Chapter 6: Groups and Teamwork

Organizational Behaviour

5th Canadian Edition

Langton / Robbins / Judge
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Chapter Outline

- Teams vs. Groups: What’s the Difference?
- Why Have Teams Become So Popular?
- Types of Teams
- From Individual to Team Member
- Stages of Group and Team Development
- Creating Effective Teams
- Beware! Teams Aren’t Always the Answer
Groups and Teamwork

1. What are teams and groups?
2. Does everyone use teams?
3. What kinds of teams are there?
4. How does one become a team player?
5. Do teams go through stages while they work?
6. How do we create effective teams?
7. Are teams always the answer?
Teams vs. Groups: What’s the Difference?

- **Groups**
  - Two or more people with a common relationship.

- **Teams**
  - A small number of people who work closely together toward a *common objective* and are *mutually accountable*.
Why Have Teams Become So Popular?

- A Conference Board of Canada report found that more than 80 of 109 respondents used teams.

- In the U.S.:
  - 80 percent of Fortune 500 companies have half or more of their employees on teams
  - 68 percent of small U.S. manufacturers use teams in their production area.

- The extensive use of teams creates the potential for an organization to generate greater outputs with no increase in inputs.
Types of Teams

• **Problem-Solving (Process-Improvement) Teams**
  – Groups of 5 to 12 employees from the same department
  – Meet for a few hours each week to discuss ways of improving quality, efficiency, and the work environment.

• **Self-Managed (Self-Directed) Teams**
  – Groups of 10 to 15 people
  – Take on responsibilities of their former managers
    • Planning, scheduling work, assigning tasks, taking action on problems etc.
Exhibit 6-1
Four Types of Teams

Problem-solving
Self-managed
Cross-functional
Virtual
Types of Teams

• **Cross-Functional Teams**
  – Employees from about the same hierarchical level, but from different work areas, who come together to accomplish a task.
    • *Task force*: temporary cross functional team
    • *Committee*: group composed of members from different departments (more long term in nature)
    • *Skunkworks*: cross-functional teams that develop spontaneously to create new products or work on complex problems.

• **Virtual Teams**
  – Use computer technology to tie together physically dispersed members in order to achieve a common goal.
From Individual To Team Member:

Roles

- Roles – a set of expected behaviour patterns associated with someone occupying a given position in a social unit.

Role expectations

- How others believe a person should act in a given situation.

Role Conflict

- A situation in which an individual is confronted by divergent role expectations.
From Individual To Team Member-
Roles

• **Role Ambiguity**
  – A person is unclear about his or her role.

• **Role Overload**
  – Too much is expected of someone.

• **Role Underload**
  – Too little is expected of someone
  – That person feels that they are not contributing
From Individual To Team Member - Norms

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

- What Norms Cover
  - **Performance**: work ethic, work quality, levels of tardiness
  - **Appearance**: personal dress, when to look busy, when to "goof off," how to show loyalty
  - **Social arrangement**: how team members interact
  - **Allocation of resources**: pay, assignments, tools & equipment
How Norms Develop

- Explicit statements made by a group member
- Critical events in the groups history
- Primacy: initial patterns of behaviour
- Carry-over behaviour
Why Norms Are Enforced

- Facilitate group survival.
- Make behaviour predictable.
- Minimize embarrassment.
- Express central values.
- Clarify the group’s identity.
From Individual To Team Member- Conformity

- Adjusting one’s behaviour to align with the norms of the group

- People conform to reference groups
  - Important groups to which individuals belong or hope to belong
Exhibit 6-2

Stages of Group Development

- Pre-group
  - Individual issues: “How do I fit in?”
  - Group issues: “Why are we here?”
- Forming
  - Individual issues: “What’s my role here?”
  - Group issues: “Who is in charge and who does what?”
- Storming
  - Individual issues: “What do the others expect of me?”
  - Group issues: “Can we agree on roles and work as a team?”
- Norming
  - Individual issues: “How do I best perform?”
  - Group issues: “Can we do the job properly?”
- Performing
  - Individual issues: “What’s next?”
  - Group issues: “How do we disband?”
- Adjourning
  - Individual issues: “Return to independence”
  - Group issues: “Dependence/interdependence”
Stages of Group and Team Development

- **Stage I: Forming**
  - Characterized by uncertainty and anxiety
- **Stage II: Storming**
  - Characterized by intra-group conflict
- **Stage III: Norming**
  - Characterized by close relationships and cohesiveness
- **Stage IV: Performing**
  - The stage when the group is fully functional
- **Stage V: Adjourning**
  - The final stage in group development
  - Characterized by concern with wrapping up activities rather than task performance for temporary groups
• Groups do not necessarily progress clearly through the stages one at a time.

• Groups can sometimes go back to an earlier stage.

• Conflict can sometimes be helpful to the group.

• Context can matter: airline pilots can immediately reach performing stage.
The Punctuated-Equilibrium Model

- **Phase 1**
  - The first meeting sets the group’s direction.
  - The first phase of group activity is one of inertia.

- **Transition**
  - A transition takes place at the end of the first phase, which occurs exactly when the group has used up half its allotted time.
  - The transition initiates major changes.

- **Phase 2**
  - A second phase of inertia follows the transition.

- **Last meeting is characterized by markedly accelerated activity.**
Exhibit 6-3 The Punctuated-Equilibrium Model

- Phase 1
  - First Meeting
  - Transition
  - (Low)

- Phase 2
  - Completion
  - Time
  - (A+B)/2

- Performance
  - (High)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Clear purpose</th>
<th>7. Open communication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Informality</td>
<td>8. Clear rules and work assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Participation</td>
<td>9. Shared leadership</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Listening</td>
<td>10. External relations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Civilized disagreement</td>
<td>11. Style diversity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exhibit 6-4 Characteristics of an Effective Team**

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Exhibit 6-5
A Model of Team Effectiveness

**Context**
- Adequate resources
- Leadership and structure
- Climate of trust
- Performance evaluation and rewards

**Composition**
- Skills
- Personality
- Roles
- Diversity
- Size
- Member flexibility
- Member preference for teamwork

**Work design**
- Autonomy
- Skill variety
- Task identity
- Task significance

**Process**
- Common purpose
- Specific goals
- Team efficacy
- Managed level of conflict
- Accountability
Creating Effective Teams – Context

- Adequate Resources
- Leadership and Structure
- Climate of Trust
- Performance Evaluation and Rewards
Creating Effective Teams – Composition

- Skills
- Personality
- Roles
- Diversity
- Size
- Member Flexibility
- Members’ Preference for Teamwork
Skills

- Teams need the following skills to perform effectively:
  - Technical expertise
  - Problem-solving and decision-making skills
  - Interpersonal skills
# Exhibit 6-6

## Teamwork Competencies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXHIBIT 6-6 Teamwork Skills</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Orient Team to Problem-Solving Situation</td>
<td>Assists the team in arriving at a common understanding of the situation or problem. Determines the important elements of a problem situation. Seeks out relevant data related to the situation or problem.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organizes and Manages Team Performance</td>
<td>Helps team establish specific, challenging, and accepted team goals. Monitors, evaluates, and provides feedback on team performance. Identifies alternative strategies or reallocates resources to address feedback on team performance.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Promotes a Positive Team Environment</td>
<td>Assists in creating and reinforcing norms of tolerance, respect, and excellence. Recognizes and praises other team members’ efforts. Helps and supports other team members. Models desirable team member behaviour.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Facilitates and Manages Task Conflict</td>
<td>Encourages desirable and discourages undesirable team conflict. Recognizes the type and source of conflict confronting the team and implements an appropriate resolution strategy. Employs “win-win” negotiation strategies to resolve team conflicts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appropriately Promotes Perspective</td>
<td>Defends stated preferences, argues for a particular point of view, and withstands pressure to change position for another that is not supported by logical or knowledge-based arguments. Changes or modifies position if a defensible argument is made by another team member. Projects courtesy and friendliness to others while arguing position.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


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Personality

• Team members should be selected based on personalities and preferences
• According to research on the subject:
  – Teams under perform when there are one or more highly disagreeable members
  – Conscientious people help teams perform
    • they sense when support is needed and back members up
  – Open team members communicate better
    • which leads to more creativity and innovation
Roles

• **Task-oriented roles**
  – These group members ensure that the tasks are accomplished.

• **Maintenance roles**
  – These group members maintain good relations within the group.

• **Individual roles**
  – Roles performed by group members that are not productive for keeping the group on task.
### Exhibit 6-7 Roles Required for Effective Team Functioning

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Example</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initiating</td>
<td>Stating the goal or problem, making proposals about how to work on it, setting time limits.</td>
<td>“Let’s set up an agenda for discussing each of the problems we have to consider.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seeking information and opinions</td>
<td>Asking group members for specific factual information related to the task or problem, or for their opinions about it.</td>
<td>“What do you think would be the best approach to this, Jack?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Providing information and opinions</td>
<td>Sharing information or opinions related to the task or problems.</td>
<td>“I worked on a similar problem last year and found . . .”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Clarifying</td>
<td>Helping one another understand ideas and suggestions that come up in the group.</td>
<td>“What you mean, Sue, is that we could . . .?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elaborating</td>
<td>Building on another’s ideas and suggestions.</td>
<td>“Building on Don’s idea, I think we could . . .”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summarizing</td>
<td>Reviewing the points covered by the group and the different ideas stated so that decisions can be based on full information.</td>
<td>Appointing a recorder to take notes on a blackboard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consensus testing</td>
<td>Providing periodic testing on whether the group is nearing a decision or needs to continue discussion.</td>
<td>“Is the group ready to decide about this?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Resolving</td>
<td>Mediating conflict among other members, reconciling disagreements, relieving tensions.</td>
<td>“Don, I don’t think you and Sue really see the question that differently.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Compromising</td>
<td>Admitting error at times of group conflict.</td>
<td>“Well, I’d be willing to change if you provided some help on . . .”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gatekeeping</td>
<td>Making sure all members have a chance to express their ideas and feelings and preventing members from being interrupted.</td>
<td>“Sue, we haven’t heard from you on this issue.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encouraging</td>
<td>Helping a group member make his or her point. Establishing a climate of acceptance in the group.</td>
<td>“I think what you started to say is important, Jack. Please continue.”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Diversity

- Diversity in personality, age, gender, and experience promotes conflict
  - stimulates creativity and idea generation
  - leads to improved decision making.
- Cultural diversity in groups initially leads to more difficulty in building cohesion, gaining satisfaction and being productive.
  - Problems pass with time (certainly by three months).
  - Culturally diverse groups bring more viewpoints out.
### EXHIBIT 6-8  Advantages and Disadvantages of Diversity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Multiple perspectives</td>
<td>Ambiguity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater openness to new ideas</td>
<td>Complexity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Multiple interpretations</td>
<td>Confusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased creativity</td>
<td>Miscommunication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased flexibility</td>
<td>Difficulty in reaching a single agreement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased problem-solving skills</td>
<td>Difficulty in agreeing on specific actions</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Group Size

• Research shows that:
  – Smaller groups are faster at completing tasks.
  – When problem solving, larger groups do better.

• Social Loafing
  – The tendency for individuals to expend less effort when working collectively than when working individually.

• How can we reduce social loafing?
  – teams should not be larger than necessary
  – individuals should be held accountable for their actions.
Team Member Attributes

- **Member Flexibility**
  - The ability of team members to complete each others’ tasks.

- **Members’ Preference for Teamwork**
  - Team members who would prefer to work on their own threaten the team’s morale.
Creating Effective Teams – Work Design

• Effective teams need to work together and take collective responsibility to complete significant tasks. They must be more than a “team-in-name-only.”
Creating Effective Teams – Process

- Common Purpose
- Specific Goals
- Team Efficacy
- Managed Level of Conflict
- Accountability
Exhibit 6-9 Relationship Between Team Cohesiveness, Performance Norms, and Productivity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Performance Norms</th>
<th>Cohesiveness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>High productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Low productivity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Moderate to low productivity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Beware! Teams Aren’t Always the Answer

- Teams work best when the answer is yes:
  - Can the work be done better by more than one person?
  - Does work create a common purpose or set of goals for the people in the group that is more than the aggregate of individual goals?
  - Are members of the group interdependent?
1. **What are teams and groups?**
   - Groups are simply the sum of individual efforts. Teams generate positive synergy through coordinated efforts.

2. **Does everyone use teams?**
   - Teams have become an essential part of the way business is being done, with a large majority of companies now using them.

3. **What kinds of teams are there?**
   - Four most common forms: problem-solving (process-improvement); self-managed (self-directed); cross-functional (project); virtual teams.

4. **How does one become a team player?**
   - Individuals on a team need to understand their roles and then work together to create a set of group norms.
Summary and Implications

4. Do teams go through stages while they work?
   - Two different models were presented:
     • The five stage model: forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning
     • The punctuated-equilibrium model: describes the pattern of development of specific to temporary groups with deadlines

6. How do we create effective teams?
   • For teams to be effective, careful consideration must be given to resources, the team’s composition, work design, and process.

7. Are teams always the answer?
   • Can the work be done better by more than one person?
   • Does the work create a common purpose or set of goals for the people in the group that is more than the aggregate of individual goals?
   • Are the member of the group interdependent?