Chapter 6: Groups and Teamwork

▌TEAMS VS. GROUPS

group = 2 or more ppl w/ a common relationship

team = small # of ppl who work closely together toward a common objective & are accountable to one another

Groups become teams when:

- Team members share leadership
- Individuals & the team as a whole share accountability for team's work
- Team develops its own purpose / mission
- Team works on problem-solving continuously, NOT just @ scheduled meeting times
- Team's measure of effectiveness is team's outcomes & goals, NOT individual's

▌WHY HAVE TEAMS BECOME SO POPULAR?

- use of teams creates potential for organization to generate greater outputs w/ no inc. in inputs
- teams typically outperform individuals when tasks being done require multiple skills, judgment, exp.
- teams more flexible and responsive to changing events
- teams can quickly assemble, deploy, focus, disband
- greater task identity

▌TYPES OF TEAMS

Problem-Solving Teams (process-improvement team)	group of 5~12 employees from same department who meet for a few hrs/week to discuss ways of improving quality, efficiency, work environment i.e. planning teams, task forces, committees organized to get tasks done	- members share ideas, offer suggestions on how to improve work processes/methods - rarely given authority to implement their suggestions
		Quality Circle = work group of 8~10 employees & managers who meet regularly to discuss their *quality problems*, investigate causes of problems, recommend solutions, take corrective actions - generate & evaluate their own feedback - teaching employees group communication skills, quality strategies, measurement & problem analysis techniques - tend to show little/ no effect on employee satisfc'n - sometimes +ve results on productivity (?)

Self-Managed Teams (self-directed teams)	group of 10~15 employees who take on many of responsibilities of their former managers *(plan & schedule work, assign tasks to members, collectively control pace of work, make operating decisions, take action on problems)*	- external managerial positions take on dec. importance (or even eliminated) b/c can block high performance - sometimes viewed –vely by workers who fear that inc. use of teams will lead to layoffs - +ve effect on productivity - NO significant impact on job satisfaction, organizational commitment, absenteeism/turnover - may not work well in all cultures *(e.g. Mexico, respect hierarchical authority)*
Cross-Functional Teams (project teams)	group of employees @ about same hierarchical level, but from diff. work areas, who come together to accomplish a task	- each individual expected to contribute knowledge of his field - time-consuming: members need to learn to work w/ diversity & complexity **task force** = temporary cross-functional team **committee** = group composed of members from different departments
		Skunkwork = cross-functional team that develop spontaneously to create new products or work on complex problems - usually found in high-tech sector, sheltered from other org. members → work on new ideas in isolation, w/o being watched over during creative stages; ignore structure & bureaucratic rules of org. while they work
Virtual Teams	team that uses computer tech to tie together physically dispersed members to achieve a common goal	- for work that's knowledge-based - allow ppl from diff. time zones to work together - limited social contact of team members - absence of paraverbal (voice tone, inflection, voice volume), nonverbal (eye movement, facial expression, body lang.) cues in communications, which inc meaning - more at risk of misunderstanding - trust-building not the same as face-to-face teams How to Improve the Way the Team Functions: make sure team addresses feelings of isolation, team members have mix of interpersonal & technical skills, carefully give evaluations & provide recognition, feedback

FROM INDIVIDUAL TO TEAM MEMBER

ROLES

= set of expected behaviours of a person in a given position in a social unit

role expectations = how others believe a person should act in a given situation

- **Role Conflict** = situation in which an individual finds that complying w/ one role requirement may make it harder to comply w/ another
  - inc. internal tension & frustration → give formalized bureaucratic response → conflict resolved
    replying on rules, regulations, procedures that govern org. activities
    e.g. faced w/ conflicting requirements imposed by controller's office and his own manager
    → *decides in favour of immediate boss (manager)*
  - other responses: withdrawal, stalling, negotiation, redefining facts & make them appear same
- **Role Ambiguity** = person is unclear about his role
  - lead to confusion, stress, bad feelings

roles should be balanced. if not:

role overload = too much is expected of someone

role underload = too little is expected of someone, and he feels he's not contributing to the group

NORMS

= acceptable standards of behaviour within a group that are shared by the group's members

- influence behaviour of group members w/ min. of external controls
- differ among groups, communities, societies
- common norms dealing w/ issues such as:
  - *Performance* (how hard to work, what kind of quality, levels of tardiness)
  - *Appearance* (personal dress, when to look busy or "goof off", how to show loyalty)
  - *Social arrangement* (how team members interact)
  - *Allocation of resources* (pay, assignments, allocation of tools & equipment)

How Do Norms Develop?

1. Explicit statements made by a group member
   (instructions form supervisor or powerful member)
2. Critical events in group's history
   (e.g. work injury/accident)
3. Primacy
   (1st behaviour pattern that emerges in a group)
4. Carry-over behaviours from past situations
   (expectations brought to the group from other groups)

Why Are They Enforced? Why Are They Important?

1. It facilitates group's survival.
   (groups don't like to fail, therefore seek to enforce norms that inc. chances for success)
2. It inc. predictability of group members' behaviours.
   (enable group members to anticipate each other's actions & prepare appropriate responses)
3. It reduces embarrassing interpersonal problems for group members.
   (prevent interpersonal discomfort, ensure satisfc'n of members)
4. It allows members to express central values of the group & clarify what is distinctive about the group's identity. (help solidify & maintain the group)

Conformity = adjusting one's behaviour to align w/ the norms of the group

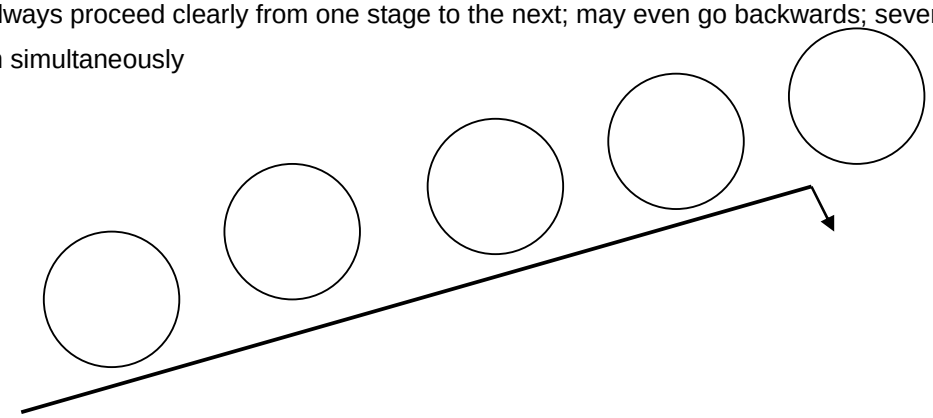
- Solomon Asch's study of conformity
- group can place strong pressures on members to change their attitudes & behaviours to conform to group's standard
- can lead to –ve (conform to antisocial behaviours) & +ve (prosocial)

STAGES OF GROUP AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT

The Five Stage Model *– interpersonal process*

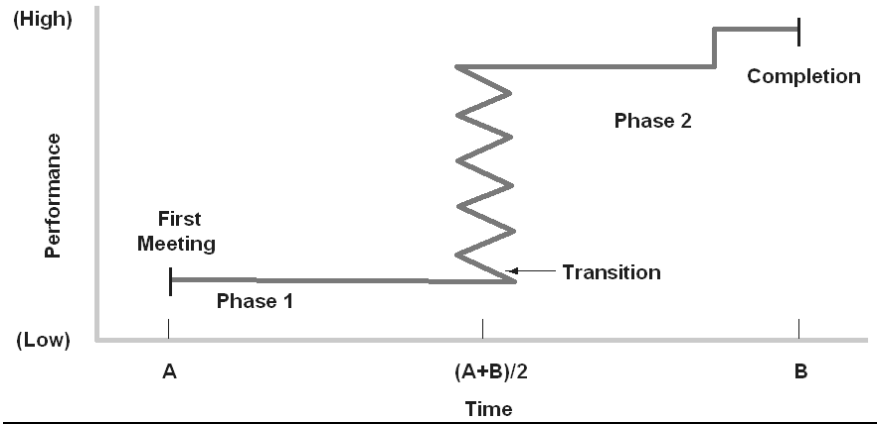
1	**Forming**	*characterized by much uncertainty*	-Uncertainty about group's purpose, structure, leadership -Complete when members start to think of themselves as part of a team
2	**Storming**	*characterized by intragroup conflict*	-Members accept existence of the team, but resist constraints that the team imposes on individuality; conflict over who will control team -Complete when clear hierarchy of leadership emerges *Some teams never emerge form Storming, or move back and forth thru Storming & other stages *If remain in this stage → less ability to complete task
3	**Norming**	*characterized by close relationships & cohesiveness*	-Strong sense of team identity & Camaraderie -Complete when team structure solidifies; team has common expectations of def. of correct member beahviour
4	**Performing**	*when the group is fully functional*	-Structure fully functional & accepted; team energy moved to performing task @ hand
5	***Adjourning**	*final stage for temp. group; attention is directed toward wrapping up activities rather than task performance*	-Group prepares for disbandment -Some upbeat members: bask in group's accomplishments -Others may be depressed over loss of camaraderie & friendships

- group becomes more effective as it progresses thru 1st 4 stages
- conflict directed toward task (NOT members) can be conductive to high group performance
- groups do NOT always proceed clearly from one stage to the next; may even go backwards; several stages may go on simultaneously



INDIVIDUAL ISSUES	How do I fit in?	What's my role here?	What do the others expect of me?	How do I best perform?	What's next?
GROUP ISSUES	Why are we here?	Who's in charge & who does what?	Can we agree on roles and work as a team?	Can we do the job properly?	How do we disband?

The Punctuated-Equilibrium Model *(Prof Connie Gersick) – time challenges, deadline-oriented teams*



PHASE 1	• 1st mtg sets group's direction • 1st phase of group activity is one of inertia	team performing @ low state (tasks not completed in coordinated fashion)	*forming* *norming*
TRANSITION	• transition takes place @ end of 1st phase (when group has used up 1/2 of its allotted time) • transition initiates major changes	concentrated burst of changes, dropping of old patterns, adoption of new perspectives	*low performing* *storming*
PHASE 2	• 2nd phase of inertia (equil'm) • last mtg: markedly accelerated activity	team executes plans created during transition period	*high performing* *adjourning*

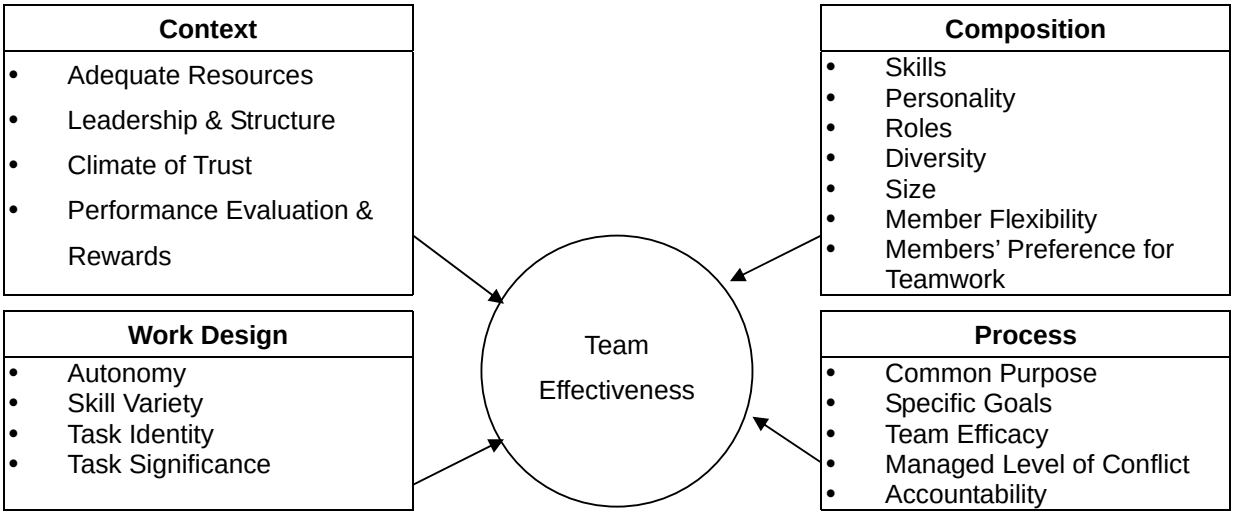
E.G.

1. @ 1st mtg, timetable established; members size up on one another, agree they have 9 weeks to work on the project; instructor's requirements discussed/debated
2. group meets regularly to carry out activities
3. after 4/5 weeks, problems: criticisms, open discussions; group reassesses & moves to make changes
4. if right changes made, next 4/5 weeks: group developing 1st-rate project
5. @ last mtg (just before project is due): lasts longer, all final issues discussed, details resolved

CREATING EFFECTIVE TEAMS

- Resources & Contextual Influences that make teams effective
- Team's Composition
- Work Design
- Process Variables (things in the team that influence how effective the team is)

CAVEATS to keep in mind:
- teams differ in form & structure, so model should be used as a guide
- model assumes that it's already been determined that teamwork is preferable over individual work



CONTEXT	**Adequate Resources**	- tech, adequate staffing, admin. assistance, encouragement, timely info - support from management & larger org. - scarcity reduces ability of team to perform job effectively
	Leadership & Structure	- create real team (rather than team in name) - setting clear/meaningful direction - make sure team structure supports working effectively - ensure that team operates within supportive org context - provide expert coaching - leader's expectations & mood affect team performance

	Climate of Trust	- interpersonal trust facilitates cooperation, reduces need to monitor each others' behaviour, bonds members around belief that others won't take advantage of them - trust in leadership: allows team to be willing to accept & commit to leader's goals & decisions
	Performance Evaluation & Rewards	- group-based appraisals, profit-sharing, gainsharing, small-group incentives - avoid discrepancy in wages among team members
COMPOSITION	**Skills**	1) technical expertise 2) problem-solving & decision-making skills *(identify problems, generate alternatives, evaluate alternatives, make competent choices)* 3) interpersonal skills *(good listening, feedback, conflict resolution)*
	Personality	- influences team behaviour - high levels of Ex, Agr, Con, Emo Stab *(Big 5 Model)* → high performance
	Roles	**task-oriented roles** = ensure that tasks of group are accomplished e.g. initiators, information seekers/providers, summarizers, elaborators, consensus makers **maintenance roles** = maintain good relations within the group e.g. harmonizers, compromisers, gatekeepers, encouragers - members flexible enough to play multiple roles → desired **individual roles** = are not productive for keeping team on task (more concerned for himself than the team)
	Diversity	**group diversity** = presence of a heterogeneous mix of individuals in a group (in terms of functional & demographic/cultural characteristics) - *may lead to creative / unique solutions - lack of common perspective → spend more time discussing issues (dec. possibility that a weak alternative is chosen) - if team members try to learn about & understand each other @ beginning → +ve effect on team Possible conflicts… - informational diversity → constructive conflict - demographic diversity → interpersonal conflict - value-goal diversity → most damage, hard to function
	Size	- < 10 members is best (if too many → break into sub-teams) - too many → cohesiveness & mutual accountability declines ppl talk less, Social Loafing inc. **social loafing** = tendency for individuals to expend less effort when working collectively than when working individually why? Dispersion of responsibility & belief that others not carrying fair share

	Member Flexibility	flexible individuals can complete others' tasks → high performance
	Members' Preference for Teamwork	when ppl who prefer to work alone are required to team up → threat to team's morale (士氣)
WORK DESIGN	**Autonomy**	freedom
	Skill Variety	opportunity to utilize diff. skills & talents
	Task Identity	ability to complete a whole & identifiable task / product
	Task Significance	participation in task / project that has substantial impact on others
PROCESS	**Common Purpose**	- provides direction, momentum, commitment for members - broader than specific goals
	Specific Goals	- energize teams, maintain team's focus on achieving results - facilitate *(make easy)* clear communication - should be challenging (which raises team performance)
	Team Efficacy	= having confidence in team itself & belief that they can succeed **cohesiveness** = degree to which team members are attracted to each other & are motivated to stay on the team - help build efficacy

		Cohesiveness	
		HIGH	LOW
Performance Norms	HIGH	High productivity	Moderate productivity
	LOW	Low productivity	Moderate to Low productivity

Socio-emotional cohesiveness = sense of togetherness that develops when individuals derive emotional satisfc'n from group participation

Instrumental cohesiveness = …when group members are mutually dependent on one another b/c they believe they could not achieve the group's goal by acting separately

How to inc. team efficacy? (inc. confidence!)

- help team achieve small successes
- - skill training

	Managed Level of Conflict	- if no conflict → apathy, disengagement, lower performance level, forget to consider key issues, unaware of important aspects of situation To negotiate in conflicts: - share info & goals - strive to be open & get along - sense of humour - willingness to understand points of others w/o insisting everyone agree
	Accountability	make members individually / jointly accountable for team's purpose, goals, approach

*Research Finding on Diversity

- diversity can lead ppl to recall stereotypes (bring bias into evaluation of ppl diff. from them)
- more difficult to unify team & reach agreements
- teams of strangers > teams of friends (lower performance) in terms of profit
- to bring benefit to team, teams must be willing to share info about themselves early on & have some common values

BEWARE! TEAMS AREN'T ALWAYS THE ANSWER

Disadvantages of Teams:

- takes more time
- takes more resources
- inc. communication demands, conflicts, meetings

How do you know if work of a group would be better done in teams? Ask:

1. Can the work be done better by > 1 person?
   (simple tasks are better left to individuals)

2. Does the work create a common purpose / set of goals for the ppl in the group that's more than the aggregate of individual goals?
   (some teams better manage collective responsibility)
   e.g. car-dealer departments have teams that link sales representatives, customer service personnel, mechanics, parts specialists to ensure customer needs are properly met

3. Are members of the group interdependent?
   (success of whole depends on success of each, success of each depends on success of others)

Other conditions that may find teams more useful:

- work processes cut across functional lines
- speed is important
- org. mirrors complex, differentiated, rapidly changing market environment
- innovation & learning have priority
- tasks require online integration of highly interdependent performers

Characteristics of an Effective Team

1	**Clear purpose**	vision, mission, goal, task of team defined & is now accepted by everyone (there's an action plan)
2	**Informality**	climate tends to be informal, comfortable, relaxed (no obvious tensions / signs of boredom)
3	**Participation**	there's much discussion; everyone is encouraged to participate
4	**Listening**	members use effective listening techniques (questioning, paraphrasing, summarizing, etc) to get out ideas
5	**Civilized disagreement**	there's disagreement, but team is comfortable w/ this & shows no signs of avoiding, smoothing over, or suppressing conflict
6	**Consensus decisions**	for important decisions, goal is substantial but not necessarily unanimous agreement thru open discussion of everyone's ideas, avoidance of formal voting, or easy compromises
7	**Open communication**	members feel free to express their feelings on tasks & on group's operation (there are few hidden agendas); communication takes place outside of mtg's
8	**Clear rules & work assignments**	there are clear expectations about roles played by each team member (action is taken, clear assignments made, accepted & carried out); work is distributed among members
9	**Shared leadership**	while team has a formal leader, leadership functions shift from time to time depending on circumstances, needs of group & skills of members; formal leader models appropriate behaviour & helps establish +ve norms
10	**External relations**	team spends time developing key outside relationships, mobilizing resources, building credibility w/ important players in other parts of org.
11	**Style diversity**	team has broad spectrum of team-player types (including members who emphasize attention to task, goal setting, focus on process, Ques about how team is functioning)
12	**Self-assessment**	periodically, team stops to examine how well it's functioning & what may be interfering w/ its effectiveness

Roles Required for Effective Team Functioning

	FUNCTION	DESCRIPTION	E.G.
Roles that *Build Task Accomplishment*	**Initiating**	• Stating goal / problem • Making proposals about how to work on it • Setting time limits	*"Let's set up an agenda for discussing each of the problems we have to consider."*
	Seeking Info & Opinions	Asking group members for specific factual info related to task/problem or for their opinions about it	*"What do yo think would be the best approach to this, Jack?"*
	Providing Info & Opinions	Sharing info/opinions related to task/problem	*"I worked on a similar problem last year and found…"*
	Clarifying	Helping one another understand ideas & suggestions that come up in the group	*"What do you mean, Sue, is that we could…?"*
	Elaborating	Building on one another's ideas & suggestions	*"Building on Don's idea, I think we could…"*
	Summarizing	Reviewing points covered by group & different ideas stated so that decisions can be based on full info	*Appointing a recorder to take notes on a blackboard*
	Consensus Testing	Providing specific testing on whether group is nearing a decision or needs to continue discussion	*"Is the group ready to decide about this?"*
Roles that *Build & Maintain a Team*	**Harmonizing**	• Mediating conflict among other members • Reconciling disagreements • Relieving tensions	*"Don, I don't think you and Sue really see the question that differently."*
	Compromising	Admitting error @ times of group conflict	*"Well, I'd be willing to change if you provided some help on…"*
	Gatekeeping	• Making sure all members have a chance to express their ideas & feelings • preventing members from being interrupted	*"Sue, we haven't heard from you on this issue."*
	Encouraging	• Helping group member make his point • Establishing climate of acceptance in group	*"I think what you started to say is important, Jack. Please continue."*