

Chapter 7: Team Building and Team Leading

Overview

This chapter discusses group and team work in a business setting. This is a very common approach in business today, so it is important that students understand the process as well as its advantages and disadvantages.

Lecture Notes

A. Groups

A group is defined as any collection of two or more people with a common goal or purpose, who work together, and who share an awareness of common goals and work.

1. **General Types of Groups** can be formal or informal, large or small, permanent or temporary, and focus on any aspect of life. Membership distinguishes groups into types:
 - a. Community groups include those found in churches, civic organizations, and volunteer groups. They serve a variety of purposes in the community and hold an identity in their community.
 - b. Family groups share the job of caring for family needs.
 - c. Friends can be referred to as a circle; it is a very important group for individuals.
 - d. Work groups can include several types of groups—for organizational goals or personal groups.
2. **Formal Groups** are created by management and charged with carrying out specific tasks; they represent smaller subsystems in an organization.
 - a. Components of the formal group include at least one leader to supervise the group to accomplish goals through specific arrangements. Members are chosen to work with the leader on a specific mission. Work arrangements are then made.
 - b. Types of formal groups include command groups (manager and subordinates), teams (groups that interact and coordinate work to accomplish common objectives), and task forces (temporary formal group to solve a particular problem in a designated period of time).
3. **Informal Groups** are created by employees instead of the organization; they are formed through association on a regular basis.
 - a. Components of the informal group include at least one leader who works with the members to accomplish goals established by the group.
 - b. Types include interest (common concerns or needs) and friendship groups (personal factors in common).
 - c. Reasons for formation of informal groups include affiliation, mutual aid, protection, communication, proximity, attraction, and sharing norms and values.
4. **Goals of Groups** vary.

- a. Goals define the group; characteristics are determined by defining it as a certain type of group.
- b. Goals are shared by members of the group.
- c. Different goals require different activities within the group.
- d. Some groups have special goals, and members may play specific roles.

B. Dynamics of a Group Membership and Participation

Most believe that a group can accomplish more than the same number of people working individually (synergy).

1. **Group Characteristics** are determined by the official organization for formal groups; informal groups are created freely for the needs of the members.
 - a. Size affects ease of communication, the potential for influence, and member satisfaction. While there is no magic number for an effective group, formal groups range in size from 5–15. Larger groups (12–15) start to lose intimacy. Issues to consider include group agreement and opinions, formation of subgroups when group is getting large, informal group size (less critical), and group efficiency.
 - b. Norms are standards of behavior for specific situations; they define acceptable behaviors in the group. The group expects everyone to comply, even newcomers.
 - c. A role is the task each member is expected to perform; it is defined by the group. Problems occur when roles are ambiguous or conflict with expectations. Critical roles in a group include task specialist and socioemotional support.
 - d. Status refers to the relative importance of individuals in the group; it is a position placement by members.
2. **Group Dynamics** refers to the interactions within a group that characterize it. For the dynamics to lead to effective action, the group must minimize conflict (proximity, homogeneity, distinctness, and cohesion).
 - a. Stages of development include forming (initial entry of members), storming (assertive in clarifying roles), norming (conflict is resolved), performing (focus on problem-solving), adjourning (disbanded), and setbacks (regress).
 - b. Proximity refers to the physical closeness of people in a setting; they become aware and sensitive to member needs to minimize conflict.
 - c. Homogeneity refers to the sameness of individuals (common purpose). Our culture is very diverse.
 - d. Distinctiveness (something unique) gives a group its unity with a special location, support staff, or uniform.
 - e. Cohesiveness refers to degree that members will work together, the importance of voluntary action, and the desire to remain part of the group. Many factors play a role in its effectiveness in a group. (*Review in text.*)
3. **Participation—Being a Good Member** requires several types of interaction.

- a. Frequent contact on an individual basis or with several people from the group occurs throughout the workday.
 - b. Formal meetings may require the entire group; a good leader keeps everyone informed.
 - c. Meeting dynamics allows good members to be involved in a number of ways: accepting and supporting others, asking questions for clear understanding, responding to requests, and making suggestions/contributions.
4. **Leadership—facilitating Membership** requires cohesion in appointing members.
- a. Increase group cohesion with strategies like competition, interpersonal interaction, increased interaction, as well as common goals and fates.
 - b. Responsibilities of leaders differ in formal and informal groups. Informal group leaders uphold norms and represent group's point of view; formal leaders lead toward achievement of goals and represent the group within the organization.

C. Team Building

Teamwork has become a way of maximizing effort, but the team has to be nurtured and built for effectiveness.

1. **The Work Team—a Building Block for Efficiency** implies that winning requires teamwork—in sports and business. A work team is a special group within a workplace; it includes individuals that depend on one another as they work on a common task.
2. **Types of Team Tasks** include
 - a. Provide advice and increasing involvement to enhance the work environment.
 - b. Provide production and service according to the business model.
 - c. Complete one-of-a-kind projects in highly innovative work settings.
 - d. Implement actions from a task force.
3. **Team Building Activities** may be implemented within the business or with the assistance of a specialized consultant.
 - a. Activities that build cohesion by examining interpersonal processes include methods to break down areas of conflict and build confidence.
 - b. Activities that help set and clarify goals focus on communication.
 - c. Activities that clarify roles within the team include examining expectations, behaviors, and how responsibility is shared.
 - d. Activities that take a task-oriented approach to solving problems or making decisions include techniques discussed in the next chapter.
4. **Building and Maintaining Effectiveness** requires an active effort on the part of the leader and the members. There are five characteristics that should be developed and nurtured.
 - a. Group participation in problem-solving and decision-making comes from sharing responsibilities and sense of control.

- b. Mutual trust and respect for other team members is necessary for cohesiveness and cooperative communication.
- c. Communication and mutual understanding comes from trust. It is necessary for effective team collaboration.
- d. Minimization of destructive conflict requires trust and open communication. Group cohesion is necessary for team effectiveness.
- e. Individual responsibility for actions creates more positive results for the team and the individual.

D. Team Leading

While work teams and task forces can really lead to organizational success, leading is an important factor.

1. **Improving Effectiveness—Formal Groups and Teams** comes from identification and awareness of group strengths and deficiencies.
 - a. Learn about members' concerns related to the group and its efforts.
 - b. Specify purposes and expectations of team before the team is organized.
 - c. Establish goals and adhere to them; put them in writing to be absolute requirements.
 - d. Identify the group's responsibility and authority so members know how they are expected to perform.
 - e. Set boundaries (parameters, timetables, and restrictions) for group activity.
 - f. Team leaders lead, not mandate. The book "Robert's Rules of Order" may be helpful; it is a guide to parliamentary procedure.
 - g. Train teams for cooperative working so they can work together effectively.
 - h. Prepare plans, rules, and agendas to guide the team as it works; it makes a difference in its efficiency.
 - i. Equal treatment of all members should mean that rules and game plans are the same for everyone.
 - j. Required participation by team members means **no freeloaders**; everyone is responsible for the final results.
 - k. Foster synergy—encourage and foster dissent and diversity for maximum results.
 - l. Accept dissent and teach team members that it is desired in order to get the best results.
2. **Strategies for Working with Informal Groups** assist in the challenge since informal groups cannot be controlled or eliminated by management.
 - a. Acknowledge the existence and importance of informal groups is the first step to understand the informal structure.
 - b. Create a positive environment for informal groups so they can flourish and realize their objectives.
 - c. Use organizational power and politics to the advantage of the group.

- d. Recognize the existence of informal groups and their benefit to the formal structure. Accept and respect roles of the informal groups.

Additional Resources for Students

Recommended readings (no texts should be more than two years old):

- Bateman, Thomas S. and Scott A. Snell. *Management: Building Competitive Advantages*. Irwin/McGraw Hill.
- David, Fred R. *Strategic Management: Concepts & Cases*. Prentice-Hall.
- Dessler, Gary. *Essentials of Management*. Prentice-Hall.
- Griffin, Ricky W. *Management*. Houghton Mifflin.
- Hersey, Paul, Kenneth H. Blanchard, and Dewey E. Johnson. *Management of Organizational Behavior*. Prentice-Hall.
- Robbins, Stephen P. *Organizational Behavior*. Prentice-Hall.
- Robbins, Stephen and Mary Coulter. *Management*. Prentice-Hall.
- Stoner, James, R. Edward Freeman, and Daniel R. Gilbert, Jr. *Management*. Prentice-Hall.

Current issues of periodicals or business publications are also an excellent resource. Some of the following periodicals have an accompanying Web site.

<i>Current Periodical</i>	<i>Web Address</i>
<i>BusinessWeek</i>	http://www.businessweek.com
<i>IAAP Complete Office Handbook</i>	http://www.iaap-hq.org/products/handbook.htm
<i>Modern Office Technology</i>	
<i>OfficePro</i>	http://www.iaap-hq.org/officepro/toc.htm
<i>The Office</i>	