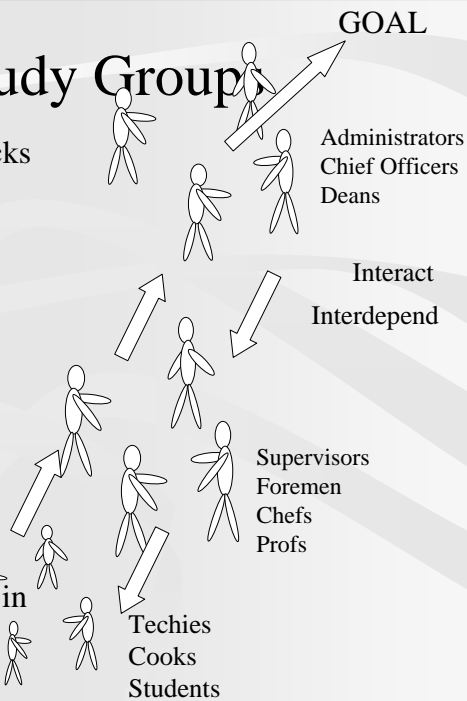


Groups and Team Work

Chapter 7

Why Study Groups

- Groups are the building blocks of organizations.
- An organization is simply a hierarchy of a series of interlocked formal work groups.
- Groups are critical in determining the success of organizations.
- The knowledge of groups is therefore an important topic in OB.



GROUPS



- Groups - critical to the success of an organization
- Group – two or more people interacting interdependently to achieve a common goal
- Formal – groups that are established by organizations to facilitate the achievement of organizational goals, committees, task forces.
- Informal – Groups that emerge naturally in response to the common interests of organizational members.
- Special-Interest groups, religious groups, ethnic groups, etc.
- Groups influence our behaviour, values, beliefs
- Groups help us exert our influence on others...

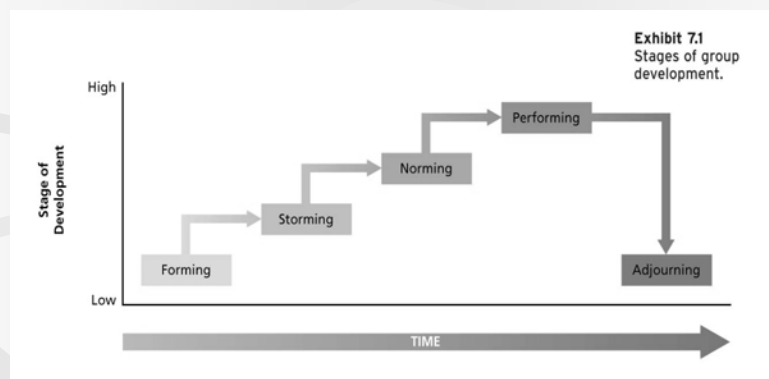
Group Development

- Groups are complex social devices.
 - Psychology
 - Norms
 - Size
 - Development
- They require a fair amount of negotiation and trial-and-error before individual members begin to function as a true group.
- How do groups develop?
 - Tuckman's Stages Model
 - Gersick's Punctuated Equilibrium

Tuckman's Stages of Group Development

- Groups develop through a series of stages over time.
- Each stage presents the members with a series of challenges they must master in order to achieve the next stage.
- Not all groups go through these stages.
- The process applies mainly to new groups that have never met before.

Group Development... Stages Model



Group Development... Stages Model

Forming

- Group members meet for the first time and try to orient themselves by “testing the waters”. What are we doing here? What is the purpose.
- The situation is ambiguous.

Storming

- Conflict often emerges
- Confrontation and criticism occur as members determine whether they will go along with the way the group is developing.
- Sorting out roles and responsibilities is often at issue.

Group Development...

Norming

- Members resolve the issues that provoked the storming and they develop social consensus.
- Compromise is often necessary.
- Norms are agreed on and the group becomes more cohesive.
- Information and opinions flow freely.

Performing

- The group devotes its energies toward task accomplishment.
- Achievement, creativity, and mutual assistance are prominent themes at this stage.

Group Development...

Adjourning

- Some groups have definite life span others disperse due to layoffs and other situational or personal variables.
- Rites and rituals that affirm the group's previous successful development are common.
- Members often exhibit emotional support for each other.

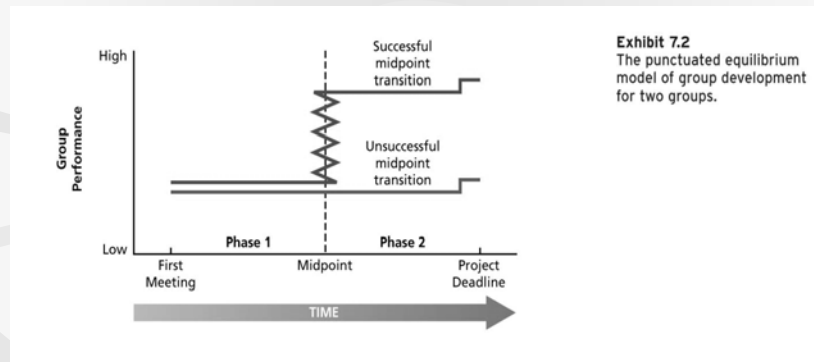
Group Development...

Punctuated Equilibrium Model

Connie Gersick

- | | |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• PEM – A model which describes how groups with deadlines are affected by their first meeting and crucial midpoint transition. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Equilibrium punctuated by<ul style="list-style-type: none">– Critical first meeting– A midpoint change in group activity– A rush to task completion |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Punctuated Equilibrium...



Group Structure and Its Consequences

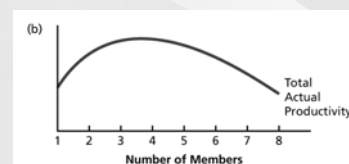
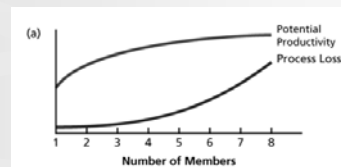
- Group structure: refers to characteristics of the stable social organization of a group
 - Group size
 - Diversity
 - Group norms
 - Roles
 - Status
 - Cohesiveness

Group Size and Satisfaction

- Number of people in a group, most work groups 3-20
- The bigger the group the less the satisfaction
- More time and energy to communicate
- More points of view more conflicts
- Participation decreases
- Some people are inhibited about participating in larger groups
- Difficult to identify with accomplishments

Size and Performance

- Do large groups perform better than small groups?
- How many people should a bank assign to evaluate loan applicants? How many carpenters should a construction company assign to build a garage?
- Depends on the task that the group needs to accomplish.



Size and Performance...

- Depends on tasks
 - Additive – tasks in which group performance is dependent on the sum of the performance of individual group members (building a house) Performance increases.
 - Disjunctive – performance is dependent on the best group member (research team) performance increases.
 - Conjunctive – performance is determined by the poorest member (assembly line) performance decreases.
- Process loss – group performance difficulties stemming from the problems of motivating and coordinating larger groups.

Diversity of Group Membership

- Diverse groups may take longer to go through group forming stages
- Once formed diverse groups show cohesiveness
- Diverse groups perform better in tasks that require creativity, problem solving, i.e., non-routine tasks
- Deep diversity in attitudes towards work may damage cohesion

Group Norms

- Group Norms (codes of conduct): collective expectations regarding the behaviour of each member.
 - Norms provide regularity, predictability, psychological security allowing minimum disruption to daily business
 - Managers are more concerned with important norms, e.g., attendance vs office decoration.
 - Norms are always collective
- Norm Development:
 - Individuals develop attitudes as a function of a related belief and value.
 - Shared attitudes form the basis of norms.
 - Why do individuals comply to norms?
 - Mostly because it complies with privately held attitude.
 - Save time (even shaking hands)
 - Comply even if norms go against privately held beliefs

Some typical norms

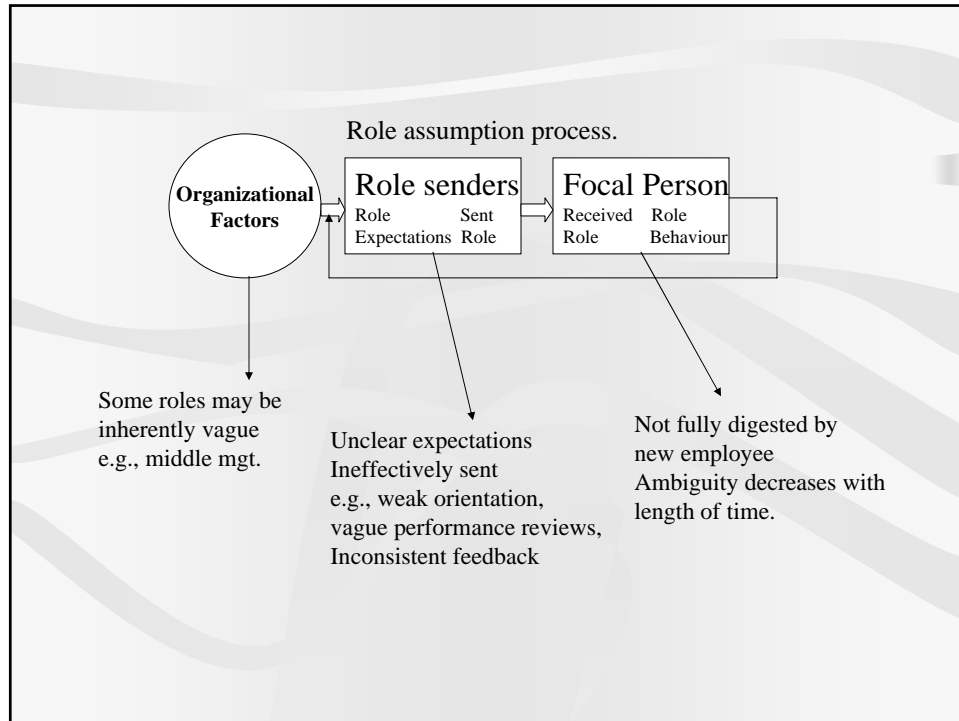
- Dress Norms
- Reward Allocation Norms
 - Equity (according to input)
 - Equality (reward everyone equally)
 - Reciprocity (reward people the way they reward you)
 - Social responsibility (reward those who truly need the reward)
- Performance Norms
 - What level of performance is expected (absenteeism, punctuality, coffee breaks,...)
 - Official performance norm (high) vs Informal performance norm)

Roles

- Roles: positions in a group that have a set of behaviours attached to them. They are packages of norms that apply to particular group members.
- Roles indicate that group members may be required to act differently from one another (secretary, chairperson).
- Designated Roles, formal roles of who does what, president, analyst, programmer.
- Emergent Roles, roles that develop naturally to meet social-emotional needs of a group or to assist in job accomplishment.
- Role as a committee secretary or chairperson
- Role Ambiguity: lack of clarity of job goals or methods. Confusion how performance is evaluated, limits of authority and responsibility,...
 - Role ambiguity creates dissatisfaction, reduced organizational commitment, low performance, intentions to quit.

To Do List

- Group Presentations – groups 5,6,7
 - Ted, Mary and Lisa have been hired by HR in TOBank as junior managers. They are recent graduate of BA in Management. Design a socialization, orientation or onboarding strategy for the new employees. Relate your strategy to theoretical concepts in OB.
- Chapter 7
- Chapter 8
 - Vignettes
 - Fairmont Hotels
 - Computer-Based Orientation
 - Videos, podcasts,...



Group Structure...

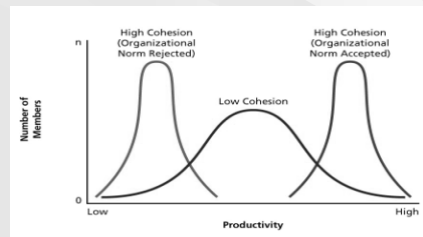
- **Role conflict:** a condition of being faced with incompatible role expectations.
 - Intrasender role conflict – a single role sender provides incompatible role expectations.
 - Intersender role conflict – two or more role senders provide incompatible role expectations.
 - Interrole conflict – several roles held by a role occupant involve incompatible expectations.
 - Person-role conflict – role calls for behaviour that is incompatible with the personality or skills of a role occupant.
- **Role conflict results in job dissatisfaction, lowered commitment, turnover intentions.**
- **Status:** the rank, social position, or prestige accorded to group members.
 - **Formal Status Systems** – recognized by the application of status symbols; titles, pay packages, work schedules, physical working environment...
 - **Seniority and assigned job positions** determine status.
 - **Informal Status Systems** – Not formally recognized but operate, power hitters, cool heads, fast trackers, ...

Group Structure...

- **Consequences of Status Differences:**
 - Most people want to communicate with people at their own status or higher, rather than people who are below them.
 - If status differences are large, people can be inhibited from communicating upward. This can stall effective communication.
 - Status affects the amount of various group members' communication and their influence in group affairs.
- **Reducing Status Barriers** – status differences can inhibit communication. This has led many organizations to downplay status differentiation by doing away with status symbols.
- Many observers believe that e-mail has leveled status barriers.

Group Cohesiveness

- **Cohesiveness:** degree to which a group is especially attractive to its members.
- **Factors Influencing Cohesiveness:**
 - Threat and Competition
 - Success
 - Member diversity – high performance may outweigh surface dissimilarities.
 - Size
 - Toughness of Initiation
- **Consequences of Cohesiveness:**
 - More participation in group activities
 - More Conformity
 - More Success – cohesiveness results in performance if the group accepts goals of the organization



Social Loafing

- **Loafing:** the tendency to withhold physical or intellectual effort when performing a group task.
 - Free rider effect – lower input to get free ride
 - Sucker effect – lower input to restore equity
- Ways to counteract social loafing
 - Make individual performance more visible
 - Make sure that work is interesting
 - Increase feelings of indispensability
 - Increase performance feedback
 - Reward group performance

Designing Effective Work Teams

- What is a team?
 - For our purpose a team is a group in a work setting.
- Many companies; GM, Rubbermaid, Xerox, etc. use team based work arrangements.
- Research has shown that team based work arrangements improve organizational performance in terms of efficiency and quality.



Designing Effective Work Teams..

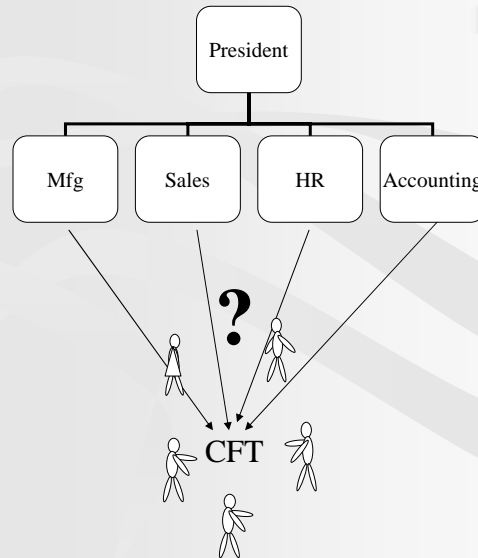
- How are teams designed, don't they form spontaneously in response to the demands of the organization's goals or technology?
 - Even though these factors set limits on how groups are organized, there is plenty of scope for creativity in work group design.
- A good model about the design of effective work groups would be a successful sports team.
 - It is small
 - Its members are highly skilled and are able to meld their skills into a cohesive effort
 - The task is intrinsically motivating and provides direct feedback
 - The team is obsessed with obtaining the right personnel
 - The team is "coached" and not supervised.
 - These leads us to Self-Managed Teams

Self-Managed Work Teams

- **Self-Managed Work Teams:** work groups that do challenging work under reduced supervision.
- Critical to self Managed teams are:
 - **Nature of task** – should be challenging and complex. Enriched jobs, variety of tasks, task identity,...
 - **Composition** – stable, small, smart (technical & social skills), similar yet diverse
 - **Support Mechanisms** – Training; technical, social, language, business,
 - Rewards; tied to team accomplishment,
 - Management; self-managed (independent)

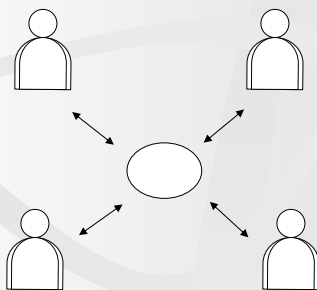
Cross Functional Teams

- Cross-Functional Teams – people with different functional expertise brought together to better invent, design or deliver a product or service, e.g., new product or service.
- Research has discovered a number of factors that make Cross-Functional very effective:
 - Composition – made of all relevant expertise and parties.
 - Superordinate goals – are attractive outcomes that can only be achieved by collaboration.
 - Physical proximity – to facilitate informal contact.
 - Autonomy – from the larger organization.
 - Rules and procedures – to prevent anarchy.
 - Leadership – strong people skills b/c of potential of conflict.



Virtual Teams

- Virtual Teams – work groups that use technology to communicate and collaborate across time, space, and organizational boundaries.



Advantages:

- Round-the-clock-work
- Reduced travel time and cost
- Larger talent pool

Challenges:

- Miscommunication, e.g., humour
- Trust – when not face-to-face
- Isolation
- High costs of high technology and faultless operation of equipment.
- Management – new challenges of monitoring and assessing employees.

Lessons concerning VT:

- Recruitment – highly skilled, that can handle independence, and isolation
- Training – train for both tech. and interpersonal skills.
- Personalization – encourage personal or informal encounters.
- Set goals and ground rules, give feedback