Chapter 9
Work Teams and Groups

1. Define group and work team.
2. Explain the benefits organizations and individuals derive from working in teams.
3. Identify the factors that influence group behavior.
4. Describe how groups form and develop.
5. Explain how task and maintenance functions influence group performance.
6. Discuss the factors that influence group effectiveness.
7. Describe how empowerment relates to self-managed teams.
8. Explain the importance of upper echelons and top management teams.

Learning Outcome

Define group and work team.
Groups and Teams

GROUP – two or more people with common interests, objectives, and continuing interaction

WORK TEAM – a group of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common mission, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable

Learning Outcome

Explain the benefits organizations and individuals derive from working in teams.
Why teams?

• Good for work that is complicated, complex, interrelated and/or more voluminous than one person can handle
• Overcomes individual limitations.

Teamwork

joint action by a team of people in which individual interests are subordinated to team unity
**Beyond the Book:**

**Two CEOs?**

- Apparel retailer Aeropostale is challenging conventional wisdom by appointing co-CEOs.
- The move is risky, given the recession.
- Other companies have made this structure work – California Pizza Kitchen, Chipotle, Motorola, Research in Motion, Twitter.
- The most successful teams are those with complimentary talents, composed of the organization’s veterans who worked together for some time.

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**New vs. Old Team Environments**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>NEW TEAM ENVIRONMENT</th>
<th>OLD WORK ENVIRONMENT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Person comes up with initiatives. Team has considerable authority to chart its own steps.</td>
<td>Person follows orders. Team depends on the manager to chart its course.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Members form a team because people learn to collaborate in the face of their emerging right to think for themselves. People both rock the boat and work together.</td>
<td>Members were a team because people conformed to direction set by the manager. No one rocked the boat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People communicate by using their thoughts and feelings. They link up through direct talk.</td>
<td>People communicated by suppressing their thoughts and feelings. They wanted to get along.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Benefits of Teams

• For Organizations:
  • Encourages collaboration

• For Individuals
  • Psychological intimacy
  • Integrated involvement

Learning Outcome

Identify the factors that influence group behavior.
Group Behavior

Norms of Behavior – the standards that a work group uses to evaluate the behavior of its members

Group Cohesion – the “interpersonal glue” that makes members of a group stick together

Social Loafing – the failure of a group member to contribute personal time, effort, thoughts, or other resources to the group

Loss of Individuality – a social process in which group members lose self-awareness and its accompanying sense of accountability, inhibition, and responsibility for individual behavior
4 Learning Outcome

Describe how groups form and develop.

3 Issues Addressed by Groups

• Interpersonal issues
  (Matters of trust, personal comfort, and security)

• Task issues
  (Mission or purpose, methods, expected outcomes)

• Authority issues
  (Leadership, managing power and influence, communication flow)
Group Formation

**Formal Groups** – official or assigned groups gathered to perform various tasks

**Informal Groups** – groups that evolve in the work setting to meet needs not met by formal groups.

In both, ethnic, gender, cultural and interpersonal diversity is critical.

The Five Stage Model

- **Forming**
  - Little agreement
  - Unclear purpose
  - Guidance and direction

- **Storming**
  - Conflict
  - Increased clarity of purpose
  - Power struggles
  - Coaching

- **Norming**
  - Agreement and consensus
  - Clear roles and responsibilities
  - Facilitation

- **Performing**
  - Clear vision and purpose
  - Focus on goal achievement
  - Delegation

- **Adjourning**
  - Task completion
  - Good feeling about achievements
  - Recognition

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Punctuated Equilibrium Model

Groups do not progress linearly from one step to the next, but alternate between periods of inertia and bursts of energy.

MATURE GROUP CHARACTERISTICS

Purpose and Mission
• May be assigned or may emerge from the group
• Group often questions, reexamines, and modifies mission and purpose
• Mission converted into specific agenda, clear goals, and a set of critical success factors

Behavioral Norms
• Well-understood standards of behavior within a group
• Also evolve around performance and productivity.
Group Cohesion

interpersonal attraction binding group members together; enables groups to exercise effective control over the members

Groups with High Cohesiveness

- demonstrate lower tension and anxiety
- demonstrate less variation in productivity
- demonstrate better member satisfaction, commitment, and communication
Beyond the Book:
What You Don’t Want in a Team

In his new book *How The Mighty Fall: And Why Some Companies Never Give In*, Jim Collins identifies a number of characteristics of ineffective teams:

- People shield those in power from unpleasant facts
- People assert strong facts without data.
- Team members don’t unify to make a decision.
- Team members try to take as much credit as possible.
- Team members blame others for failures.
Status Structure
the set of authority and task relations among a group’s members; can be egalitarian or hierarchical

Learning Outcome

5

Explain how task and maintenance functions influence group performance.
Team Task Functions

those activities directly related to the effective completion of the team’s work

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Maintenance Functions

those activities essential to the effective, satisfying interpersonal relationships within a team or group

Team Maintenance Functions

- Supporting others
- Following others’ leads
- Gatekeeping communication
- Setting standards
- Expressing member feelings
- Testing group decisions
- Consensus testing
- Harmonizing conflict
- Reducing tension

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6 Learning Outcome

Discuss the factors that influence group effectiveness.

Work Team Structure Issues

- Goals and objectives
- Guidelines
- Performance measures
- Role specification.

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Work Team Process Issues

• Managing cooperative behaviors

• Managing competitive behaviors

Diversity in Teams

• Plays a large role in groups’ effectiveness.

• Members contribute to team in one of four styles:
  – Contributor
  – Collaborator
  – Communicator
  – Challenger
  – An effective group also needs an integrator.
Dissimilarity in Teams

- Demographic dissimilarity influences absenteeism, commitment, turnover intentions, beliefs, workgroup relationships, self-esteem, and organizational citizenship behavior.
- Can have positive or negative effects on teams
- Value dissimilarity negatively related to team involvement

Structural Diversity

- The number of structural holes in a work team
- Teams with few holes may have problems with creativity.
- Teams with lots of holes may have difficulty coordinating.
- Teams with moderate structural diversity achieve the best performance.
Describe how empowerment relates to self-managed teams.
Self-Managed Teams

also called self-directed teams or autonomous work groups; teams that make decisions once reserved for managers

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Beyond the Book: Self-Directed Work Teams

Studies suggest: leaders within self-directed work teams get better results with soft influence tactics (e.g. rational persuasion, consultation, inspirational appeals) than hard influence tactics.

How should approaches to leadership differ when leading a group from within or from without?

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Learning Outcome

Explain the importance of upper echelons and top management teams.

Upper Echelons:
Teams at the Top

- Self-managed teams at the top-level of an organization
- Their background characteristics predict organizational characteristics
- Set standards for values, competence, ethics, and unique characteristics in the organization
- Key to the strategic success of the organization
5 Seasons of CEO Tenure

1. Response to a mandate
2. Experimentation
3. Selection of an enduring theme
4. Convergence
5. Dysfunction

Executive Tenure and Organizational Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CRITICAL CEO CHARACTERISTICS</th>
<th>1 RESPONSE TO MANDATE</th>
<th>2 EXPERIMENTATION</th>
<th>3 SELECTION OF AN ENDURING THEME</th>
<th>4 CONVERGENCE</th>
<th>5 DYSFUNCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>COMMITMENT TO A PARADIGM</td>
<td>Moderately strong</td>
<td>Could be strong or weak</td>
<td>Moderately strong</td>
<td>Strong; increasing</td>
<td>Very strong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TASK KNOWLEDGE</td>
<td>Low but rapidly increasing</td>
<td>Moderate; somewhat increasing</td>
<td>High; slightly increasing</td>
<td>High; slightly increasing</td>
<td>High; slightly increasing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INFORMATION DIVERSITY</td>
<td>Many sources; unfiltered</td>
<td>Many sources but increasingly unfiltered</td>
<td>Fewer sources; moderately filtered</td>
<td>Few sources; highly filtered</td>
<td>Very few sources; highly filtered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TASK INTEREST</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderately high</td>
<td>Moderately high but diminishing</td>
<td>Moderately low and diminishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POWER</td>
<td>Low; increasing</td>
<td>Moderate; increasing</td>
<td>Moderate; increasing</td>
<td>Strong; increasing</td>
<td>Very strong; increasing</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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Diversity at the Top

Out of dissimilarity, strength is built.

Multicultural Top Teams

Diversity may increase uncertainty, complexity, and inherent confusion in group processes.

Culturally diverse groups may generate more and better ideas, and limit groupthink.
1. This chapter defined group as “two or more people who have common interests, objectives and continuing interaction.” Does this film sequence have examples of each part of that definition? Identify specific moments that fit the definition.

2. Review the section “Stages of Group Development.” Apply that discussion to both film sequences. You should see examples of each stage.

3. Does the small group in these film sequences appear cohesive? Cite some specific moments from the film sequences to support your conclusion.