Defining and Classifying Groups

group(s)
Two or more individuals, interacting and interdependent, who have come together to achieve particular objectives

formal group
A designated work group defined by the organization’s structure.

informal group
A group that is neither formally structured nor organizationally determined; appears in response to the need for social contact.
command group
A group composed of the individuals who report directly to a given manager

interest group
Those working together to attain a specific objective with which each is concerned.

task group
Those working together to complete a job task.

friendship group
Those brought together because they share one or more common characteristics.
Why People Join Groups

- Security
- Status
- Self-esteem
- Affiliation
- Power
- Goal Achievement
Stages of Group Development

forming stage
The first stage in group development, characterized by much uncertainty.

storming stage
The second stage in group development, characterized by intragroup conflict.

norming stage
The third stage in group development, characterized by close relationships and cohesiveness.
performing stage
The fourth stage in group development, when the group is fully functional.

adjourning stage
The final stage in group development for temporary groups, characterized by concern with wrapping up activities rather than task performance.
Group Behavior Model

- External conditions imposed on the group
- Group member resources
- Group structure
- Group processes
- Group task
- Performance and satisfaction
External Conditions Imposed on the Group

Imposed Conditions:
- Organization’s overall strategy
- Authority structures
- Formal regulations
- Resource constraints
- Selection process
- Performance and evaluation system
- Organization’s culture
- Physical work setting
Group Structure - Norms

**norms**

Acceptable standards of behavior within a group that are shared by the group’s members.

**Classes of Norms:**
- Performance norms
- Appearance norms
- Social arrangement norms
- Allocation of resources norms
Group Structure - Size

**Performance**

**Group Size**

---

**social loafing**

The tendency for individuals to expend less effort when working collectively than when working individually.

---

**Expected**

**Actual (due to loafing)**

---

**Other conclusions:**

- Odd number groups do better than even.
- Groups of 7 or 9 perform better overall than larger or smaller groups.
**group demography**

The degree to which members of a group share a common demographic attribute, such as age, sex, race, educational level, or length of service in the organization, and the impact of this attribute on turnover.

**cohorts**

Individuals who, as part of a group, hold a common attribute.
cohesiveness

Degree to which group members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the group.

Increasing group cohesiveness:
1. Make the group smaller.
2. Encourage agreement with group goals.
3. Increase time members spend together.
4. Increase group status and admission difficulty.
5. Stimulate competition with other groups.
6. Give rewards to the group, not individuals.
7. Physically isolate the group.
Group Tasks

- **Decision-making**
  - Large groups facilitate the pooling of information about complex tasks.
  - Smaller groups are better suited to coordinating and facilitating the implementation of complex tasks.
  - Simple, routine standardized tasks reduce the requirement that group processes be effective in order for the group to perform well.
Group Decision Making

- **Strengths**
  - More complete information
  - Increased diversity of views
  - Higher quality of decisions
  - Increased acceptance of solutions

- **Weaknesses**
  - More time consuming
  - Increased pressure to conform
  - Domination by one or a few members
  - Ambiguous responsibility
Group Decision-Making Techniques

**interacting groups**
Typical groups, in which members interact with each other face-to-face.

---

**brainstorming**
An idea-generation process that specifically encourages any and all alternatives, while withholding any criticism of those alternatives.

---

**nominal group technique**
A group decision-making method in which individual members meet face-to-face to pool their judgments in a systematic but independent fashion.

---

**electronic meeting**
A meeting in which members interact on computers, allowing for anonymity of comments and aggregation of votes.
Evaluating Group Effectiveness

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Effectiveness Criteria</th>
<th>Interacting</th>
<th>Brainstorming</th>
<th>Nominal</th>
<th>Electronic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of ideas</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of ideas</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social pressure</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Money costs</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Speed</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task orientation</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Potential for interpersonal conflict</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feelings of accomplishment</td>
<td>High to low</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Commitment to solution</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Not applicable</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Development of group cohesiveness</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>