvement. One of the roles we discovered is that they aid the commitment of people to the principles of

total quality management.  Finally, it was found that there was a high level of employee participation in quality improvement group work.

## 5.0    SUMMARY

In this unit, basic characteristics of effective groups were identified and explained. Groups have roles in the continuous improvement if there is maximum co-operation by each member of the group.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

State and explain five roles of groups in attaining and sustaining continuous improvement.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Hart, S. A. (1997). *"Interpersonal Dynamics Turn 'Group' into 'Team'"* Electronic News, pp43, 48-49.

Ethen T. (1997). *"Staying Focused and Effective",* Association Management, 49(1), pp.45-48.

Nurick A. J. (1993*)."Facilitating Effective Work Teams"* SAM Advanced Management Journal, 58(1) pp. 22-27.

## UNIT 4       GROUP CONFLICT MANAGEMENT

CONTENTS

## 1.0    INTRODUCTION

It is practically inevitable for a group to function effectively without
conflict. As a result there should be strategic alternative or ways of
managing these conflicts. This unit will identify the causes of conflict as
well as explain ways of managing conflict in groups.

## 2.0    OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit you should be able to:

• explain inter-group conflict
• explain how to manage conflict
• explain the meaning of different conflict styles.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Inter-Group Conflict, Managing Conflict and Conflict Styles

### 3.1.1  Inter-Group Conflict

The complex maze of interdependencies through organizations provides
boundless opportunities for conflict to arise among groups and teams.
Some conflict is constructive for the organization, as we discussed in
unit 3.  But many things cause great potential for destructive-conflict the
sheer number and variety of contact; ambiguities in  jurisdiction and
responsibility; differences in goals; inter-group  competition  for  scare

resources in which some units' are tuned to longer term considerations and other focus on short term needs; and other factors. Tension and anxiety are likely to arise in demographically diverse teams, or groups from different parts of the organization or groups composed of contrasting personalities. These tensions need not to be destructive influences. In fact, they can be an important source of information, new perspectives, and variety. The group must learn not only to accept differences and conflict but to use them to advantage. The group must be willing and able to confront disagreement in direct, honest, sincere ways.

## 3.1.2 Managing Conflict

Groups inevitably face conflicts and must decide how to manage them. The aim should be to make the conflict productive, that is, for those involved to believe they have benefited from a conflict when:

i.    A new solution is implemented, the problem is solved, and it is unlikely to emerge again and
ii.   Work relationships have been strengthened and people believe they can work together productively in the future.

How can conflict be managed? A recent study of human resources (HR) managers and the conflict with which they deal provides some insight into how HR managers deal how with every type of conflict imaginable-interpersonal difficulties, from minor irritations to jealousy to fights; operations issues including union issues, work assignments, overtime and sick leave; discipline over infractions ranging from drug use and theft to sleeping on the job, sexual harassment and racial bias; pay and promotion issues; and feuds or strategic conflicts among divisions or individuals at the highest organizational levels.

In the study, the HR managers successfully settled most of the disputes. These managers typically follow a four-stage strategy. They investigate by interviewing the disputes and others and gathering more information. They decide how to resolve the dispute, often in conjunction with the disputants "bosses". They take action by explaining their decisions and reasoning, and advise or train the disputants' to avoid future incidents. They follow up by documenting the conflict and the resolution, and monitoring the results by checking back with the disputants and their bosses.

Throughout, the objectives of the people are to be fully informed so they understand the conflict, to be active and assertive in trying to resolve it, to be as objective, neutral and impartial as humanity possible, and to be flexible by modifying their approaches according to the situation.

Here are some other recommendations for more effective conflict management.  Don't allow dysfunctional conflict to build, or hope or assume that it will go away.  Address it before it escalates.  Try to resolve it, and if the first efforts don't work, try others.

### 3.1.3  Conflict Styles

Inter-group conflict can be managed through structural solutions such as the integrating roles discussed in Unit 8.  But a group or an individual in a conflict situation has several additional options regarding the style used in interactions with others. These personal styles of dealing with conflict are  distinguished based on how much people strive to satisfy their own concerns (the assertiveness dimension) and to what degree they focus on satisfying the other party's concern (the cooperative dimension).

For example, a common reaction to conflict is avoidance.  In this situation, people do voting to satisfy themselves or others.  They either ignore the problem by doing nothing at all or address it by merely smoothing over or deemphasizing the disagreement. This, of course, fails to solve the problems or clear the air.

ACCOMMODATION means cooperating on behalf of the other party but not being assertive about one's own interests. Compromise involves moderate attention to both parties concerns, being neither highly cooperative nor highly assertive.  This style therefore results in satisfying but not maximizing solutions. FORCING is highly competitive response in which people focus strictly on their own wishes and are unwilling to recognize the other person's concerns.

Finally, COLLABORATION emphasizes both cooperation and assertiveness. The  goal is to maximize satisfaction for        both parties.

Different approaches are necessary at different times.  For example, competition or forcing can be healthy if it promotes positive motivation and even necessary when cutting costs or dealing with other scarce resources. Compromise may be useful when people are under pressure, when they need to achieve a temporary solution, or when collaboration fails. People should accommodate when they learn they are wrong or to minimize loss when they are outmatched. Even avoidance may be appropriate if the issue is trivial or others should solve the conflict.

But when the conflict concerns important issues, when both sets of concerns are valid and important, when a creative solution is needed, and when commitment to the solution is vital to implementation,

collaboration is the ideal approach. Collaboration can be achieved by airing feelings and opinions, addressing all concerns, and avoiding goal displacement by not letting personal attacks interfere with problem solving. An important technique is to involve SUPER-ORDINATE GOALS - higher-level organizational goals towards which all groups should be striving and that ultimately need to take precedence over unit References/Further Readings. Collaboration offers the best chance of reaching mutually satisfactory solutions based on the ideas and interests of all parties and of maintaining and strengthening work relationships. (see diagram below).

<div style="text-align:center">Cooperativeness</div>

| | Uncooperative | Cooperative |
|---|---|---|
| Assertive | Competing | Collaborating |
| Asser-tiveness | Compromising | |
| Unassertive | Avoiding | Accommodating |
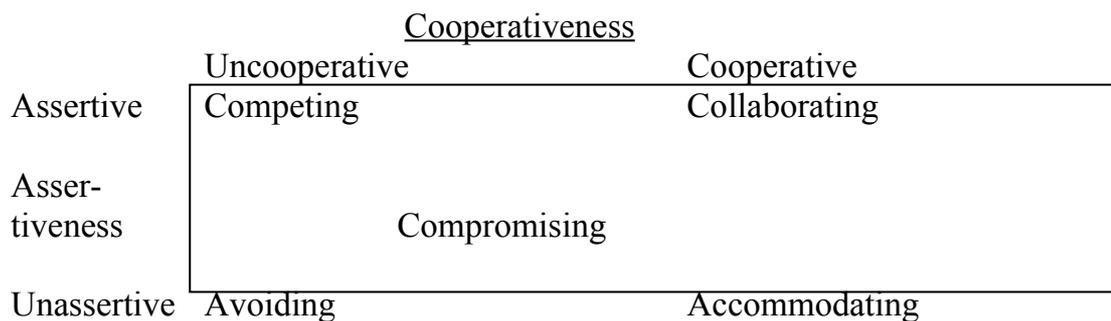
## SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

List two likely causes of group conflict

## 4.0    CONCLUSION

The effectiveness of group management is a function of group conflict management. Apart from helping you to understanding inter-group conflict this unit also touches on some ways of solving or managing conflict, which include investigation, information gathering, documenting the conflict and the resolution.

## 5.0    SUMMARY

This unit outlines the importance and the necessity of managing conflict in a group. We started by creating the understanding of inter-group conflict and how such conflicts can be managed. We finally examined various conflict styles and how to manage them.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the ways of managing conflict in a group.

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Lieberman, G.F. (1983). *3,500 Good Quotes for Speakers*.  New York: Main Street,  Books.

Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert Jnr (2002). *Management,* 6th Practice, Hall of India.

Dumain Brian (1990). *Who Needs a Boss*? Fortune, pp. 52, 62.

Peters, Tom (1987). *Handbook for Management Revolution*. Excel.

## UNIT 5          GROUP BENEFITS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

**CONTENTS**

## 1.0     INTRODUCTION

In an organization, groups serve numerous functions.  Some of these functions benefit the organizations directly; others benefit primarily the group's members. The benefits of groups and their contributions to organizations are varied and tend to differ from organization to organization. There are, however, some basic benefits and contributions. These, we shall look at in this unit.

## 2.0     OBJECTIVES

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- state the functions served by groups in an organizations
- explain the benefits of groups to organizations and the group's members
- list and explain the contributions of groups to organizations.

## 3.0    MAIN CONTENT

## 3.1    Functions, Benefits and Group Contributions

### 3.1.1  Group Functions

The table below illustrates some of the functions of groups and how these functions benefit the organization directly; others primarily benefit the groups' members.

| For the Organisation | For the Individual |
|---|---|
| 1. Accomplish tasks that could be done the individuals working alone. | 1. Aid in learning by about organization and its environment. |
| 2. Bring multiple skills and talents to bear on complex tasks. | 2. Aid in learning about oneself |
| 3. Provide a vehicle for decision making that permits multiple and conflicting views to be aired and considered. | 3. Provide help in gaining new skills. |
| 4. Provide an efficient means for organizational control of individual behaviour. | 4. Obtain values/rewards that are not accessible through individual initiative. |
| 5. Facilitate changes in organizational important policies or procedures | 5. Directly satisfy personal needs, especially needs for social acceptance |
| 6. Increase organizational stability by transmitting shared beliefs and values to new members. | |

### 3.1.2  Group Benefits

There are organization benefits because groups have greater total resources (skills, talents, information, energy) than individuals do. Therefore, they can perform jobs that cannot be done by individuals working alone. They also have a greater diversity,     which     enables groups to perform complex tasks.  Also, groups can aid decision making, even though they help to socialize new members, control

individuals' behaviour, and facilitate organizational performance, innovation, and change.

Groups also provide many benefits for their members. The group is a very useful learning mechanism. Members learn about the company and themselves, and they acquire new affiliation and esteem. Other needs are met as group members receive tangible organizational rewards that they could not have achieved working alone.

Group members can provide one another with feedback; identify opportunities for growth and development and train, each and mentor.

A marketing representative can learn about financial modeling from a colleague on new product development team, and the financial expert can learn about consumer marketing.

Experience working together in a group, and developing a strong team problem-solving capabilities, is a vital supplement to specific job skills or functional expertise. And the skills are transferable to new positions.

### 3.1.3  The Contributions of Groups

Groups-based approaches to work can be powerfully effective as a:

**BUILDING BLOCK FOR ORGANIZATION STRUCTURE**

Many organizations are structured entirely around groups. Groups are a formidable force in the development of organizations.

**FORCE FOR PRODUCTIVITY**

A good example is the Shenandoah Life Insurance Company (USA). It credited its new team organization with a 50 percent increase in the handling of applications and customer service requests, with fewer people. This experience pervades group- oriented organizations.

### 3.1.3.1  Force for Quality

Examples abound on the impact of groups on quality.

Quality rose 50 percent in a Northern Telecom facility and Federal Express reduced billing errors and lost packages by 13 percent. Boeing's engineering teams built its new 777 passenger jet with far fewer design errors than an earlier program, and for the first time in Boeing's history of spare parts from different suppliers needed very little reworking. As a result, Boeing received the fastest flight certification ever for a new commercial aircraft.

**FORCE FOR COST REDUCTION**

Honeywell's team saved over $11million after reducing production times and shifting over 99 per cent of orders on time. Boeing management claims that it could not have developed the 777 without cross functional teams; it would have been prohibitively expansive. Examples also exist in all parts of the world.

### 3.1.3.2   Force for Speed

Chrysler, and many other American companies are using teams to create new products quicker. Groups at Bell Atlantic are trying to make the company a high speed force on the information highway. Other companies have cut home mortgage improvement times from weeks to hours and life insurance companies have cut the time to issue new policies from six weeks to one day.

### 3.1.3.3   Force for Change:

At Bell Atlantic corporation, a formerly monopolistic bureaucracy becomes more entrepreneural in part through the creation of client service groups. At KPMG Netherlands, a strategic integration team of 12 partners, with 100 other professionals divided into 14 task forces, led strategic and cultural changes by studying future trends and scenarios, defining core competent, and dealing with organizational challenges. The banking industry in Nigeria is another group that has seen changes driven by group work.

### 3.1.3.4   Force for Innovation

The auto industry decided on project teams to develop new vehicles, with Chrysler leading the way in the United States and Ford achieving great success with its Taurus project. At 3M, work teams turned around one division by tripling the number of new products. 3M's innovative success-stories are numerous and legendary, emerging through the use of teams that are small, entrepreneurial business within the larger corporation.

**SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

State the contributions of groups to an organization.

### 4.0   CONCLUSION

It is pertinent that groups have done a great deal the world over in the improvement of performance and quality in organizations. Examples

abound from the world's most successful technological and industrial nations.

Unfortunately, statistics and research reports are scarce in the developing world. However, the experience of what groups have contributed in other parts of the world remain relevant for Nigeria. Examples are drawn from these countries.

## 5.0    SUMMARY

The unit looked at sundry benefits of groups to both the members and the organization. It also examined the depth of contributions that groups have made and continue to make in the success of the concept of groups, especially in the work place. Apart from being a strong agent of socialization, groups play dominant roles in enterprise as a whole.

## 6.0    TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Identify four functions of groups and explain how do they benefit the organization  directly and primarily?

## 7.0    REFERENCES/FURTHER READINGS

Bateman and Snell (1999). *Management: Building Competitive Advantage,* McGraw-Hill.

Stoner, Freeman and Gilbert J. (2002). *Management,* 6th Edition, Prentice Hall of India.

Peters Tom (1987). *Handbook for Management Revolution*. Excel.