
Group And Work Group Behavior: A Manager's View

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ABSTRACT

The study of group behavior has a long tradition among social scientists in various disciplines. It does not confine itself to any one of the recognized social science alone. The management field has been among those very interested in studying group behavior, particularly in some countries where people even in the work setting have displayed strong groups tendencies of smooth interpersonal relationship. Managers have become aware of the need to understand how to the relationships between group members and between management and the group influence work behavior.

KEYWORDS: Group, Group Work, Group Behavior, Kinds of Groups, Limitation of a group

INTRODUCTION

After the individual, the group is the second unit of analysis in the study of human behavior. A group is composed of individuals working together towards common goals by interacting with one another and utilizing some resources. They need a certain period of time for common interests to be discussed, explained and internalized so that stability and efficiency would ensue. In this paper it discusses the elements and types of group, the limitations and importance of groups in work organization, the group structure, group goals, and group norms, the characteristics of high-performing teams and the group methods and techniques.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

1. What are the elements and types of group?
2. What are the limitations and importance of groups in work organization?

3. What are the group structure, group goals, and group norms?
4. What are the classifications of group roles?
5. What are the characteristics of high-performing teams?
6. What are the group methods and techniques?

METHODS AND PROCEDURES

The researcher made use of the library research as the main tool in gathering the needed data. The process of summarizing, paraphrasing and note taking were totally used in this term paper. Interviews with authorities were also conducted to compare the actual results (happenings) and the literatures that were gathered. Critical analysis and comparative evaluative were also used as the design of the term paper. A comprehensive review technique was used to make in-depth information about the topic and able to get a valid answer to the sub-problems.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

1. ELEMENTS AND TYPES OF A GROUP

Many definitions of group have common elements which suggest that a group is a collection of people interacting with each other for fairly some time utilizing certain resources and methodologies to achieve common goals or interests. Common interests and goals bind the members of a group that moves towards its achievement through frequent interface among them. The dynamics that ensure make the group interaction interesting and challenging. Various types of resources such as staff, funds, facilities, equipment, supplies, time, and information are put to use with varied methods and techniques for goal accomplishment. These resources may not be too well identified and defined in informal groups. Group exist in various setting like family, bible study group, aerobic enthusiast group, marketing department, production department, Saturday joggers.

Groups can be classified into formal and informal. Formal groups arise from assigned tasks and responsibilities, derived from the position in an organizational structure. The various departments of an organization like operations, finances, human resources, marketing, research and development are formal groups.

Informal groups arise from formal group. The former is an outgrowth whose aims and objectives cannot be fully achieved through the latter. Examples of informal groups in an organization are the lunch groups whose members eat lunch together every day, the

Friday drinkers, the chorale group. A workers union usually starts with just a handful of disgruntled individual who meet for snacks and meals in the canteen. An organized union becomes a formal group. The members of informal are first and foremost members of formal groups. The latter, in many organizations, is the source of membership of informal group.

Formal groups also arise from informal ones. A farmers group, for instance, usually starts from a handful of individuals who meet at the store to discuss planting and farming activities and problems. These regular meetings at the store make an informal group. It develops into a formal one when the farmers themselves begin to set goals in order to address their concern and problems.

Informal organization is a reality that management can ignore at the latter's own peril. A shortsighted management emphasizes the entire organization even to the point of trying to break up what it regards as destructive cliques. Yet loyalty as engendered in the face-to-face interaction with one's fellow workers is much stronger than loyalty to the larger entity. Management can develop overall loyalty only by encouraging teamwork and informal relations. The group may exercise far stronger control over its members than does management itself.

2. THE LIMITATION AND IMPORTANCE OF GROUPS IN WORK ORGANIZATION

Buchlow (2016) explains why groups are worth considering as important building blocks of the organization:



Membership activities needs are satisfied by groups which provide needed support especially during stressful and crisis periods. Groups serve as problem solving tools and develop innovation and creativity. Better decisions are derived by groups than by individuals. For application and implementation, groups serve as useful tools. Groups can control and discipline individuals better than impersonal, formal, and quasi-legal system. Big size organizations are tempered by groups that preclude long communication lines, steep hierarchy levels, lost individual in a crowd.

Mayo (2005) observed that the need for relationships with other people is one of the strongest of human drives. Social needs are among the most compelling, potent and powerful on the job motivation. The people who compose an organization behave as members of groups. Their membership helps shape their attitudes and work behavior towards the organization and the job.

According to Zelst (2017) study showed that being part of a desirable work group can help promote job satisfaction. The natural attraction group members have for each other is one of the reasons for groups being very influential in affecting group and individual behavior. Groups have been formed to improve organizational preference or to restrict it in very important ways.

It is to be noted, however, that most innovation and creativity are done not by groups but by individual alone. This implies that innovation is really derived from individuals who pursue changes in non-traditional ways. Much as the group exerts pressure on the individual and the organization to perform better, its adverse effects cannot be discounted. Mitchell

(2017) points out that research does not support the contention that groups can do a better job than people working alone. He says that groups are riskier than individuals. They take a longer time to solve a problem. Groups may loaf and they may be less effective. Some managers complain that groups are slow and democratic. They destroy the power of the hierarchy. Small in groups like cliques or gangs are hard to penetrate.

Informal organization may act to fill in gaps in a manager's abilities. Informal organization helps in solving the work problems of members. It allows sharing job knowledge and taking decisions which affect a number of jobs. Informal groups evolve short-cuts and eliminate red tape. They facilitate smooth flow of information and quick decision-making. All these ensure better coordination among various individuals and departments. Informal groups act to fill up the communication gaps which might arise in the organization. Informal communication cuts across the hierarchical and departmental boundaries and transmits information with greater speed. Management can use informal channels to share information with the workers and get their reaction to management's proposals. Informal communication can be of great use to organization, if it is handled by the management properly. Informal groups do not allow the managers to cross their limits. They restrict them from getting unlimited power and from using their power injudiciously. A manager can build better relations with his subordinates through informal contacts. He can consult the informal leaders and seek their cooperation in getting the things done from the workers.

3. GROUP STRUCTURE, GROUP GOALS, AND GOALS NORMS

Group Structure

Zander (2015) defines group structure as the interrelationships between the individuals of a group and as guidelines to group behavior that make group functioning orderly and predictable. The boundary of a group consists of social mores, norms, ethic, customs and obligation to which an individual member must conform as the price of inclusion. Financial means for social clubs, initiation ceremonies for fraternities, professions of faith for religious organizations, and production level for a work group are examples of the boundaries through which one must pass to become a member of functioning group systems.

Group Goals

Goals are the main justification for the group's existence. Initially, they are somewhat tenuous and vague but as the members reaffirm their sincerity and purposefulness in its formation; they become firm and are accepted by enough members to motivate the group to work towards them. Goals can be either formally stated orally or in writing or informally implied in the actions of group members.

Agreement about group goals, either formal or informal, increases group cohesiveness. An example of a group goal is that of the MIS Department which aims to give top management accurate information in a speedy manner. An informal goal is that of a production department to 'outsmart' the marketing department. When the goals of individual members are incongruent with group goals, individuals develop agenda which are hidden from the group. These are

exposed when a diagnosis of group and organization ills is done.

Group Norms

It is define as the unspoken and often unwritten set of informal rules that govern individual behaviors in a group. Group norms vary based on the group and issues important to the group. Without group norms, individuals would have no understanding of how to act in social situations.

Group norms are the informal guidelines of behavior and a code of conduct that provides some order and conformity to group activities and operations. These rules are expected to be followed by all the group members. These norms and rules usually develop gradually and informally as group members learn as to what behaviors are necessary for the group to function effectively. These norms may include a code of dress for meetings or being on time for the meetings and behaving in a predictable manner both within and outside the group meetings.

This predictability of behavior also causes higher degree of cohesiveness within the group. Predictability reduces chaos, ambiguity and conflict. Discomfort would be high in a committee or a task group, if the group members are not sure as to how each member would behave. Norms also identify the values and ethics of the group members. They are established on the basis of what is right and decent and expected of professionals.

4. CLASSIFICATION OF GROUP ROLES

Take a moment to think about the individuals in a particular group you were in and the role each of them played. You may recall that some people were extremely helpful, organized and made getting the job

done easy. Others may have been more difficult to work with, or seemed to disrupt the group process. In each case, the participants were performing roles that manifest themselves in most groups. Early studies on group communication provide an overwhelming number of different types of group roles. To simplify, you provide an overview of some of the more common roles. As you study group roles, remember that we usually play more than one role at a time, and that we do not always play the same roles from group to group.

A role means a set of expected behavior pattern attached to a position or post in a social unit. In an organization, an employee's role is briefly indicated by a position title and elaborately specified by a job description. As regards group roles, these are designated and assigned in formal groups.

These roles are prescribed by the organization with a view to make division among workers and assign them responsibility. But, group roles are usually not explicitly prescribed in informal groups. That is why in informal groups, one group member may perform several roles or several members may also perform the same role.

In practice, the group members may be expected to perform a variety of different roles. A complete listing of these group roles would be very lengthy. However, the three most relevant group roles are discussed as follows:

Work Roles: These roles relate to task-oriented activities involved in accomplishing the group tasks or group goals. Developing a strategy for accomplishing the task, assigning jobs, evaluating work progress and

clarifying the group goals are the examples of work roles related to task-oriented activities.

Maintenance Role: These roles relate to social-emotional activities of group members that help maintain their involvement and commitment to group. Examples of these roles may be encouraging other fellow members to participate, praising and rewarding other members for their excellent contribution and similar other activities designed to maintain a friendly group atmosphere.

Blocking Roles: These are the activities that disrupt or destroy the group. These activities may include such things as dominating the discussion, attacking other group members, disagreeing unreasonably with other group members and distracting group by unnecessary humor.

As work groups develop, the members come to play different parts in the social structure. The emergencies of different roles are behaviors of the group members. Bence and Sheats (2002) have classified roles into three such as: task-oriented roles, maintenance roles and individual roles.

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF HIGH-PERFORMING TEAMS

Most members of high-performing teams report that it's fun and satisfying to work on collaborative teams because they are asked to contribute at their highest potential and they learn a lot along the way. Characteristics of high-performing teams include the following:

(1) People have solid and deep trust in each other and in the team's purpose — they feel free to express feelings and ideas.



(2) Everybody is working toward the same goals.

(3) Team members are clear on how to work together and how to accomplish tasks.

(4) Everyone understands both team and individual performance goals and knows what is expected.

(5) Team members actively diffuse tension and friction in a relaxed and informal atmosphere.

(6) The team engages in extensive discussion, and everyone gets a chance to contribute — even the introverts.

(7) Disagreement is viewed as a good thing and conflicts are managed. Criticism is constructive and is oriented toward problem solving and removing obstacles.

(8) The team makes decisions when there is natural agreement — in the cases where agreement is elusive, a decision is made by the team lead or executive sponsor, after which little second-guessing occurs.

(9) Each team member carries his or her own weight and respects the team processes and other members.

(10) The leadership of the team shifts from time to time, as appropriate, to drive results. No individual members are more important than the team.

A team charter paves the way for collaborative success by providing clarity that builds trust and accountability. With a team charter in place, you'll be able to unlock the potential value of your people by empowering them to contribute. In the long

run, teams with a clear purpose and good chemistry drive business results.

Job satisfaction goes up, employees stay engaged in their work and everybody wins. In essence, a team is high performing when there is a clear purpose and values, mutual accountability for results, interdependence and a deep care and commitment for the task and each other.

6. GROUP METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

Think-Pair-Share: The instructor poses a question. Students are given time (30 seconds or one minute) to think of a response. Each student then pairs with another and both discuss their responses to the question. The instructor invites pairs to share their responses with the class as a whole.

Structured Controversy: Divide the class into groups of four. The instructor identifies a controversial topic in the field covered in the course and gathers material that gives information and background to support different views of the controversy. Students work with one partner, forming two pairs within the group of four. Each pair takes a different side of the issue. Pairs work outside of class or in class to prepare to advocate and defend their position. The groups of four meet, and each pair takes a turn stating and arguing its position while the other pair listens and takes notes without interrupting. Each pair must have a chance both to listen and take notes and to argue their position. Then all four talk together as a group to learn all sides of the issue. Next, each pair must reverse its position and argue the opposite position from the one it argued before. Lastly the group of four as a whole discusses and synthesizes all the positions to



come up with a group report. There may be a class presentation in which each group presents its findings.

Paired Annotations: Instructor or students identify a number of significant articles on a topic. Each student individually outside of class writes a reflective commentary on one article. In class, students are randomly paired with another student who has written a commentary on the same article. The two partners read each other's commentaries, comparing key points to their own commentary. Then the two students team-write a commentary based on a synthesis of both their papers.

Roundtable: Students in small groups sit in a circle and respond in turn to a question or problem by stating their ideas aloud as they write them on paper. The conversation can go around the circle, each student in turn, more than once if desired. After the roundtable, students discuss and summarize the ideas generated and report back to the class.

Three-Step Interview: This can be used an icebreaker or as a tool to generate ideas and discussion. Ask each student to find one partner they don't know well. Make sure everyone has a partner. You can use triads if there is an uneven number of a student in the class. Students interview their partner for a limited amount of time using interview questions given by the instructor. Often questions are opinion or experience generated: How do you use writing in your daily life? Should premed students study holistic medicine? After a set time, students switch roles so that both get a chance to be interviewed. Then, join each pair with another pair to form a group of four. Each partner in a pair introduces the partner to the other pair and summarizes the partner's

responses. Other variations on this activity are possible.

Thinking-Aloud Paired Problem Solving: Students in pairs take turns thinking through the solution to a problem posed by the teacher. The student who is not the problem solver takes notes, and then the two students switch roles so that each student gets a chance to be both solver and note taker. Then they can go into larger teams or back to the class as a whole and report back about the solutions and the process.

Think-Pair-Square: Same as think-pair-share except that instead of reporting back to the entire class students report back to a team or class group of four to six.

Peer Editing: Ask students to hand in a first draft of a writing assignment. Photocopy each paper and identify it with a number instead of the student's name. Give each student in the class an anonymous paper to edit. It is helpful to give the students verbal and written guidelines for editing criteria. After the students edit a paper, each student receives the anonymous feedback from his or her unknown peer editor. It is often useful to have a class discussion about how this process worked for everyone.

Reciprocal Peer Questioning: The instructor assigns outside class reading on a topic. The instructor asks students to generate a list of two or three thought-provoking questions of their own on the reading. (Note that asking productive questions can be a new skill for students to learn; you may want to give some attention to this.) Students bring the questions they have generated to class. Students do not need to be able to answer the questions they generate. Students then break into teams of three to four. Each student poses her questions to the team and the team discusses

the reading using the student-generated questions as a guide. The questions of each student are discussed within the team. The team may then report back to the class on some key questions and the answers they came up with.

SUMMARY

After the individual, the group is the second unit of analysis in the study of human behavior. A group is composed of individuals working together towards common goals by interacting with one another and utilizing some resources. They need a certain period of time for common interest to be discussed, explained and internalized so that stability and efficiency would ensue. The two types of groups that have been identified are formal and informal groups.

However, group and group work have their disadvantages and limitations. Groups work differently than people alone. A good match of people, situation and job can maximize the former's effectiveness. Group cohesiveness is characterized by its members wanting to remain in the group rather than leaving it. They share positive feelings about their group; they share goals and values that are internalized.

High performing teams are influenced by different components. The most common group methods and technique are also a part of the group to perform their roles.

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