

MODULE: 4

GROUP AND TEAM BEHAVIOR

Introduction

Humans are social animals and hence, form groups wherever they are. This is true for organizations as well as familial and friendship networks wherein people tend to congregate in groups and be governed by the norms and rules of the group. For instance, familial groups impose a certain way of behavior in us as are the friendship groups that we form. Similarly, organizations are collections of people in groups which require the members to conform to laid down or explicit and informal or implicit rules of behavior. Indeed, organizations have laid down policies and procedures which enjoin the employees to adhere to such rules as part of their employment. For example, there are certain organizational policies that stipulate the timings, the dress code, following the rules governing work and contractual basis of employment. Moreover, such policies are also formed to ensure that the employees work together as a team to realize and actualize the organizational vision and mission.

What is a Group?

Groups where people get along, feel the desire to contribute to the team, and are capable of coordinating their efforts may have high-performance levels. Group can be defined as a collection of individuals who have regular contact and frequent interaction, mutual influence, the common feeling of camaraderie, and who work together to achieve a common set of goals.

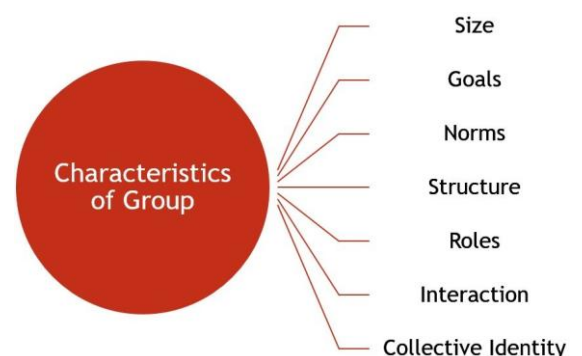
Definition: A Group is basically an assemblage of people. It can be understood as a collection of individuals (two or more), who come together and interact with each other, so as to achieve the objectives of the organization. These are the foundation of an organization.

The definition of a group can be given by some other simple ways like:

- Several people or things that are together or in the same place.
- Several people who are connected by some shared activity, interest, or quality.
- Several individuals assembled or having some unifying relationship.
- A set of people who meet or do something together because they share the same purpose or ideas.

Characteristics of Groups

1. **Size:** To form a group, it must be having at least two members. Practically, the number of group members ranges from 15 to 20. The more the members in the group, the more complex it is to manage.
2. **Goals:** Every group has certain goals, which are the reasons for its existence.
3. **Norms:** A group has certain rules, for interacting with the group members.
4. **Structure:** It has a structure, based on the roles and positions held by the members.



5. **Roles:** Every member of a group has certain roles and responsibilities, which are assigned, by the group leader.
6. **Interaction:** The interaction between the group members can occur in several ways, i.e. face to face, telephonic, in writing or in any other manner.
7. **Collective Identity:** A group is an aggregation of individuals, which are separately called as members, and collectively called as a group.

Functions of Groups

- Working on a complex and independent task that is too complex for an individual to perform and that cannot be easily broken down into independent tasks.
- Generating new ideas or creative solutions to solve problems that require inputs from several people.
- Serving liaison or coordinating functions among several workgroups whose work is to some extent independent.
- Facilitating the implementation of complex decisions. A group composed of representatives from various working groups can coordinate the activities of these interrelated groups.
- Serving as a vehicle for training new employees, groups teach new members methods of operations and group norms.

Types of Groups

1. **Formal Groups:** Groups that are formed consciously by the management, with an aim of serving an organizational objective. These are further classified as:

- **Self-directed teams:** The group of employees which are so authorised to make decisions, on their own, as it is independent and self-governing in nature.
- **Quality Circles:** A number of employees classed together belonging to the same field, who meet every week for an hour, to talk about their problems, identify the causes and find out solutions, to take necessary steps in this regard.
- **Committees:** An association of people created by the management for different matters to identify and discuss the issues of the company and arrives at a conclusion. It can be:
 - Standing Committee
 - Advisory Committee
 - Audit Committee
 - Grievance Committee
 - Adhoc Committee
- **Task force:** It is a temporary committee, wherein people belonging to different fields are grouped together for the performance of the task.



2. **Informal Groups:** The social and psychological variables operating at the workplace, results in the formation of informal groups. The creation of these groups is spontaneous due to the common interest, social needs, physical proximity and mutual attraction.

Reasons for Group Formation

1. **Personal Characteristics:** Individuals with similar beliefs, attitudes and values are more likely to form groups.
2. **Opportunity for interaction:** If the employees of an organization, are given an opportunity to interact with one another, they find that they have many things similar, which also creates a group.
3. **Interest and goals:** When individuals share common interest and goals, it requires cooperation and coordination for its achievement, which also results in the formation of groups.
4. **Influence and power:** Last but not the least, a group has more influence and power, as compared to an individual, which also promotes its formation.



What is Group Behavior?

Group behavior in organizations tends to follow the organizational norms and rules wherein the employees are expected to be disciplined, follow orders, and work to the requirements of the organization rather than their own whims and fancies. Indeed, the extreme form of groups conforming to the common codes of behavior is the armed forces wherein all members at whatever level they are in are expected to follow the orders of their superiors.

On the other hand, organizations such as Google and Facebook are less hierarchical and less structured with employees being allowed to work on their pet projects for a certain period every week. The difference here is that in the armed forces and many organizations, the boss is always right whereas in the startups and the new economy or the knowledge sector, the rules tend to be less rigid. Most organizations fall between these two extremes wherein the employees are encouraged, persuaded, and even ordered to conform to the norms of the group with some latitude and freedom being allowed for them to exercise their independence.

Group Development

Definition: The Group Development means, forming the association of people to work as a group and direct their actions towards the accomplishment of a common goal. The jobs of each group member are interdependent and hence the performance of one will affect the entire group's performance. It is often called as a team building or team development.

Stages of Group Development

The most famous and a well-known model of group development was proposed by **Bruce Tuckman**, that included four stages Viz, forming, storming, norming, performing and later the fifth stage adjourning was added to this model.

1. **Forming:** At this stage, the formation of a new group begins, wherein the members come together and get to know each other through the interactions. Here the individuals are excited and anxious to know about the scope of the task and the ways to approach it. Generally, the individuals come with a desire to get accepted by others and avoid controversy or conflicts.
2. **Storming:** Once the forming stage is over, the individuals will start interacting with each other in the context of the task to be achieved. The conflict and competition among the group members will be highest at this stage.

The most dominant group members come in the front while the confrontational members remain silent and continue to be in the security or calm stage (forming).

The issues related to the leadership, responsibility, strategies, rules, authority, evaluation, reward system, etc. arises at the storming stage.

3. **Norming:** Once the role of every member is cleared along with the authority and responsibility of each, the team members start settling in a group. Here, everybody works cohesively towards the target and appreciate each other's experience and skills.
4. **Performing:** At this stage, synergy gets created between the team members, where everyone works towards the accomplishment of a goal. This stage is characterized by flexibility and interdependence. The team members know each other so well that they can handle any complex problem that comes before the team.
Also, the roles and responsibilities of member changes according to the situation frequently, because at this stage everyone is equally a task-oriented and people-oriented and thus can perform efficiently.
5. **Adjourning:** This is the last stage of group development, where the group is terminated, and the group members are separated from each other. Every group is created for a purpose, and once the purpose is fulfilled the group is adjourned.

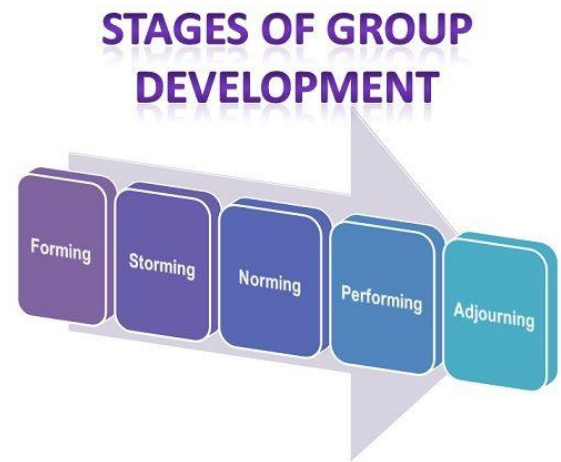
Some authors call this stage as “**mourning or deforming,**” because, the sense of loss is felt by the group members, at the time of separation from each other.

Properties of Group

Working groups are not unorganized mobs. The workgroup has properties that shape the behavior of members and make it possible to explain and predict a large portion of the individual behavior within the groups as well as the performance of the group itself. Some of these properties are roles, norms, status, group size and degree of group cohesiveness.

Role: The role is a set of expected behavior patterns attributed to someone occupying a given position in a social unit.

- **Role identity:** - Attitudes and actual behaviors consistent with a role, and they create the role identity. People have the ability to shift roles rapidly where they recognize that a situation and its demands clearly require major changes. For instance, when reunion stewards were promoted to supervisory positions it was found that their attitudes changed from reunion to management within a few months of



their promotion. When this promotion had to be rescinded later because of economic difficulties in the firm, it was found that the demoted supervisors had once again adopted their pro-union attitude.

- **Roles perception:** - Activities of managers and workers alike are guided by their role perceptions, that is, how they are supposed to act in their own roles and how others should act in their roles.
- **Roles Expectation:** - Roles expectations are defined as the way others believe you should act in a given situation. It can be helpful to look at the topic of role expectations from the perspective of the psychological contract—an unwritten agreement that exists between employees and their employer. If management is derelict in keeping up its part of the bargain, we can expect negative repercussions on employee performance and satisfaction.
- **Role conflict:** - When others have different perception or expectations of a person's role, that person tends to experience role conflict. Such conflict makes it difficult to meet one set of expectations without rejecting another. A company president faced role conflict, for example, when she learned that both the controller and the personnel director wanted her to allocate the new organizational planning function to their departments.
- **Role ambiguity:** - When the role is inadequately defined or is substantially unknown, role ambiguity exists, because people are not sure how they should act in situations of this type. When role conflict and role ambiguity exist, job satisfaction and organizational commitment will likely decline. On the other hand, employees tend to be more satisfied with their jobs when their roles are clearly defined by job descriptions and statements of performance expectations.

Norms: Norms are an acceptable standard of behavior within a group that are shared by the group members. It tells the member what they ought and ought not to do under certain circumstances. From individual subpoint, they tell what is expected of you in the certain situation. When agreed to and accepted by the group, norms act as a means of influencing the behavior of group members with a minimum of external control. Norms differ among groups, communities and societies but they all have them.

- **Performance norms:** Here workgroups typically provide their members with explicit cues on how hard they should work how to get the job done.
- **Appearance norms:** A second category encompasses appearance norms. This includes things like appropriate dress, loyalty to the workgroup or organization, when to look busy, and when it is acceptable.
- **Arrangement norms:** These norms come from informal work groups and primarily regulate social interactions within the group.
- **Resources norms:** A final category relates to allocation of resources norms. These norms can originate in the group or in the organizational and cover things like pay, assignment of difficult jobs, and allocation of new tools and equipment.

Status: The status that is, a socially defined position or rank is given to group or group's member by others permeates every society. Even the smallest group will develop roles, rights, and rituals to differentiate its members. Status is an important factor in understanding human behavior because it is a significant motivator and has major behavioral consequences when individuals perceive a disparity between what they believe their status to be what others perceive it to be.

Size: The size of a group affects the group's overall behavior. The impact of size on a group's performance depends on the type of task in which the group is engaged. In an organization, the group can be formed either large or smaller.

- **Smaller group:** - In smaller groups- those are faster at completing tasks that are large ones and that individuals perform better in smaller groups than in large ones. Those are better at doing something productive with that input.
- **Large group:** - Large groups- those with a dozen or more members- are good for gaining diverse input. So if the goal of the group is fact-finding, large groups should be more effective. However, for groups engaged in problem-solving, large groups consistently get better marks than their smaller counterparts. One of the most important findings related to the size of a group has been labeled social loafing. Social loafing is the tendency for 'individuals to expend less effort when working collectively when working individually.

Cohesiveness: - Group differs in their cohesiveness- that is, the degree to which members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the groups. For instances, some work groups are cohesive because the members have spent a great deal of time together, or the group's small size facilitates high interaction, or the group has experienced external threats that have brought members closer together. Cohesiveness is important because it has been found to be related to group productivity.

A group leader can:

- ✓ shrink the size of the group to encourage its members get to know each other and can interact with each other.
- ✓ increase the time the group spends together, and even increase the status of the group by making it seem difficult to gain entry to it.
- ✓ help the group come to agreement around its goals.
- ✓ reward the entire group when those goals are achieved, rather than the individuals who made the biggest contributions to it.
- ✓ stimulate competition with other groups.
- ✓ isolate the group physically.

All of these actions can build the all-important cohesiveness that impacts productivity.

Group decision making

Group decision making refers to the process where the group as a whole makes the decision. In group decision making, group members consider all the possible solution of a problem and select the most feasible option.

One of the more obvious applications of communication concepts is in the area of group decision making. We communicate information, and information is used in making of decisions.

Moreover, group decisions require transmitting of message between members, and the effectiveness of this communication process will significantly impact the quality of group decisions.

Various techniques have been developed in the area of decision-making which have made the decision-making process more rational and scientific. Efforts have been made by the social scientists to develop strategies to make group decision making more and more effective.

Techniques of group decision making

Some of the techniques of group decision making are:-

1. Delphi Technique

2. Nominal Group Technique
3. Brainstorming Technique
4. Dialectic Decision Methods
5. Decision-Tree
6. Meetings
7. Consensus Mapping

1) The Delphi Technique:

Members with expertise and relevant information concerning an issue are selected to make the decision regarding that issue. Questionnaires are sent to the group members who record their answers in writing.

The group members do not meet face-to-face. Replies of all the members to the questionnaires are summarised and feedback to them are sent for review. They are asked to make the decisions again in view of the additional information. This process is repeated until a satisfactory decision is made.

This technique is mostly used for the decisions relating to demand forecast, project market trends, identify future problems, predict the future state of finance, production etc.

Success of this technique depends on:

- Seriousness of the group members
- Expertise of the group members
- c. Availability of adequate time
- d. Written communication skills of the members
- e. Level of involvement and motivation of the members
- Level of effectiveness of summarization of responses
- Use of information technology like e-mail, voice-mail and chatting.

Advantages:

The advantages of Delphi technique include:

- Ego problems and related issues of face-to-face interaction can be avoided
- b. Efficient use of expert time
- c. Avoidance of interpersonal problems
- d. Enough time is given for reflection and analysis by respondents, and Utmost care can be taken.

2) Nominal Group Technique:

Group members have minimal interaction prior to making a decision.

The steps involved in nominal group decision making are:

- Group members are brought together and presented with a problem.
- Members develop the solutions independently and write them on cards.
- They share their ideas with each other in a structured format (all members get an opportunity in a round table format).
- Members ask questions just to get clarifications during a brief session.
- Group members individually select the best alternative and inform through a secret ballot.
- The group decision is announced.

Advantages:**Advantages of this technique are:**

- a. All members get equal opportunity for participation.
- b. No member can dominate the discussion.
- c. Decision can be taken in the right time due to control of time.
- d. Expertise of each member is used independently.
- e. Ego problems and interpersonal problems are solved.

Disadvantages:**Disadvantages of this technique include:**

- a. The procedure is too rigid.
- b. Members may be frustrated.
- c. Members cannot have interpersonal relations.
- d. Group cohesiveness cannot be ensured and
- e. Ideas cannot be cross-fertilised.

3) Brainstorming Technique:

This technique is used to encourage creative thinking in groups of around eight members.

Brainstorming is built on the following lines:

- a. Generate as many ideas as possible.
- b. Be creative, free-wheeling and imaginative.
- c. Build upon (piggy back), extend or combine earlier ideas and
- d. Withhold criticism of others' ideas.

The success of this technique depends upon the members' ability to listen to others, use this interaction as a stimulus to spark new ideas and feel free to express them. Further, even the idiotic and impracticable ideas should also be encouraged. More number of ideas should be encouraged so that eventually higher quality ideas would be generated.

Advantages:**Advantages of this technique include:**

- a. Group members would be enthusiastic, involved immensely and emotional.
- b. Broader participation of the members.
- c. High task orientation and also high relation orientation will be maintained.
- d. Members have a sense of belongingness and the final product is the team effort.

Disadvantages:**Disadvantages of this technique are:**

- a. Some members may fear that their ideas may be looked down by others.
- b. Criticism of ideas kills creativity.
- c. Some people may dominate the process of decision making.

4) Dialectic Decision Methods:

This method ensures generation of alternatives seriously, detailed discussion on each of the alternatives and selecting the alternative or developing a new alternative. The incomplete discussions, analysis and making the decisions quickly, discourage some group members from participating in the group decision making. This technique solves this problem.

5) **Decision-Tree:**

Alternative solutions are generated in the decision making process. Each of these alternative decisions is evaluated before ranking the solutions. The decision tree is a model in the form of a graphic tool that charts the steps to consider in evaluating each alternative solution in the decision making.

The main points of the decision tree are:

- a. Using the information acquired in preparing to make the decision.
- b. Recognising the sequential nature of the decision making process.
- c. Decision tree is a graphic outline of the future choices that the decisions made in the present will lead to.
- d. Decision tree helps managers to evaluate and arrange the information in order and
- e. Decision tree enables managers to introduce a degree of quantifiability.

The company has to make a decision whether to make or buy the wipers.

It is observed that the car manufacturing company has to take a decision whether to make the wipers or to buy them from other companies. The company has three chance events for each of these two alternatives. Managers make the decision based on the information and quantified data provided in the decision tree.

Teams

It may seem obvious to say so, but groups are made of humans, and humans express behaviors that are both beneficial and detrimental to the function of their teams. People who feel they are part of a team are often mutually supportive and report greater job satisfaction. However, not all teams are successful.

Types of Teams

Companies create different types of teams for different purposes.

A **cross-functional team** is just what it sounds like—a team that pulls its members from across the different functional areas of an organization. For example, cross-functional teams may be composed of representatives from production, sales, marketing, finance, and legal. The strength of this type of team lies in its members having different functional backgrounds, education, and experience. The diversity of experience aids innovative problem solving and decision making.



Task Force team

This is one of the most interesting types of work teams. They form only when emergency situations emerge which the organization needs to solve. Its members are usually the best of the company in the area.

During the resolution of the emergency, they will dedicate themselves exclusively to this task. Their goal is to do this in the best way and in the shortest possible time. A task force is a group or committee, usually of experts or specialists, formed for analyzing, investigating, or solving a specific problem. Quite often, a task force is formed in reaction to a problem or specific event, and once the job is done, the task force is disbanded. The goal of a task force is to offer solutions, support, and, if possible, create preventive measures for issues. Types of concerns that may generate task forces in the workplace include bullying, health and wellness, employee training, increasing customer sales, or improving employee job satisfaction. A project team is similar to a task force, but a project team is often ongoing and covers a wider range of tasks.

Self-managed teams

Groups of employees who work in an extremely integrated and collaborative way because they don't have a formal leader. Members define the division of labor, responsibilities and the distribution of tasks, as well as make decisions and even control and supervise themselves. A self-managed team is a group of employees that's responsible and accountable for all or most aspects of producing a product or delivering a service. It could be thought of as a mini-company within a larger organization. Traditional organizations assign tasks to employees depending on their skills or the functional department (sales, finance, production). A self-managed team carries out the supporting tasks as well, such as planning and scheduling the technical workflow tasks, and human resource tasks such as managing vacations and absences. Team members may take turns leading and assuming technical responsibilities.

Functional work team

In this work team, all the members belong to the same functional area and respond to a single manager, responsible for the management of the whole group. It's very common in companies with rigid hierarchies and you'll recognize them for the examples we are going to give: such as Accounting and HR departments or the Maintenance team and other specialized groups like these.

Inter-working team

In this case, the work team is made up of members from different areas of activity, and its members usually have the same hierarchical level. This type of work team is usually formed to develop work with a multidisciplinary view, in which each area represented by team members complements the knowledge of others, bringing more creative and comprehensive results. Examples of these types of work teams would be committees and councils, where members from different areas work together to solve specific problems, such as a Sustainability Committee, for example; or strategic, as is the case with the Boards of Directors of companies.

Troubleshooting team

Organizations employ these teams usually to improve processes to find out how to solve the problems that are harming them. When determining the options for solving the causes of problems, they are sent to the departments responsible, as this kind of work team does not implement the solutions it suggests.

Project team

These are work groups an organization creates to implement a specific project until completion. Afterward, the group dissolves as it achieved its objectives. Typically, members come from different areas of the company and

perform other tasks related to their home department. But, as far as the project is concerned, they answer to the project leader.

Team Dynamics

1. **Psychological safety:** This was the single most important dynamic in an effective team. Psychological safety is about risk-taking and being comfortable with vulnerability. People who don't feel psychologically safe worry that taking risks will mean they're seen as ignorant, incompetent, negative or disruptive. Psychological safety means feeling confident about admitting mistakes, asking questions, or offering new ideas.
2. **Dependability:** On dependable teams, members reliably complete quality work on time. They don't avoid their responsibilities and they take them seriously, helping to keep the team on track. As simple as it sounds, this turned out to be vital for effectiveness in teams.
3. **Structure and Clarity:** This means that a team has clear roles, goals and plans. Individuals understand what's expected of them, what they and their team is aiming for and how they are all going to get there. Google often uses Objectives and Key Results (OKRs) to help set and communicate specific, challenging and attainable short- and long-term goals, at an individual and at a group level.
4. **Meaning:** For individuals on a team, finding a sense of purpose in their work or its output is vitally important for team effectiveness. That meaning is personal, so it varies from person to person, but might include financial security, their ability to support their family, their commitment to the success of the team, or their individual self-expression.
5. **Impact:** Do you fundamentally believe that the work you do makes a difference? This subjective judgment marks out the most effective teams and can be based on seeing how one's work contributes to an organization's goals and what it has helped to change.
