

Chapter 7

Groups and Teams

Learning Objectives

- **Define groups and teams**
- **Understand the elements of group structure**
- **Know two models of group development**
- **Discuss group processes, including decision making and social loafing**

Learning Objectives (cont.)

- **Explain the differences between groups and teams**
- **Appreciate the influences of differences in group and team composition on organizational behavior**
- **Know how groups function in different cultures**

Group

A plurality of individuals who are in contact with one another who take one another into account, and who are aware of some significant commonality

Elements of Group Structure

- **Rules and Norms**
- **Roles and Status**
- **Leaders and Followers**
- **Formal and Informal Groups**

Group Development

- **The Five-Stage Model**
 - **Forming**
 - **Storming**
 - **Norming**
 - **Performing**
 - **Adjourning**
- **The Punctuated Equilibrium Model**

Group Processes

- **Communication**
- **Group Culture**
- **Decision Making**
 - Individual Vs. Group
 - “Groupthink”
- **Participation and Social Loafing**
 - Are these culturally specific?

Team

A small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable

Types of Groups

- **Homogeneous**
- **Token**
- **Bicultural**
- **Multicultural**

How Teams Differ from Groups

- **Shared Leadership**
- **Accountability**
 - Team: accountable to each other
- **Purpose**
- **Work Products**
 - Team: cover for each other
- **Communication**
- **Effectiveness**
- **Work Style**

Typical Difficulties

- Dislike and Mistrust
- Unsophisticated Stereotyping
- Lack of Cohesion
- Miscommunication
- Overall Decreased Effectiveness

Some Solutions

- Recognize Differences
- Selection by task-related ability, not culture
- Negotiate Roles
- Establish Norms
- External Vision/Focus
- Group Success
- Work together
- Give Feedback

Advantages and Disadvantages of Group Diversity

Advantages

Diversity Permits Increased Creativity

Wide range of perspectives

More and better ideas

Less “groupthink”

Diversity Forces Enhanced

Concentration to Understand Others’

Ideas

Meanings

Arguments

Disadvantages

Diversity Causes Lack of Cohesion

Mistrust

Lower interpersonal attractiveness

Stereotyping

More within-culture conversations

Miscommunication

Slower speech: Non-native speakers

Less accurate communication

Stress

More counterproductive behavior

Less agreement on content

Tension

Advantages and Disadvantages of Group Diversity (cont.)

Advantages

Increased Creativity Can Lead to

Better Problem definitions

More alternatives

Better solutions

Better decisions

Groups Can Become

More effective

More productive

Disadvantages

Lack of Cohesion Causes Inability to

Validate ideas and people

Agree when agreement is needed

Gain consensus on decisions

Take concerted action

Groups can Become

Less efficient

Less effective

Less productive

Is Seeing Culture Illegitimate?

- Some people associate recognizing culture with simplistic and immoral ways of thinking
- Recognition is not the same as judging people from one culture to be superior or inferior to those of another
- Cultural blindness limits our ability to benefit from diversity.
 - Blindness leads to “like me” fallacies: I.e believing people are basically the same as you, and have the same needs.

Diversity and Consensus

- Fiol and Lyles found that consensus can be reached in diverse groups without everyone agreeing.
- These groups tended to have high performance
- Group has to interact to the point that each member understands the other's perspectives and opinions.
- They can then agree to disagree and move on

Strategies for Managing Cultural Diversity

- Parochial: Cultural blindness/avoidance
 - Homogeneity or Similarity myths
- Ethnocentric
 - Cultural Dominance
- Combine
 - Compromise or Accommodate
- Synergistic
 - Often discussed and promoted, rarely achieved

Convergence or Divergence?

- **Trend toward using group-oriented management techniques in individualistic societies**
- **Introduction of market-based principles in collective societies leading to more individualism**
- *Continuing tensions among cultures*
- *Multiculturalism threatens dominant groups*
- *Some societies remain homogeneous*

Implications for Managers

- **Managing Groups**

- **Give organizational objectives precedence over multicultural considerations**
- **Emphasize clear vision/superordinate goal**
- **Create equal power among group members**
- **Avoid ethnocentrism**
- **Learn how to diagnose group behavior in other cultures**

Implications for Managers (cont.)

- **New uses of groups and teams**
 - **Groups and teams may replace traditional organizational structures**
 - **Use of teams may increase in cross-cultural negotiations**