

**Organizational Human Behavior management**

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**Lecture 8**

***Foundations of Group Behavior***

# After studying this chapter, you should be able to:

1. Define *group* and differentiate between types of groups.
2. Identify the five stages of group development.
3. List and define the five properties of groups.
4. Demonstrate how norms and status exert influence on an individual's behavior.
5. Contrast the strengths and weaknesses of group decision making.
6. Evaluate evidence for cultural differences in group status and social loafing as well as the effects of diversity in groups.

# Groups

Two or more individuals, interacting and interdependent, who come together to achieve particular objectives



## Formal

- Defined by the organization's structure

## Informal

- Neither formally structured nor organizationally determined

# Four Types of Groups

## Formal Groups

- **Command** – determined by the organization chart
- **Task** – working together to complete a job task

## Informal Groups

- **Interest** – affiliate to attain a specific objective of shared interest
- **Friendship** – members have one or more common characteristics



# Why Do People Join Groups?



- Security
- Status
- Self-esteem
- Affiliation
- Power
- Goal achievement

# The Five-Stage Model of Group Development

1

- **Forming:**

- Uncertainty about purpose, structure, and leadership

2

- **Storming:**

- Intragroup conflict as members resist constraints

3

- **Norming:**

- Group is cohesive with strong group identity

4

- **Performing:**

- Group fully functional and working toward goals

5

- **Adjourning:**

- For temporary groups: breaking up

# Key Points & Critique of Five-Stage Model

- Group Effectiveness:
  - Generally groups are more effective as they progress
  - Reasons for this are complex
- Group Conflict:
  - Some groups need conflict, most productive in Stage II
- Blurred Stages:
  - Stages not always sequential
  - Multiple stages may be taken simultaneously
  - May regress a stage

# Group Properties

- Roles
- Norms
- Status
- Size
- Cohesiveness



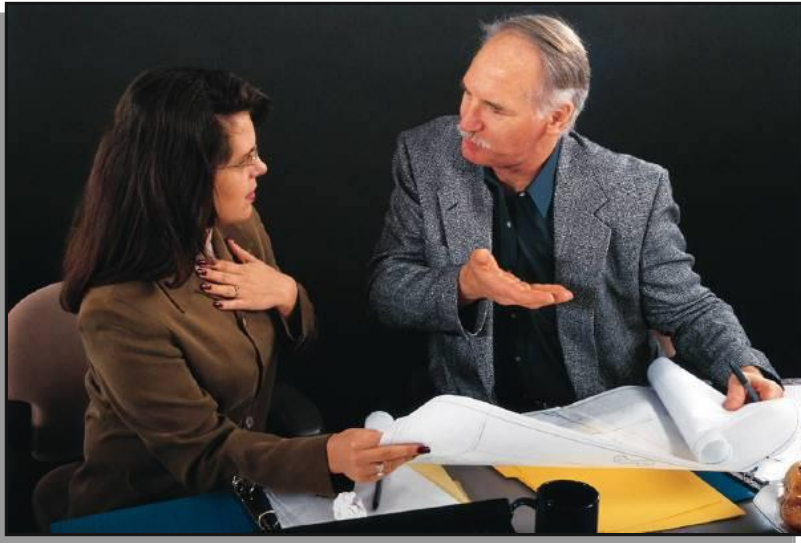
# Group Property 1: Roles

*The set of expected behavior patterns that are attributed to occupying a given position in a social unit*

- **Role Identity** – role's associated attitudes and behaviors
- **Role Perception** – our view of how we're supposed to act in a given situation
- **Role Expectations** – how others believe you should act in a given situation
- **Role Conflict** – conflict experienced when multiple roles are incompatible

# Group Property 2: Norms

*Acceptable standards of behavior within a group that are shared by the group's members*



- Powerful means of influencing behavior
- Performance Norms

# Lessons from the Hawthorne Studies

- Productivity increased because groups were paid attention to by the observers – not because of changes in environment
- Workers in groups do not maximize individual economic rewards
- Group standards are set and enforced by the group itself

# Conformity

- Reference Groups:
  - Groups in which a person is aware of other members, defines self as a member, believes group members to be significant
  - Individuals try to conform to norms of these groups
- Asch Studies
  - Members desire to avoid being visibly different
  - Members with differing opinions feel extensive pressure to align with others
  - Level of conformity has declined since 1950s

# Deviant Workplace Behavior

*Voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and, in doing so, threatens the well-being of the organization or its members*

- Is likely to flourish when:
  - Supported by group norms
  - People are in groups



# Group Property 3: Status

*A socially defined position or rank given to groups or group members by others*

- Determined by:
  - The **power** a person wields over others
  - A person's **ability** to contribute to a group's goals
  - An individual's **personal characteristics**



# Impact of Status

- High-status members:
  - Often have more freedom to deviate from norms
  - Are better able to resist conformity pressures
- Interaction among members of groups is influenced by status
  - High status people are more assertive
  - Low status members may not participate
  - Group creativity may suffer

# Group Property 4: Size

- Smaller groups are faster at completing tasks – members perform better
- Large groups are consistently better at problem solving
- **Social Loafing** - tendency to expend less effort working in a group than as an individual

# Social Loafing

## Causes:

- Equity theory – unequal distribution of work
- Dispersion of responsibility – clouds the relationship between individual inputs and group output

## Prevention:

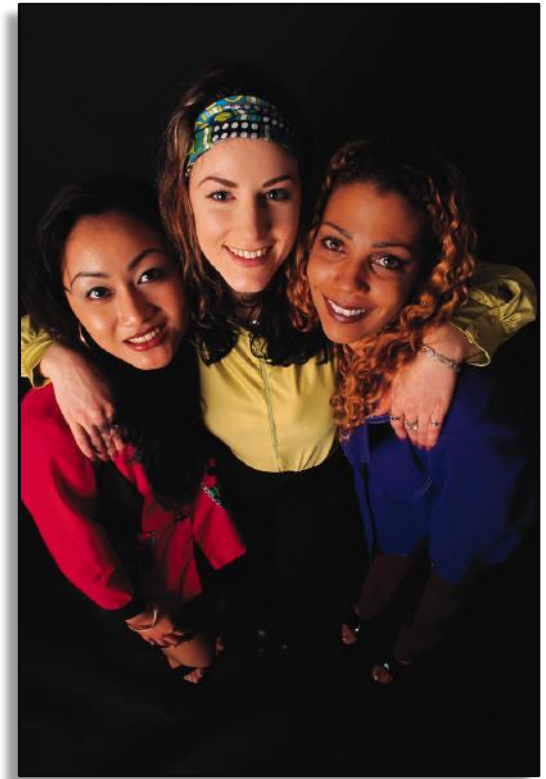
- Set group goals
- Increase inter-group competition
- Engage in peer evaluation
- Distribute group rewards based on members' individual contributions



# Group Property 5: Cohesiveness

*The degree to which members of the group are attracted to each other and motivated to stay in the group*

- Performance-related norms are the moderating variable for productivity and cohesiveness
- High cohesiveness with high norms gives higher productivity



# Encouraging Cohesiveness

1. Make the group smaller
2. Encourage agreement with group goals
3. Increase the time spent together
4. Increase the status and perceived difficulty of group membership
5. Stimulate competition with other groups
6. Give rewards to the group rather than to individual members
7. Physically isolate the group

# Group Decision Making

## Strengths

- Generate more complete information and knowledge
- Increased diversity of views
- Increased acceptance of a solution

## Weaknesses

- Takes longer
- Conformity pressures
- Discussions can be dominated by one or a few members
- Ambiguous responsibility for the final outcome



# Effectiveness & Efficiency



## Effectiveness:

- Accuracy – group is better than average individual but worse than most accurate group member
- Speed – individuals are faster
- Creativity – groups are better
- Degree of Acceptance – groups are better

Efficiency: Groups are generally less efficient

# Groupthink Symptoms

*A deterioration of individual's mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgments as a result of group pressures*

Occurs when members:

- Rationalize away resistance to assumptions
- Pressure doubters to support the majority
- Doubters keep silent/minimize their misgivings
- Interprets silence as a “yes” vote

# Minimizing Groupthink



- Limit group size ( $\leq 10$ )
- Encourage group leaders to actively seek input from all members and avoid expressing their own opinions
- Appoint a “devil’s advocate”

# Groupshift

- Group discussions lead members to assume new, more extreme, positions
- Groups often take positions of greater risk
- May be due to diffused responsibility



# Group Decision-Making Techniques

*Interacting groups meet face-to-face and rely on verbal and non-verbal interactions to communicate*

## **Brainstorming**

- Generates a list of creative alternatives
- Problem: production blocking

# Group Decision-Making Techniques

*Interacting groups meet face-to-face and rely on verbal and non-verbal interactions to communicate*

## **Nominal Group Technique (NGT)**

- Restricts discussion during the decision-making process to encourage independent thinking

# Global Implications



Cultural differences affect the importance, display, and derivation of status.

Social loafing occurs mostly in individualistic cultures motivated by self-interest.

Diversity leads to greater conflict but the surface-level recognition may make members more open-minded and accepting – leading to better decisions.

# Implications for Managers

- Positive relationship between role perception and performance evaluation
- Group norms can affect individual performance either positively or negatively
- Status inequities adversely impact productivity and performance
- Group size impacts effectiveness
- Cohesiveness can influence productivity

# Keep in Mind...

- Group norms, roles, and identities have powerful affects on individual behavior
- Conformity can be a problem: have leaders minimize initial inputs
- Group decision making is not always better than individual decision making

# Summary

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