

■ TYPES OF GROWTH GROUPS

John E. Jones

In the field of human relations training there is considerable confusion over terminology among both professionals and the public. The most obvious example of a failure to use a common language is the term, “sensitivity training.” To some people that term connotes brainwashing, manipulation, and a host of other horrid activities. To others the term refers to a technology of helping people to grow in self-understanding from analyzing their experience in social situations. To others the term carries the meaning, “feel and reveal.” There are many other connotations attached to the term sensitivity training, and, because it has such surplus meaning, it is for all practical purposes a garbage term. There is a need for consumers of groups—that is, prospective participants and people who hire group consultants—to have realistic expectations when they elect to invest in the group approach. There are important differences among various categories of groups commonly found in the human potential movement, and it is very useful for the public to understand what those differences are.

A major reason why making distinctions among the various types of groups can be useful is that the various group strategies are not equally appropriate in all learning situations. The counseling group can be highly appropriate as an intervention in the lives of young people in school, where the emphasis is on their personal development; whereas, a more therapy-oriented approach may place too great an emphasis on personal deficiencies or may be inappropriate for a variety of other reasons. There are also political reasons why distinctions among different types of groups are important. The counselor in the school is taking a large risk if he describes his counseling groups as T-groups, since most parents are not equipped to understand the distinction and may have been propagandized by the mass media to think negatively of the T-group experience.

Some of the distinctions among the more common types of groups found in the human-potential movement today are very real in practice, and some have an aura of arbitrariness about them; that is, the distinctions are in terms of degree rather than kind. An analogy may help. There are two times during the day when we cannot say for sure whether it is day or night: At dawn and during the twilight hours we cannot say with complete confidence that it is day or that it is night. Nevertheless, we find the two terms, day and night, to be enormously useful. While there are rather large commonalities among T-groups, counseling groups and other kinds of groups, there are some differences that are useful to explore. These very often represent differences in the

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degree of emphasis on a particular method or a particular learning goal, and often different types of groups look similar and are experienced very much alike.

The dimensions that will be considered to differentiate the selected types of groups are goals, time orientation, the settings in which they are found, the roles of facilitators, and the usual clientele to whom the group experience is offered.

MAJOR TYPES

The major types of groups that have been selected for analysis are the T-group (training group), the encounter group, the marathon group, the therapy group, and the counseling group. Figure 1 represents a summary of the major distinctions between these types of groups. There is no attempt to make exhaustive lists of the variety of types of groups that are available in the human-potential movement today, such as developmental groups, emergent groups, transactional-analysis groups, etc.

GROUP TYPE DIMENSION	TRAINING	ENCOUNTER	MARATHON	THERAPY	COUNSELING
GOALS	To develop awareness and skill-building	To develop awareness and genuineness	To break down defenses	To increase coping	To develop effective planning skills
TIME ORIENTATION	Here and now	Here and now plus	Here and now plus	Past and present	Present and future
SETTING	Education, business	All over	All over	Clinical	Educational
ROLE OF FACILITATOR	Model and scan	Model and confront	Confront aggressively	Treat	Facilitate group helpfulness
CLIENTELE	"Normals"	Anyone	Anyone	People deficient in coping	"Normals"

Figure 1. Summary of Types of Growth Groups

Training Groups

The major objectives of a T- or training group are awareness and skill building. The objectives center around helping the individual participants to grow in increased awareness of their feeling experience, of their reaction to other people, of their impact on other people, of how others impact them, and in their awareness of how people interrelate and of how groups operate. In terms of skills, the objectives are to improve one's ability to listen to people, to understand them empathically (to put oneself in their shoes, so to speak), to be more effective in expressing what is going on with oneself, and to improve one's own skill in responding to other people when attempting to give them feedback. The major goals, then, are increased awareness and increased skills in

interpersonal relations. The goals also include understanding group process (i.e., becoming more cognizant of trends, unacknowledged relations and communications, functional roles, and so on). There are two major types of T-group trainers: those who emphasize the personal growth of the individual participant in terms of awareness and skills and those who take as their primary objective helping people to learn about how groups operate, how societies form, and how communities develop.

In terms of time orientation, the T-group is distinguished from all the rest of the types that will be discussed in this paper by a rather rigid adherence to what is called the “here and now.” There is no history-taking, no story-telling, and no future-planning activity. The entire energy of the group is focused on the immediate present, trying to find that reality, and discussing it openly with each other.

T-groups are most commonly found in educational and business settings. The educational settings are usually in teacher training, in-service education, and higher education. Very little T-group work is done, as such, with elementary and secondary school students. In fact, it can be argued that the T-group is largely an inappropriate intervention into the lives of children and early and middle adolescents. It is generally felt that the giving and receiving of open, honest feedback about feeling reactions to one’s behavior requires that the participants have a certain amount of ego strength and stability in their view of themselves. T-groups have long been a part of managerial training; however, in recent years there has been a retrenchment from wide (occasionally indiscriminate) use of T-groups in industries. Managers and other people in business and industry experienced subtle coercion into participating in T-groups, and the effects of T-groups on managerial development were sometimes negative, or at least not positive. The development of a set of theories and strategies called organization development has largely supplanted the misuse of T-groups in business and industry; however, the appropriate use of them can be found as a part of the repertoire of organization development specialists and consultants in the business and industrial arena.

The role of the facilitator in a T-group is to participate and to provide some leadership in helping people to get in touch with themselves and to share openly with each other. Two major approaches that T-group trainers use are modeling and scanning. These ideas are described most aptly by Schein and Bennis (1965). The T-group trainer who models is a person who tries to be as open as he or she can be, gives feedback, solicits feedback, and tries to be, in short, an ideal participant. This trainer does not run things, but simply attempts to be as open and sensitive as possible. The T-group trainer who adopts the role of scanner is a person who participates less as a person and more as a professional. This is a person who monitors the dynamics of the group’s development and comments on the processes that he or she sees. This trainer is more aloof from the interaction, more authoritative in approach, and likely to be a person whose major interest is more in getting people to learn some model of social interaction than in getting people to be more open and sensitive. Both modeling and scanning are necessary to group training to various degrees, depending on the needs of the individual group, and

many T-group trainers assume both roles with varying emphasis during the life of the group.

The clientele for T-groups is that broad range of people who are colloquially called “normal.” Egan (1970) describes some of the psychopathology of being normal in *Encounter*. For purposes of this discussion, the term “normal” describes that person who gets along in everyday existence without significant assistance from other people. His or her level of coping is sufficient to accomplish his or her objectives. In addition, this is a person who does not ordinarily distort the reality of the situations in which he or she finds himself or herself. There is no precise technical definition of normality that has been agreed on by those in the helping professions. What we are concerned with in the T-group are people who encounter and respond appropriately to everyday concerns. The T-group is not a place for a person who is under a great deal of psychological stress or who is incapable of understanding reality the way most people do.

The T-group, then, functions primarily toward the individual’s development and awareness of interpersonal skills and is restricted to the immediate present. It is found primarily in educational and business settings. Facilitators tend to be a part of the process as people and focus by modeling and scanning on interpersonal issues and group development. The T-group experience is designed primarily for the broad range of people called normal. It consists of ten to fifteen people who begin work for about twenty to thirty hours in a highly unstructured way, usually with no ground rules. They develop and discuss a structure as it emerges in the group. The kinds of interactions that take place are encounters between people and the sharing of feeling reactions to the interpersonal behavior that occurs. The attempt is to get people to try new behavior, to try new ways of relating to one another, and to share emotional reactions to the behavior that spontaneously occurs in the group setting. The technology that is often used consists of lectures, skill-building games such as listening activities, process-observation experiences, games, simulations, and other activities. But the core of the learning experience is the unstructured T-group meeting, in which members take responsibility for their own learning and participate in a free, give-and-take of feeling reactions to one another’s behavior. There is little or no attempt to try to discover why people behave the way they do; rather the emphasis is on studying the effects of behavior and exploring alternative behaviors that might be more effective.

A major distinction is made within T-groups between content and process: what is talked about and what happens in the group. Another major distinction that is drawn within T-groups is between thinking and feeling. Participants learn that what they think and what they feel may not be highly correlated. The major effort of the T-group is to help people share their feeling experience of each other.

Incidentally, the intent of the T-group is diametrically opposed to the intent of brainwashing in that the T-group is an exercise in democratic interpersonal relating, in which people become more free as a result of becoming more aware of what they do to one another on an impact level. The intent is not to get people to conform, to cry, or to feel alike, but to increase a person’s freedom of choice and freedom of behavior by

giving him or her an accurate reading on the way he or she comes across to other people and what other people do to him or her. The emphasis is on learning in order for the person to run his or her own life more effectively.

Encounter Groups

The major goals of the encounter group are awareness and genuineness. The encounter group differs from the T-group in that it has a relatively high emphasis on helping the person to have a real experience of other people. The flavor is existential, that is, the concern is not so much with the application of the learning as it is with the realness of the encounter between people. The major objectives are to help the participants to get in touch with themselves more fully, more authentically; to help them relate that to other people more openly; and to help them be with other people in the world. Being-together-in-the-world in a very open, level way is presumed to have a justification of its own. There is relatively less emphasis than in the T-group on skill-building and back-home application.

In terms of time orientation, the encounter group may be described as “here and now plus.” A great deal of attention is spent looking at the immediate reality, but there is some story-telling. There is some sharing of one’s psychological development. It is permissible in the usual encounter group to talk about people who aren’t there; ordinarily in the T-group that becomes forbidden. In the encounter group the major emphasis is on the present, but one may look at the past and the future.

Encounter groups can be found almost anywhere. They are used in business, industry, schools, clinical settings, teacher training, and parent-effectiveness training, and they are independently offered by growth centers and others as isolated personal experiences.

The facilitator’s role in the encounter group is to model and to confront. The facilitator engineers confrontations in the sense of encouraging people to be more open than they ordinarily would be, more genuine, and more level in looking directly at the interpersonal reality that emerges. He or she also participates in the interchange, giving and receiving feedback.

The usual encounter-group facilitator would exclude no type of person arbitrarily. All sorts and conditions of people can be found in encounter groups, from “normals” to therapy patients. On occasion encounter facilitators will require therapy patients to obtain prior permission from their therapists, but generally that is for legal protection rather than because of any design for the kind of interaction that will take place.

The encounter-group meeting tends to be emotionally charged. There is perhaps more attention given to extreme feelings of loving and aggression in the encounter group than in the T-group. The technology of the encounter group tends to be more in the area of pair confrontation, touching, and nonverbal communication than in the T-group. Encounter group facilitators very often eschew T-group games and lecturettes and tend to use a wide variety of nonverbal and fantasy techniques to generate the interpersonal-confrontation data.

Marathon Groups

The major goal of the marathon group, as opposed to the major goals of either the T- or encounter group, is to deliberately strip away from the participants their ordinary defensive behavior, so that they are able to look at themselves more genuinely than they might ordinarily.

The time orientation could be described in a manner similar to that of the encounter group (i.e., “here and now plus”). A good bit of attention is placed on looking at the participants as they interact with other people in the marathon setting, but the participants often develop histories of their psychological development and explore those with one another. The major distinguishing feature of the marathon group is the time that the group consumes. Marathon groups take place in uninterrupted meetings generally of twenty or more hours. Some facilitators conduct marathons of less than twenty hours, but ordinarily at least twenty hours of continuous interaction is planned. The rationale behind the marathon is that fatigue can serve to lower one’s need for defensiveness and that genuine, real behavior is more possible if one is able to stick with the task over a long period of time. Meals are brought in, people excuse themselves to go to the bathroom, sometimes the facilitator reserves the right to take a break for brief periods of rest, but the participants stay with the group throughout the time that the group is together in continuous meeting.

Marathon groups can be found in a variety of settings and are often not a separate group experience but rather one phase of a total training design. Sometimes a marathon group is an intervention in a school, in a hospital, or with a therapy group. Some facilitators like to begin groups with a marathon session, and some teachers begin a course the same way. There is almost no limit on the portability of the idea.

The facilitator takes a slightly different role in a marathon group than in a T-group or encounter group. The facilitator is more likely in a marathon group to engage in direct confrontation. Depending on his or her theoretical persuasion, he or she may also interpret some of the behavior of the participants in an analytical way. At any rate, the facilitator’s major style tends to be to use direct, sometimes aggressive, confrontation.

The clientele of marathon groups can be almost anyone, since they may be integrated into designs for other types of growth groups. The marathon group can be used as a very powerful intervention for therapeutic purposes, or it may be used to enhance the growth of essentially normal people. Sometimes groups are made up of combinations of people who are psychotherapy patients and people who are there primarily for their own personal growth and not for “treatment.”

Therapy Groups

There are endless varieties of approaches to group therapy, but there are some major distinctions between group therapy and other groups that have been discussed. One major distinction is that the goals of therapy groups generally focus on the increased coping ability of members. That is, the participants are led in a therapy group to explore themselves in ways that will permit them to be more effective in their daily living, so

that they will be less anxious, more capable of making decisions, more capable of accepting responsibility for their behavior, less depressed, etc.

The time orientation of the therapy group differs from the three groups that have been discussed in that in a therapy group a great deal of life-history data is discussed. The time orientation of the therapy group is primarily past and present. People talk through unresolved difficulties in their pasts and talk about their lives in the present because the goal of the therapy group is typically to improve the life situation of a person in the immediate present.

Therapy groups are most commonly found in clinical settings (i.e., in hospitals, mental health centers, medical clinics, student health centers, etc.).

Ordinarily the therapy group is conducted by a doctoral-level therapist whose role is to treat the participants or patients. The usual interaction that takes place in the therapy group is for the therapist to treat people one at a time, with other group participants watching and helping. Some group psychotherapists function differently by using group-process observations and interventions as a treatment strategy, but the usual procedure is individual treatment in a group session.

The clientele of therapy groups could be considered those people who are significantly below par in their level of ordinary, everyday coping. These people would be considered non-normal in the sense that they require significant assistance from other people for them to solve their everyday problems.

Counseling Groups

There is probably as much variety among counselors as there is among group psychotherapists in the approaches that are used in their groups, but some broad differences exist between counseling and any of the other four types of groups that have been discussed. On the dimension of goals, the counseling group is usually distinguished by its emphasis on effective planning. The counseling group has as its major objective helping people to learn to manage their lives more effectively. Members develop increased awareness of who they are, awareness of what opportunities are available to them, and increased ability to make decisions in planning their own development.

The time orientation of the counseling group is generally present and future. Persons talk through their normal development problems, but a great deal of attention in counseling groups is placed on, "Where do we go from here?"

Counseling groups most commonly are found in educational settings from the elementary school through higher education. The facilitator in the counseling groups has the job of helping group members to learn how to be helpful to one another. The facilitator perhaps does more teaching of effective group membership than do facilitators in other types of groups. He or she may also inject into counseling groups a great deal of educational and vocational information. His or her job as an intervener in group meetings is to help people to accept responsibility for helping their peers. Counseling groups are designed to facilitate the orderly development of normal people who are experiencing the same kinds of problems that most people do.

NEW DEVELOPMENTS

These broad distinctions among the most common types of growth groups are not intended to be precise but to be illustrative of trends in the human-potential movement. It is significant that there is overlap among such groups. Such commonalities stem in large part from the major commitment among group facilitators to find new ways to enhance the personal growth of the general populace.

Four streams of activity are taking place in the human-potential movement. A number of people are doing some highly creative work in developing group approaches that will facilitate sensory awakening, sensory awareness, and self-expression on the part of people whose adult-life situations do not permit them the freedom of learning about themselves and being genuine with one another. A second stream is in education—both within institutions and in the free education movement—to find new ways of using group approaches to get away from teacher-centered, highly structured classroom interaction. A third area of considerable activity is in finding new ways of working with clinical populations, those people who are hospitalized, those who are out-patients in various clinics, and so on. A number of people are working on ways of borrowing from education models and from the experimental work that is being done in growth centers ideas that may be useful in accelerating the treatment of persons who need interpersonal assistance to develop effective coping. A fourth stream of activity that is a vital part of the human-potential scene is the infusion of all these activities into organization development and into working with people within their work settings. A number of business and industrial officials are now coming to see that there are responsibilities on the part of the corporations for the personal development of employees, and a number of corporations are experimenting with life-planning laboratories, counseling, career development, T-groups, encounter groups, and so on, with people in their natural work environments, with the people that they interact with day by day.

There will be a continuation of confusion within the human-potential movement as new group models are developed, but the person who is thinking about participating in a group or hiring people who work in groups as consultants can make some order out of what appears to be chaos by taking into account the dimensions that have been stressed in this paper. Of those dimensions the single most important is goals. The consumer of groups needs to have a good sense of what the learning goals are of the group he or she is contemplating. The technologies of groups are nothing but means toward ends. The ends, or goals, vary depending on the facilitator and the type of group with whom he or she is working.

Perhaps the most significant commonality among the types of groups that are being experimented with today is that they are all designed to be helpful to participants. It may be that we are on the verge of redeveloping the culture in a way that permits groups of people to be supportive of each other.

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■ A LOOK AT QUALITY CIRCLES

H.B. Karp

In the past twenty years, the field of human resource development has evolved from the vast amount of theories and techniques produced in the behavioral sciences and aimed at increasing organizational productivity and/or individual effectiveness. The latest addition to the field of human resource development, and one that is enjoying a great deal of success, is the concept of quality circles (QCs). Although the QC certainly is not a panacea for all organizational problems, the data derived over the last three years indicates that, if installed properly and nurtured carefully, this approach has high potential for dealing with issues of productivity and worker involvement.

BACKGROUND AND DEFINITION

First implemented in Japan in 1962, quality circles are an outcome of American thinking, the result of quality-control technology introduced to Japan by Deming and Juran and behavioral science inputs from Herzberg, McGregor, and Maslow. In effect, quality circles are the latest refinement of organization development technology that has been developed and practiced in the United States since the early Sixties.

A quality circle is a group of three to ten people from the same work area that voluntarily meets on a regular basis—usually for one hour, once a week—to identify, analyze, and solve problems in that work area. Although frequently thought of only in terms of manufacturing plants, the quality circle is useful in any organization in which effectiveness can be measured and there is an authentic concern for increased productivity and human potential.

A quality-circle program has two major objectives: (a) to improve the quality of management within the organization, and (b) to tap the creative problem-solving skills of the workers. Although increased productivity and cost reductions usually are two of the results, these are the measures of a successful program and not its objectives. Some other benefits derived from an effective quality-circle program are improved communication, improved attendance, increases in performance and productivity, better teamwork, and enhanced technical knowledge.

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STRUCTURE

Although the quality circle focuses on the worker, everyone in the organization is, to some degree, actively or passively affected. In a QC program, there are seven categories that encompass the entire working force of an organization.

Steering Committee

The steering committee consists of people who represent various functional areas in the organization, usually mid- and upper-level managers, and it may include the chief executive officer (CEO) and union leaders from within the organization. The responsibilities of the steering committee are to establish the quality-circle program; set policies, philosophy, procedures, and objectives; provide guidance and support; demonstrate management's commitment by setting high priorities on circle recommendations; meet and work closely with the facilitator; monitor effectiveness (usually quarterly); and provide needed resources.

The steering committee usually meets weekly during the organization phase of the program and may meet bimonthly once the program is established. Regardless of its scheduled meetings, the committee is always "on call" to respond to specific needs.

Facilitator

The facilitator is the key to the success of the program. When there are more than six circles operating, the facilitator usually holds a full-time position. The facilitator is responsible for training the circle leaders and members; meeting with each circle leader prior to the circle meeting to review the plans; forming the necessary links between the circle program and the rest of the organization; locating specialists to assist the circles with particular problems; maintaining records; coordinating circle activities; working with and being a member of the steering committee; assisting leaders and members with problems; and attending and monitoring circle meetings.

Circle Leader

Usually the circle leader is the first-line supervisor of the people who make up the circle. In some cases, however, the circle leader is selected by the steering committee or elected by the members. (This usually occurs when new circles are formed in one work area or department.) The responsibilities of the circle leader are to run the circle meetings; assist the facilitator in training the circle members in problem-solving techniques; meet with the facilitator prior to each meeting to review that meeting's agenda; act as liaison to other departments and support personnel; know and understand quality-circle tools and techniques; plan circle activities; and be an active member of the circle. The circle leader must use a participative approach during the circle meeting. The leader has only one vote and, generally, will use it only in order to break a tie.

Circle Member

The circle member is a worker who volunteers to participate in a quality circle. No one is required to participate and no one is barred. The responsibilities of the circle member include being trained in quality-circle techniques; attending and participating in all meetings; and identifying, analyzing, and implementing solutions to problems in the work area.

Top Management

Top management's support will either make or break the quality-circle program. Top management's responsibilities include making the final decisions concerning the quality-circle program and the recommendations of the individual circles; actively supporting the program; attending meetings at the invitation of the circles; and providing role models for participative management.

Middle Management

Although middle management plays no active role in the program, its support is vital to the success of the program. Middle management's responsibilities include not scheduling activities that conflict with circle meetings; openly supporting circle activities; implementing circle recommendations or explaining why they are not to be implemented; including circle activities in reports to higher management; and meeting periodically with circle leaders.

Noncircle Worker

Because participation in a quality circle is voluntary, there is always a segment of the work force that prefers not to be involved in the program. The noncircle worker continues on the job when the circle(s) for his or her department meet(s). The noncircle worker may, on occasion, be asked to provide consultative help on a circle project.

IMPLEMENTATION

If they are to be effective, quality circles must be planned thoroughly before being introduced into an organization. Typically, an organization will start with four to six circles and add one or two more circles at a time. A minimum of six months of planning and preparation is required from the time a decision is made to initiate a QC program until the first circles are operative. In most organizations, it is eight months to a year from the time of the decision before any results are expected. The process cannot be rushed! With minor variations, a typical startup process will proceed through twelve steps.

Deciding to Proceed

The decision to begin a quality-circle program is made by the CEO of the organization, with whomever the CEO chooses to include in the process. This decision is made after the top management has been fully informed about the concept of quality circles.

Using a Consultant

Although it is not essential, using an external consultant has advantages. A qualified consulting firm can explain the program to top management, train the facilitator and the leaders, and help the organization to avoid pitfalls during the implementation of the program.

Introducing QCs to the Management Team

Once the decision is made to proceed, it is essential that all managers in the organization be informed and be given an opportunity to voice their support or resistance. It is also wise to include union leaders as soon as possible in the process. All managers and union leaders can be invited to a half-day training program in which a formal presentation of the nature and benefits of the QC program is made (by the external consultant or CEO). The participants then ask questions about how the program would affect their work areas.

Establishing a Data Base

Although not essential, it frequently is wise to obtain various measures of productivity in key areas of the organization before starting the program. Although increased productivity and decreased costs are not the objectives of the program, they are two of the usual benefits, and obtaining a data base in the beginning is a good way to monitor the cost effectiveness of the program.

Selecting the Steering Committee

Because the steering committee is to provide the necessary support, especially during the early stages of the program, every functional area in the organization, including the union, should be represented. However, it is best not to force any manager to participate, because it is necessary that the members of the steering committee be committed to the concept.

Selecting the Facilitator

The facilitator is the most important individual in terms of the success or failure of the program. The facilitator (usually chosen by the steering committee) can come from anywhere within the organization, but knowledge of the organization and its technical basis is a solid advantage. Some of the qualities essential in the facilitator are enthusiasm for the position; an ability to relate well to the workers; the respect of

management and easy access to the CEO; a willingness to work hard (and at odd hours if circle meetings are to occur during second or third shifts); the capacity to teach others to teach; and good communication skills.

Informing All Employees of the Plan

Employees can be informed of the plan to start the program in a number of ways. The only requirement is that the approach be well thought out and well executed. One approach is to call a meeting of all employees and make a formal presentation. Another approach is to inform the employees in small groups. A third option is to inform the employees through letters sent to their homes. These letters would explain the program and would be signed by the CEO. Any approach can include subsequent meetings in which employees can ask questions and discuss their concerns about the program.

Selecting Circle Leaders

When all supervisors understand the nature of the program, the best approach is to ask for volunteers. Because a program usually begins with only four to six circles, there usually are more than enough volunteers. Circle leaders should have enthusiasm for the program, should work well with people, should not be involved in any serious union issues, and should be able to obtain measurable results from their units. Their units also should not have any unusual problems. If a supervisor refuses to participate, additional time is needed to explain the purpose and benefits of the approach and to understand the supervisor's resistance. If the supervisor still chooses not to participate, the steering committee can select a worker from the unit to be the circle leader, but this must be done with the supervisor's consent.

Forming Circles

Once the units and the circle leaders have been identified, workers from those units are asked to volunteer. In most cases, there will be more volunteers than the circle can absorb. The steering committee can provide a policy for selection, or the volunteers themselves can be asked to determine who should be included in the first circles. It is important that all volunteers be assured that they will be included as the program expands.

Training the Facilitator

Generally, a forty-hour program is required to train the facilitator. The first phase deals with the cognitive, problem-solving techniques that will be used in the circles: problem identification, data gathering, problem analysis, and presentation techniques. The second phase focuses on process (consultative) skills such as participative leadership, communication, team building, conflict management, and training people how to train.

Training the Circle Leaders

Generally, circle leaders undergo a twenty-hour training program. They are trained in the same problem-solving methods as is the facilitator and also in participative leadership skills.

Training the Circle Members

The first eight weeks of the circle's life are dedicated to the training of its members. After a thorough introduction to quality circles, the members receive eight hours of training in problem-solving techniques and presentation skills. Although the facilitator and the circle leaders may be trained by an outside consultant, the circle members are trained by the circle leader, with the facilitator's assistance.

THE CIRCLE MEETING

When all training has been completed, the circle picks a name for itself and then begins to meet for one hour, once a week, to deal with problems relating to the work area. The typical, one-hour, weekly meeting include opening remarks by the leader, a brief reading of minutes of the last meeting, the introduction of new topics, "next steps" on existing projects, work assignments (for circle projects) for the next week, and the closing.

Certain guidelines are always in effect and are agreed to by all members, for example: (a) criticize ideas, not people; (b) the only stupid question is the one not asked; (c) everyone in the group is responsible for the group's progress and process; and (d) be open to the ideas of others.

The types of issues that the circle will address are work quality, cost reduction, safety, work methods, tools and equipment, interorganizational communications, and process and procedures. A quality circle does not deal with issues such as wages and salaries, hours of work, personalities, new product design, hiring, firing, and disciplinary decisions. Ideas for discussion topics can come from many sources, e.g., circle members, managers, customers, or staff members; however, the selection is the circle's prerogative. Most circles can handle three to ten projects per year, depending on the complexity of the problems. If the circle requires outside information or assistance, the circle leader will contact the resource needed. Should the involvement of top management be needed to complete or approve a project, the circle will prepare a formal presentation. The circle also will make a presentation to top management periodically to review its progress.

PROGRAM COSTS

There obviously is a wide range in the cost of quality-circle programs. Much depends on whether or not an external consultant will be used, whether training packages will be developed or purchased, what the facilitator will be paid, and so on. If an organization were going to develop a complete program starting with six circles, but had no existing

resources of its own, the total cost for the first year, including the cost for time off the job for the circle members, could be between \$45,000 and \$60,000. After the first year, the cost would be approximately \$200 per week, per circle, including participants' time, the training room, materials, and so on. The most accurate perspective, of course, is to view the expense not in terms of "cost" but, rather, in terms of *investment*.

CAUSES OF PROGRAM FAILURE

Merely installing the technology correctly does not guarantee success in a quality-circle program. The following is a partial list of the factors that can cause a program to fail.

1. *Management Impatience*: demanding a rapid return on investment, expanding the quality-circles program too quickly, cutting down on training time and/or start-up time, demanding that certain issues be considered by the circles, or unrealistic expectations.

2. *Lack of Management Support*: not making all needed information available to the circles; postponing circle meetings for any reason; not educating managers in the process; denying or forcing participation in the quality-circles program; not publicizing the program internally; or establishing arbitrary criteria, deadlines, or cost-savings demands.

3. *Inadequate Implementation and Planning*: not using a facilitator or poor choice of facilitator; little support from the steering committee; little or no training; not following a formal pattern; not including union representatives; not planning for turnover of members or leaders; little management involvement; inadequate assessment of organizational readiness for the program; or poor coordination among the facilitator, the steering committee, and the CEO.

UNIQUE BENEFITS

The concept of quality circles is an evolutionary step in human resource development, but several aspects make it uniquely different from other techniques that have been and are being used.

It is the only approach that is initiated by management but run solely by the work force. Although participative principles are underlying and essential elements of a quality-circle program, it actually has evolved into what could be called a "partnertive" approach. Management does not participate in a quality-circle program after it is installed and running; it merely provides support when needed. This is quite different from participative management, in which the goal is to include the worker in relevant management considerations.

It allows the installation of participative values in segments of the organization without abruptly changing the structure or value system of the organization. The most important element in the survival and growth of a quality-circle program is management's philosophy concerning human resource development and quality of work life. There is no room for lip service. If there is an authentic commitment by top

management to “humanize” an organization, but the commitment of middle and lower management is not strong, imposing “humanism” on these managers only increases their resistance. The quality-circle program provides a safe and functional structure in which those who are enthusiastic can participate and in which those who are not enthusiastic can observe and evaluate over time. In effect, it provides a mechanism whereby participative and humanistic work procedures can be absorbed slowly by the organization, rather than being forced on it.

The most beneficial payoffs occur externally to the program. Although the circle meets under a strict set of participative rules, the circle leader is bound by them only during the circle meeting, one hour per week. The rest of the time, each leader is free to lead in his or her usual style. However, circle procedures gradually begin to permeate the day-to-day work life of the unit. Most successful programs report specific returns on investment in excess of 3 to 1, but the greatest payoff is in the increase in consciousness of quality and the better work relationships that result from the program.

It provides a constant, established base for ongoing training and development. The circle provides a rich resource of training criteria. Workers learn to identify objectives, to analyze and solve problems, and to explore resources, along with numerous other work-related skills. The circle provides an established setting into which training can be introduced. Training can be more readily accepted and absorbed when the learner can see how the information can help in dealing with and overcoming work problems. Facilitators and leaders can apply additional process training not only to their circles but also to their day-to-day jobs.

■ OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE THROUGH SUPERTEAMS

Julia Pokora and Wendy Briner

The events of the last decade have imposed huge demands on the personnel of most organizations to rethink what they do and how they do it. For many, the main strategy for survival has been the search for increased efficiency and attention to competitive pressures. In its most visible form this has meant slimming down the labor force, tightening up financial controls, trimming costs, and investing in new technology. This strategy is attractive, based as it is on analysis, rationality, and objectivity; and, of course, it can be a successful one. Its limitation is that it is often based on an acceptance of the traditional model of organization life: it aims to “do better” without questioning *what* is done, *why* it is done, or *how* it is accomplished.

The questions of what, why, and how are complex. They involve issues of values and beliefs, and they challenge the traditional model and thinking. However, these questions are being asked most often by organizations whose members believe that they are in the business not of reacting to the future, but of creating it. There are numerous examples of organizations that have evolved new models of organizational life in response to these questions and in order to meet their new purposes. Such organizations have evolved nontraditional methods of combining the way in which individuals work together to produce more efficient results and greater flexibility.

The key challenges that are typically faced by organizations today are the following:

- Developing innovative products;
- Managing a number of small, independent, decentralized divisions; and
- Responding to increased customer demands without generating radical increases in costs.

The response is often to set up some activity or set of activities that enable individuals working in the organization to form a team so that ideas and energies from different parts of the organization are used to investigate and experiment with new ways of operating. The resulting experiments are not universally successful, but a significant number produce real benefits in terms of developing the business or improving effectiveness. This form of teamworking is a critical vehicle for many successful

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organizations; however, it is evident that not all ventures into teamwork are as useful as they might be.

THE SUPERTEAM APPROACH

Traditional models of teamworking have focused on team building and team development. With these models the team is usually seen as an intact, ongoing group trying to achieve a defined task. The organizational reality is that a team is often temporary, and its membership changes; the members spend a large part of their time apart, may have unclear or changing demands that have an impact on what they are supposed to be doing, often have conflicting pressures placed on them by other parts of the organization, and operate within a complex organizational network of contacts.

The Ashridge Teamworking Services model has sought to identify what “superteams”—outstanding ones—do to achieve excellent performance despite difficult conditions and what differentiates them from ordinary or below-par teams. Although there is no simple, magic formula for developing a superteam, observation and analysis suggest that there are some significant common characteristics and themes:

- A superteam persistently pursues its goals but uses very flexible and unorthodox means.
- A superteam is motivated to achieve high standards; its members drive themselves and others, and they enjoy success.
- A superteam actively cultivates a network of contacts at all levels in its own organization as well as in the customers’ or clients’ organizations. Its members use the network to influence in order to achieve more effectively. They are “streetwise” and understand how things really happen in organizational life. They know that visibility is important.
- A superteam is action oriented. Its members try new approaches to find out how to move forward, and they use planning and analysis to take them to the next phase of action. They are optimistic even when life is hard.
- A superteam’s members retain a sense of unity while they are apart by communicating frequently via all available methods.

Superteams can be used in organizations for several different purposes. Some of these uses are as follows:

- To develop and implement strategy;
- To solve problems;
- To determine ways in which to restructure or reorganize units or activities; and
- To develop the skills of crucial team leaders.

Figure 1 illustrates the superteam approach, and the following paragraphs describe it in greater detail.



Figure 1. The Superteam Approach

Negotiating Success Criteria

Superteam members believe that it is critical to spend time and energy making explicit the criteria against which they will be judged—the standards of success. These criteria are of two types: *tangible* criteria (for example, timeliness and adherence to budget) and *intangible* criteria, which are just as important but often more difficult to specify (for example, the degree to which a new product is “exciting”). Superteam members clearly understand who will influence their success; they can easily differentiate among the sponsor, the senior person in the organization championing the team, the client, the person or group commissioning the team’s output, and the user (that is, the person or group who will ultimately use or work with the team’s output). Armed with this understanding, they are in a good position to plan their ventures in such a way that they meet their own criteria of success.

Managing the Outside

Superteam members spend time building networks and relationships with the key people who will influence their success, and they pay attention to how the team is seen and “marketed” by these people. They acknowledge and look for friends and champions, but they also acknowledge and work with (or around) those who may try to block their progress.

Planning the What

Superteam members have standards of excellence in what they achieve. They challenge notions of “just good enough” and often negotiate their success criteria upward so that they must work harder to achieve higher standards than are expected of them. They do not fall into the linear-logic trap of adhering to one master plan; instead, they plan for the known and then try to anticipate the unknown by frequently checking to see how their plans need to be modified in light of new information.

Planning the How

Superteam members not only talk about *what* they will do, but also *how* they will do it. They develop explicit ground rules for the way in which they will operate, and—as is the case when they plan what they will do—they frequently review *how* they are working as a team and whether the ground rules need changing.

Leading the Team

The superteam leader has a crucial role in sustaining the team’s energy and in articulating the team’s vision of success. He or she must monitor forces that are external to the team as well as those that are internal and must keep the planning process on track by reviewing past activities and altering future ones if necessary. The leader is an information gatherer, ensuring the team is in touch with the outside environment, and an information disseminator, “marketing” the team’s progress to the outside.

Membership (The Team Together)

Superteam members have a sense of individual responsibility for the team; they are active followers rather than passive ones. They acknowledge individual differences, plan ways in which they can integrate specialists, and see diversity as a help rather than a hindrance. They also acknowledge conflict as inevitable and recognize that results can be improved by confronting differences rather than avoiding them. In addition, they develop a common language, and they articulate rules for managing themselves productively. Superteam members celebrate their successes and enjoy themselves.

The Team Apart

Superteam members understand that they will spend much of their time apart and that the “real work” is accomplished when they are apart. They pay attention to how they will work when apart—how they will stay in touch, keep up energy and commitment, spot problems early, and communicate successes quickly. They manage the balance between holding in and letting go—keeping team objectives in the fore while managing their individual priorities.

APPLYING THE SUPERTEAM MODEL

The following example comes from the experience of one organization in applying the superteam model. As the history of a particular superteam is related, the reader will notice occasional parenthetical phrases set in italicized type. Each of these phrases notes the superteam characteristic that is being illustrated by the example at that point.

Each year the company's employees complete an organizational-survey audit to pinpoint achievements as well as opportunities for growth. Achievements, once identified, are celebrated and further encouraged. After opportunities for growth have been identified, they are separated into two types: (1) those that pertain exclusively to a particular work unit and (2) those that have relevance for the entire organization.

Using the superteam concept, top management assigns the organization-wide opportunities (issues or problems) to a task force whose responsibility is to examine the company-wide scores on each issue and to come up with a viable response or solution. This task force is composed of representatives from each work unit in the organization. Its life is short and clearly defined at inception—generally about two months. Because this task force always functions so successfully and has not yet failed to become a “superteam”—despite the fact that its membership changes every year—it is worth examining the way in which it strives to achieve and then manifests the superteam characteristics.

The task force that was assembled to work from December of 1986 through mid-February of 1987 met for the first time on December 18, 1986. Also in attendance was the manager who had been chosen as the liaison between the task force and the management group; this person's responsibility was to present the task force's recommendations to the managers for approval, explaining the rationale and intentions as necessary. The first subject the members considered was the establishment of guidelines about how they would proceed (*planning the what*) and what norms would govern their meetings (*planning the how*). The following guidelines were determined at that meeting:

1. The members of the task force will share with one another all facts (data from the organization-wide survey as well as from other sources) related to each problem or issue addressed. The members will not proceed to solving any problem until all members have agreed on the definition of that problem.
2. The members will analyze the negative results of each problem by determining whose work is negatively affected and in what ways the problem keeps the organization from realizing its objectives.
3. The members will identify the desired end result of solving each problem by clearly stating the target situation and what will be, look, or feel different after the problem has been solved.
4. The members will formulate action steps to be taken in order to actualize the target situation (the desired end result) for each problem. The following will be specified:

- Who will take each action step;
 - Who outside the task force will need to be involved and in what capacity;
 - Whether management's approval will be needed for the member's proposed solution;
 - What organizational procedures and/or behaviors will need to be changed and in what ways; and
 - What deadlines and time frames will be set.
5. The members will determine a follow-up procedure for each problem to ensure that action is taken as planned. Those responsible for follow-up will be identified, and dates will be set up to review progress.

The members decided that their meeting times would be from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon each Wednesday, that they would spend one meeting period addressing each issue or problem, and that they would not meet if any member could not be present, because each person's participation and contributions were critical (*membership/the team together*). Another important decision involved choosing a leader. After considerable discussion, they decided to share the leadership of the group, with a different member chairing each meeting. Each week's leader would be responsible for facilitating, keeping the members on target, and ensuring that the objectives of the meeting were met (*leading the team*).

Subsequently, they established a sample agenda to be used by the chairperson as a guideline for conducting each meeting. This agenda is shown in Figure 2. Note that the members decided to rate their satisfaction with their meetings on a regular basis, as part of their agenda.

Also included as part of the process of each meeting was the assignment of prework to specific members, who would gather additional data, make necessary phone calls, and investigate and work the issue on their own between meetings (*the team apart*). The members agreed to check with one another between meetings when additional help was needed or when particularly important data came to light. They also agreed to enlist one another's help when writing reports of what they had discovered and when writing memoranda about their activities as progress reports for all personnel.

The task-force members also discussed how to determine whether they had succeeded in their work (*negotiating success criteria*). They realized that the most important criterion of their success would be improved scores the next year on the survey issues that they were about to address. After discussion, however, they decided to set two additional criteria: (1) the satisfaction of the other members of the organization who were not serving on the task force and (2) their own overall satisfaction with how they worked together. Consequently, they selected one task-force member to develop an evaluation questionnaire to be distributed to all employees at the conclusion of the task force's work. This individual agreed to devise the questionnaire in the next week and to present it to the task force at the next meeting. They also decided to ask management for a follow-up all-personnel meeting the following June to review progress on the issues

9:00 a.m.	Decision on next topic and next chairperson.
9:05 a.m.	Department feedback on topic of previous meeting.*
9:15 a.m.	Review of survey data for current topic.
9:30 a.m.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Where we are. ■ Where we want to be. ■ Restraining/driving forces. ■ Key factors: Is the issue significant enough to warrant addressing? Is it changeable? ■ Decisions, recommendations. ■ Evaluation.
10:30 a.m.	Ten-minute break.
10:40 a.m.	Progress report.
10:45 a.m.	Continuation of process.
11:30 a.m.	Summary.
11:40 a.m.	Prework for next meeting.
11:55 a.m.	Rating of this meeting by participants.
Noon	Adjournment.

*Information gathered from individual departments about reactions to what the task force did the previous week.

Figure 2. Sample Agenda for Task-Force Meeting

addressed by the task force. In addition, they agreed to assemble twice after their work was finished: once to evaluate and discuss their overall satisfaction with their own work and once after the next year's survey data was available to determine whether there had been improvement in the issues they addressed. They further agreed to write recommendations for the next task force based on their experience.

During the next week, the liaison met with the managers and presented the task force's guidelines, sample agenda, evaluation questionnaire, success criteria, and recommendation for a follow-up all-personnel meeting. At this time the managers formally approved all that was presented so that the task force could continue its work as planned; they also asked the liaison to convey their congratulations to the task force for their thorough, careful work.

In subsequent weeks the task-force members continued working in accordance with their intentions. As each issue was addressed, recommendations were determined and presented to the managers by the liaison. One recommendation was disapproved; at this point the task force readdressed the issue, and the liaison submitted new recommendations, which were approved. With each new issue, approved recommendations were acted on, and progress was always reviewed during the weekly meetings. Employees were consulted at intervals about the various issues being addressed, and several who were not members of the task force were asked to help with special projects or tasks. The employees were always thanked for their assistance, and the special helpers were both privately and publicly acknowledged in memoranda and in company-wide meetings (*managing the outside*). In addition, several outside experts were contacted for help with particularly difficult issues, such as that of regulating temperature within the building to ensure the employees' comfort.

By the middle of February, the task force had addressed all of the identified company-wide issues. An all-personnel meeting was scheduled, and at this meeting the members of the task force presented a progress report on each issue. At the conclusion of the meeting, each employee was asked to fill out an evaluation questionnaire about the task force's work. After all questionnaires had been completed, the members of the task force and the liaison member were formally congratulated for their accomplishments, and all employees were thanked for their willingness to help. Arrangements were made for the task-force members, the liaison, and the company president to celebrate at a luncheon that same week.

After the meeting two of the task-force members met to review the evaluations and to tally the results. One of these two prepared a report, which was distributed to all of the task-force members as well as the liaison at a meeting the following week. The members discussed the results and identified ways in which they functioned well, as well as ways in which they could have improved their functioning. One member typed a formal report on the results of the discussion in the form of recommendations for the next task force, and the liaison submitted it as well as the questionnaire results to the managers. Then the task force stopped meeting formally, although some of its members continued to work on ongoing issues such as temperature control.

In June the task-force members met again to discuss the current status of the issues and to plan their follow-up report. Only one issue was determined to be unresolved (the temperature issue, because the solution had not yet been tested during the warm summer months); plans were made to monitor temperatures through September and to act on the results. Two weeks later the follow-up all-personnel meeting was held, and the task-force members presented this report. At the end of the meeting, the task force was disbanded, and its members were again congratulated. They, in turn, again expressed their thanks to all employees for their help and support. After the meeting the members of the task force agreed to reconvene after the data from the next year's survey were available so that they could check scores on the issues they had addressed.

CONCLUSION

Although superteams are the stars—the best performers in the organization—any team can raise its performance to this level. In an organization that encourages flexibility, creativity, and experimentation, the proper climate for fostering superteams already exists. With training and guidance in how to function in accordance with the superteam characteristics, group members can actualize their potential, thereby benefiting both their organizations and themselves.

■ QUALITY CIRCLES: AFTER THE HONEYMOON

Edward E. Lawler III and Susan A. Mohrman

Quality circles are a widely practiced approach to improving organizational performance. Numerous articles have been written about their strengths and weaknesses. Both critics and proponents agree that they are typically characterized by a successful start-up or “honeymoon” period. The initial circles are characterized by high levels of enthusiasm and tend to produce a number of good suggestions. The problems with quality circles typically develop after they become an organization-wide activity and an effort is made to sustain them over a period of years. In this article we first review the reasons that quality circles typically are difficult to sustain. Subsequently, we address approaches for dealing with the problems of institutionalization and maintenance that are associated with quality circles.

THE STRUCTURE OF CIRCLES AND THEIR PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT

Quality circles are a parallel-structure approach to involving employees in problem solving. A parallel structure is one that is separate and distinct from the regular, ongoing activities of an organization and, as such, operates in a special way. In quality-circle programs, groups are composed of volunteers from a work area who meet with a special type of leader and/or facilitator for the purpose of examining productivity and quality problems. They typically meet for a few hours every week or two. In order to produce change, they must sell their ideas to the regular work organization. Because these groups constitute a form of parallel organization, they have certain inherent strengths and weaknesses that are characteristic of all parallel organizations.

One of their strengths is that they allow organizations to deal with issues that cannot be or are not dealt with in the regular organization because of lack of time or the way in which responsibilities and goals are defined, or because the issues are not salient to appropriate management or staff personnel. In addition, parallel structures can often start quickly and cause a minimal disruption to the organization’s performance. The creation of quality circles requires no obvious changes in the regular organization, its structure, activities, or responsibilities. Nevertheless, circles allow individuals who might otherwise not have such an opportunity to become involved in problem solving. In many organizations quality circles are the only participative management device that a number

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of managers are willing to accept, precisely because they are minimally disruptive to the status quo and they keep managerial authority and control firmly in place.

The problems associated with parallel structures are also significant. They tend to be viewed as a program, something “extra”; therefore, the meetings of quality circles—and indeed the structures themselves—are subject to cancellation. Parallel structures are also limited in the kinds of power they have and in the types of problem-solving activities in which they can engage. For example, quality circles typically have the power only to recommend innovations; the decision-making authority remains in the regular organization. Their mandate is to deal only with changes in work methods and procedures or organizational systems that are likely to improve quality and productivity. Because they involve only some of the employees, parallel organizations can lead to a situation in which circle members are thought of as “in” and all other employees as “out,” resulting in a negative backlash from nonparticipants. Finally, the norms and behaviors in the activities of the parallel structures may differ dramatically from those that govern the regular organization. These discrepancies can lead to tension for circle members if they see themselves treated as responsible-thinking contributors in their circle meetings but as something quite different in their day-to-day experience of the organization.

Research on quality circles has shown that they go through a series of predictable phases. The first phase, or “honeymoon” period, is typically very positive. During this phase a small number of groups are formed. They are extremely motivated to produce good ideas and improvements; and, as a result, the organization often realizes significant gains. This period is usually followed by the widespread dissemination of quality circles on the theory that if a few circles are good, a lot of circles are bound to be terrific. At this point the circle program tends to enter an era of “improvement by the numbers.” In other words, the organization counts the number of quality circles and assumes that the more there are, the more things are improving.

After the expansion program has led to the spread of circles throughout the organization, the first significant disillusionment with circles begins. The reasons for this disillusionment are numerous. Briefly, they include resistance on the part of middle managers, the failure to implement a number of the ideas generated by the circles, nonproductive circles, the extra cost of operating the extensive support systems that circles require, and the failure of some early circle ideas to produce the projected savings. Whereas the initial circles receive considerable high-level attention, generally from sponsors or champions of the process, later circles tend to be started more mechanically and must compete for management attention. Later circles are begun in an environment in which reactions to the circle process have been polarized because some individuals inevitably oppose them for political or personal reasons. At this point some organizations decide that quality circles were a mistake and abandon them. Others recognize that quality circles have had a positive impact and ask what can be done to sustain circles or to move beyond them to a different form of employee involvement. Inherent in the latter response is a desire to build on the good features of quality circles

and to carry them forward to other approaches aimed at the improvement of organizational performance.

In our view quality circles can be an important first step in moving toward organizational effectiveness through employee involvement. Indeed, there are a number of other participative approaches that can build on the work that is done in quality circles. There also are some things that can be done to sustain quality circles as an effective parallel structure. In the remainder of this paper we consider various options for companies that have implemented or are considering implementing a quality-circle program. These options include ways to extend and strengthen the circle process and the parallel-structure approach in general. An alternative approach that will be discussed is the transition to a team structure in which responsibility for decision making and problem solving is transferred to teams that are part of the regular organizational structure. We begin by examining the contributions of quality circles in establishing employee involvement in an organization.

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT: WHERE DO QUALITY CIRCLES FIT IN?

In thinking about what kind of participative structures are appropriate, an organization must examine two important considerations: (1) what issues are to be dealt with in a participative manner; and (2) how much decision-making authority will be delegated. Figure 1 illustrates the range of choices in these two areas. It differentiates decision styles on the basis of how much influence the actual performers of the work have and how much influence the management structure has. It also considers different kinds of decisions, ranging from those involving corporate strategy to those involving particular work methods and procedures. As noted in the figure, in the traditional management style, managers make all of the important strategy, structure, and work-design decisions, as well as most of the ongoing decisions about work procedures.

Quality circles change organizational decision making to a degree. They provide a vehicle through which the performers can influence how work is done. Employees can suggest better work methods, procedures, and occasionally organization-design alternatives; but quality circles are generally discouraged from considering broader policies, strategies, personnel matters, and structures. Quality-circle ideas usually must be approved by the regular management and staff structure, which means that these ideas belong in the category of joint rather than delegated decision making. It is this aspect that frequently results in the ultimate perception of circles as a burden on the organization. Instead of resulting in a transfer of responsibility to those who perform the work, they increase the demands on management and staff.

Nevertheless, the use of quality circles does result in the organization's becoming somewhat more participative; and it can begin to prepare the organization for other types of participative activities. First and foremost, the training programs that are part of most circle efforts provide a number of employees with important problem-solving and

Formulating Strategy		T A S K	B U S I N E S S
Designing Performance Unit and Context	T R A D I T I O N A L	F O R C E S	T E A M S
Managing Performance Unit		W O R K	
Deciding on Work Procedures		Q U A L I T Y C I R C L E S	T E A M S
	Management Decides	Joint Decisions	Performers Decide

Figure 1. Range of Choices of Participative Structures

group-process skills. They also provide some managers and supervisors with experience as participative leaders. Virtually every form of participative management requires that these skills be present.

Second, quality circles typically establish the credibility of employee involvement as a strategy. The positive results that are usually generated by quality circles demonstrate once and for all that people at all levels have useful ideas and can contribute meaningful suggestions when they are given an opportunity. In addition, the high volunteer rate usually associated with quality circles convinces managers that people wish to participate.

Finally, quality circles often produce important ideas and ways to improve productivity and quality. Successful implementation of such ideas contributes to a real sense of accomplishment on the part of circle members. It also may lead to a heightened awareness of how employees can take more responsibility for organizational performance.

Organizations can move beyond quality circles in one of three ways:

1. They can expand the kinds of decisions that are made by participative groups into the realms of strategy, design, and operating decisions. This expansion is generally accomplished through another type of parallel structure—task forces.
2. They can move from a model of joint decision making to one in which authority is actually delegated downward to the groups performing the work, by setting up work teams.

3. They can treat the quality circle as the basic building block of participation and alter various aspects of the organizational context to support successful circle functioning.

These three approaches are discussed in the following paragraphs.

Creating Task Forces

In many respects creating task forces is a small and natural step beyond quality circles in that task forces expand the parallel-structure approach. Task forces usually are assigned specific, critical problems and involve a cross-section of the work force. The training that is provided to quality circles is very appropriate for the problem solving that task forces must do, and task forces often allow the organization to receive broad input in solving the kinds of problems that are not normally dealt with by quality circles. For example, task forces can deal with policy issues, organization-design issues, and sometimes even corporate-strategy issues. Depending on the level of participation that the organization wants to grant, task forces can determine policy, strategy, and other organizational issues, or they can simply make recommendations on what should be done.

Like quality circles, task forces are easy to establish and, in many cases, quite productive. Also, like quality circles, they are not expected to last forever. The task forces themselves have specific life expectancies based on the types of problems they address. New task forces must be formed continually if an organization wants to keep alive this form of participation. Forming new task forces makes good sense if there are always issues to be addressed by the organization. This is particularly likely to happen in a dynamic environment where constant change and adaptation are needed.

Task forces have the advantage that they can include not only the production employees who are a part of quality circles but also management personnel. Although they may be resisted by some managers who do not like the idea of sharing decision making with lower-level employees, they partially eliminate management resistance because managers are included on task forces.

Task forces share an important problem with quality circles, however: only a limited number of people can participate at any one point in time. Therefore, they are not a broad participation vehicle. The limited life expectancy of any particular task force, however, makes it likely that a number of employees may eventually have the opportunity to serve on one. Because of the increased scope of decisions and the opportunity to involve more people at more levels of the organization, task forces can be an important and useful structure for any organization that wishes to broaden the amount and kinds of influence that performers have. Companies such as Honeywell and Xerox have successfully expanded their original quality-circle programs in some facilities to include wide usage of task forces.

Creating Work Teams

Work teams are groups of employees that take responsibility for producing a product or service. They make most decisions associated with their production activities. They schedule, assign work, decide on methods, and in some cases select their members, decide on pay, and choose their managers or leaders. Unlike quality circles, they are not parallel structures; they do the regular production work of the organization. They are sometimes called autonomous work groups, self-managing teams, or semiautonomous groups. As is shown in Figure 1, they typically allow employees to make decisions about work methods and procedures and influence decisions about the day-to-day management of the work area.

Historically the work-team concept grew up quite independently of quality circles. Teams have been strongly recommended as a participative organization design feature for decades, particularly as part of organizations designed by sociotechnical-systems approaches. Many new plants in the United States that have been designed to maximize the involvement of employees have used the work-team model. For example, TRW, Digital Equipment, Procter & Gamble, and Johnson & Johnson have all built plants with teams. Teams are used because they lead to the involvement of employees in managing their own work activities on an ongoing basis. This concept can be contrasted to the common belief that underlies the implementation of quality circles: that the work force should be involved in productivity and quality-enhancement efforts. The fundamental basis of work teams is a commitment to a philosophy that is the foundation for all aspects of an organization, whereas the basis of quality circles is a limited commitment that may or may not fit the underlying management philosophy.

Although forming teams is obviously a huge leap beyond quality circles, in some respects teams are a logical follow-up. Circles, in effect, introduce the organization to participative processes by providing training for some organizational members and by providing real-life examples of how such processes work and what can be accomplished. In addition, circles may well raise issues that result in heightened awareness of the barriers to effective performance in the organization, thus whetting the appetites of many for new approaches. They may also make visible the ways in which a participative approach comes into conflict with the traditional management model. Thus, the reduction of functional divisions by combining responsibilities into a team motivates employees to achieve improvements in performance and reduces the need for supervision and staff. These developments may seem to some a natural next step beyond circles.

Despite the potential advantages of teams, we rarely see them occur as a follow-up to quality circles. There are a number of reasons for this. The primary one seems to be that they represent a much more dramatic step toward participative management than most organizations are willing to take. As was pointed out, they do in fact require a shift in management philosophy. In addition, they do not naturally follow from the quality-circle programs of most organizations.

However, work teams could follow quality circles more naturally if certain features of the circles were designed to facilitate such a transition. First let us consider the design of the circles themselves. Quality circles typically take only volunteers from a particular work area and put them into a circle. This means that many people in a work area may never have experience with quality circles. The team concept, on the other hand, does not allow for volunteers; for a team to be effective, everyone in the work area needs to be a member. In addition, supervisors are critical to the success of a team. In many cases quality circles do not affect the supervisor, and in that supervisors are trained and that everyone in the work area is trained, the organizational structure may need to be altered. Work teams are not necessarily best formed on the basis of existing work groups and relationships. New reporting relationships and structures typically are needed. Similarly, changes may be required in many of the major organizational systems, such as personnel practices, in order to create an environment that is conducive to work teams. Figure 2 summarizes some of the changes that may be necessary.

Creating a Supportive Organizational Context

As has been stressed, quality circles often lose their momentum because the existing organization is not designed to support the parallel structure created by the quality-circle program. Circles begin to be perceived as a burden on the organization as people lose their initial enthusiasm and/or results are harder to achieve. Task forces or work teams can be developed to replace or complement quality circles, and these approaches do open up new participative avenues in the organization. However, it is also possible to change some characteristics of the existing organization to make it more supportive of quality circles, thereby enhancing circle effectiveness.

A major candidate for change is the reward system. There is a long history of very successful experience with “gainsharing” plans, like the Scanlon Plan, that involve the use of parallel-organization structures. In these plans a financial formula is developed for compensating employees for productivity and/or cost improvements. Experience with these plans indicates that a combination of problem-solving groups and bonuses for performance improvement can be a viable long-term strategy for performance improvement.

Today there are Scanlon Plans that have been in operation for over three decades, and they continue to be effective. A major reason for their long-term effectiveness is that, unlike quality circles, they affect everyone in the organization and reward performance improvement with an important incentive. The effect is to encourage everyone to think of ideas, participate in problem solving, and implement the ideas and suggestions that come out of the problem-solving process. In essence, because everyone in the organization shares in the success of the parallel structure, it is in everyone’s best interest to ensure that the parallel structure works well.

Just as in the case of the movement to teams, it is important to point out that the transition to gainsharing may involve fundamental changes in philosophy. Underlying gainsharing is the belief that every worker ought to share in financial-performance

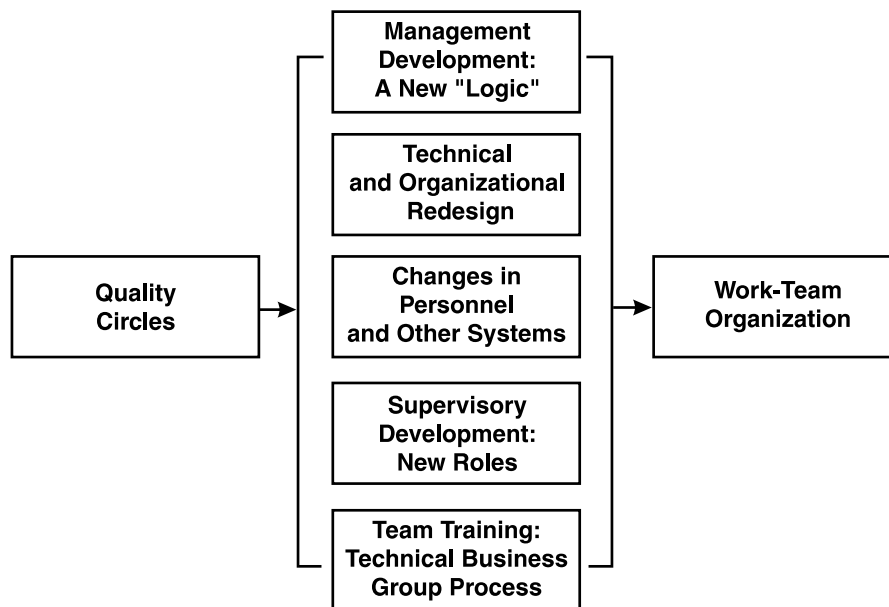


Figure 2. Changes That May Be Necessary To Create Work Teams

improvements. Many quality-circle proponents believe that the benefit to the employee should be intrinsic—that it should consist of outcomes such as satisfaction and pride rather than financial rewards. The premise of gainsharing is that financial results improve because of the combined efforts of everyone; this premise may conflict with organizational assumptions that such results are the responsibility of management and that incentives should properly reward only managers. Gainsharing calls for a broad sharing of information and training about the financial performance of the organization, while traditional management thinking argues for keeping this information in the hands of senior management.

In most gainsharing installations the parallel problem-solving approach is implemented simultaneously with the bonus for organizational improvement. However, this does not have to be the case. Indeed, a reasonable argument can be made for following the installation of quality circles with a gainsharing plan. One problem in the start-up of the typical gainsharing plan is that because there is so much to do, important activities are overlooked. Frequently, the participative structures do not receive adequate attention because of a tendency to focus solely on the financial aspect. In a typical gainsharing plan, for example, there is a need to train people in how the bonus formula works and to educate them about cost and the financial situation of the organization. In addition, problem solving and the suggestion process need to be introduced. An alternative is to start with the problem-solving process and then move to gainsharing once there are structures and skills in place to generate gain.

Another factor may argue for the use of quality circles before instituting a financial bonus. Gainsharing uses a fixed historical base to calculate improvements. If the organization has a lot of easily solved problems and is having financial difficulties, it may not make sense to share gains that are gathered from simply putting the house in

order. If gainsharing is implemented immediately, these improvements will result in perpetual bonuses for employees. In the case of an already effectively functioning organization, this usually is not a problem; but it may be a significant issue in an organization that is performing poorly and needs gains simply to be competitive.

There are some other features of the reward system that can be changed to reinforce circle activity. For example, some companies in the United States that are committed to sustaining their quality circles have strongly emphasized nonfinancial forms of recognition. These include opportunities to attend conventions; competitions among circles for the best improvement; and, of course, the opportunity to meet with top management and have circle work acknowledged. All of these practices are potentially effective ways of reinforcing the importance of circles and sustaining interest. Unfortunately, they do not deal with the issue of nonparticipants; they create neither a participation opportunity nor a reward for individuals who are not circle members.

One way to reduce the discrepancy between the participative experiences people have in quality circles and the day-to-day work experiences they have is to use the human resource systems to develop and reward participative supervisory practices. Supervisors and managers at all levels can be trained in participative techniques; appraisal, reward, and promotion can be made dependent on managerial style. Employees who experience a daily environment in which their supervisors elicit input, share information, and are open to suggestions are less likely to resent the time their coworkers spend in circle meetings. “Informal” problem solving is likely to become a regular part of the work setting, and the tension between the participative model of the quality circle and the daily management philosophy will be reduced.

Finally, changes in the information system and the education system can help quality circles to function more effectively. Most fundamentally, the information system can be designed to enable the regular sharing of key performance measures with all employees in a work unit. When trends in work-area performance are made obvious to employees in general and circle members in particular, employees can set goals, initiate changes designed to improve performance, and experience satisfaction when performance improves. In addition, the widespread availability of information about performance—especially if circle measures are being adopted and improvements are taking place—can dispel the subjective perception of managers and employees that the time spent in circle meetings is nonproductive or damaging to productivity. Dispelling negative perceptions in this way is important because the changes initiated in quality circles often have an indirect, cumulative impact on performance instead of a direct, immediately measurable impact. Thus, disseminating information about trends can provide “hard” evidence that is often needed to persuade skeptics.

A problem in some quality circles is that the members often do not have the economic and business education necessary to make good suggestions and decisions. This problem can be partially solved by offering education in economics and organizational performance. We have noticed that circles often stall after they have addressed the more obvious and easy-to-solve problems in a work area; the technical

knowledge of the circle members is often inadequate to go further. This eventuality may be overcome if technical staff groups provide the circles with assistance and training. In addition, the information system of the organization can be opened up so that all employees have a better idea of costs, business performance, and even the strategy of the organization. Often circles come up with good ideas that are not practical because of strategy changes or business decisions that the circle members do not know about. Consequently, allowing circles access to more information can reduce their chances of going down blind alleys and generating suggestions for change that are impractical or cannot be implemented.

In summary, an existing organization can make some changes that can help to sustain quality circles. Figure 3 illustrates these approaches. The approach that has the greatest probable impact is to develop a gainsharing formula so that everyone will participate in the benefits from improvements in performance. Other possible approaches include improved information and education for circle members and the use of training, appraisal, and rewards to develop participative supervision. In order to implement changes in rewards, information, and education, the organization must become a more participative environment for lower-level participants. This reinforces the point that for an organization to sustain a parallel structure that is participative in nature, it needs to become more participative in the way it does its day-to-day business.

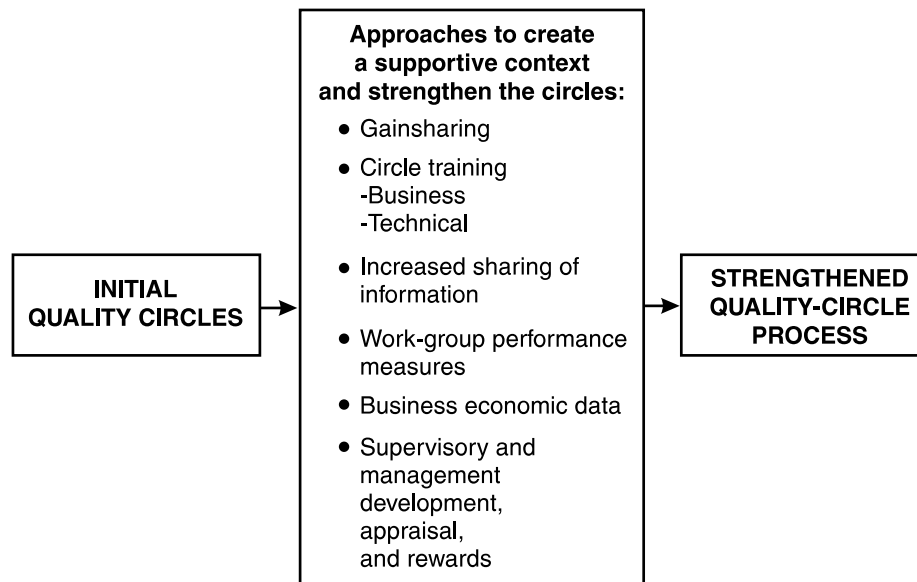


Figure 3. Strengthening the Quality-Circle Approach

OTHER STRATEGIES FOR INCREASING EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

As we have explained, an organization that wants to support the continued effectiveness of quality circles can take steps to do so. In addition, quality circles also can be used as a beginning point for an organization that wishes to move toward a more participative-

management approach. However, an organization that has never had quality circles and wants to increase employee involvement also has options.

Although quality circles can be a beginning point in a move toward participative management, they are not necessarily the best place to start, nor are they guaranteed to lead to other forms of involvement. The argument so far clearly suggests that if they are to lead to more extensive forms of involvement, considerable planning, support, and transition help are needed. Indeed, one alternative clearly is to skip quality circles entirely and to implement the work-team approach or a similar participative structure. This approach has been used in the start-up in many new plants and in such organizations as People Express Airlines and American Transtech. In most start-up situations this strategy is preferred, because it allows the organization to move more quickly in creating a participative culture and avoids processes that are incongruent with a high-involvement approach.

The situation may be different, however, in existing organizations. An existing organization may not be ready to move toward a team environment or one in which task forces make a number of important organizational decisions. In this case quality circles can provide a possible first step toward other forms of employee involvement. It is important at the beginning, however, to decide whether quality circles are an end in themselves or a transition vehicle that will lead to other forms of involvement. As previously noted, circles need to be structured differently and people trained differently if, in fact, the intention is to move to work teams and task forces. Finally, in an organization that has no experience with participation, it may be desirable to start with a program like gainsharing, which introduces a parallel-organization structure and at the same time changes the reward system. When this type of program is successfully introduced, evidence suggests that it can lead to relatively rapid improvement in organizational performance.

In conclusion, for an organization that does not have quality circles, it is important to plan on a sequence of change interventions that will lead to the type of participative organization that is desired. The right sequence depends on a number of factors, including the technology and current attitudes and values of the managers and employees. For example, the more traditional the existing organization, the more likely it is that quality circles are a good starting point. If the organization is ready for a more participative approach, then quality circles may be skipped as a first step.

The decisions confronting an organization that already has a quality-circle program are much different from those facing an organization with no program. Stated briefly, organizations with quality circles typically face a choice between transforming them or institutionalizing them. Institutionalizing them can be accomplished through the kind of support activities that were discussed earlier. Transforming them involves the formation of other kinds of parallel structures and/or the development of work teams as the primary focus of idea generation, problem solving, and employee involvement.

The choice between transformation and institutionalization is not an easy one. Our reading of the evidence is that transformation is likely to lead to the greatest

organizational effectiveness in the long term. However, it is clearly a difficult step to accomplish because it involves the development of a new philosophy about managing. In addition, it requires significant changes in managerial behavior and the development of a long-term perspective on organizational performance. For a number of reasons, it may not be practical or desirable to think about a major transition effort in an organization. For example, the resources may not be available to support it, or instability may be so great that no long-term commitments can be made. Finally, the power structure in the organization may not be receptive to more intensive forms of employee involvement, in which case the best strategy may be either to allow quality circles to fade away entirely or to make the contextual and structural changes necessary ensure that the circles continue to operate.

CONCLUSION

Quality circles are potentially useful in helping an organization to move toward greater effectiveness. Their orientation and structures are consistent with a participative approach to management. As such, they pose a challenge: how well can traditional management approaches coexist with quality circles? Our view is that in the long term quality circles have trouble existing with traditional management approaches; either the circles fade, or major features of traditional approaches must be changed. There is no road map for how to use quality circles. However, some of the strengths and weaknesses of circles suggest that careful consideration should be given before they are chosen as an approach to participative management and that, in most cases, it may be best to transform them into another type of participative management.

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■ GENERAL INCLUSION GROUPS VERSUS INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE NETWORKS

Stanley M. Herman

Abstract: In the training and organization development (OD) professions, an overemphasis on systems and teams may well have obscured the importance of developing individuals. This article explores the current imbalance in perspective. It examines the uses and limitations of typical organizational groups. These are identified as “general inclusion groups” (GIGs), which include groups that are based on the principle of participation by everybody involved in the activity or issue being addressed. Subsequently, the composition and functions of the GIGs are contrasted with those of “individual initiative networks” (IINs), configurations of goal-driven individuals and their supporters. The power of the IIN is the vision, initiative, and determination of individuals working in voluntary combination to achieve a particular goal. Examples are given of the kinds of things that IINs can achieve.

The article concludes with a discussion of the role of HRD professionals in creating, training, and supporting effective organizational groups without ignoring or shortchanging the power and potential of the individual.

There is a distinct possibility that the organization development (OD) and training professions have been seduced by the “systems viewpoint” and have lost sight of the importance of developing and training autonomous individuals. Over the last decade, most of the best minds and talents in human resource development (HRD) have been increasingly focused on large-scale change and employee-involvement groups. This has been accompanied by heavy concentration on the development and delivery of mass training aimed at changing organizational cultures. There has been relatively little concentration on the development and facilitation of the individual, as pathfinder, initiator, implementer, or even as an effective member of a work group or network—Gifford Pinchot's work on “intrapreneuring” being the exception.

The case to be made in this article is not antagonistic to systems thinking or group training. It is quite clear that these orientations serve valuable purposes. However, if our preoccupation with them becomes exclusive, if we forget that all systems are concocted abstractions and that all groups are composed of individual members, we perpetuate a potentially dangerous imbalance. Our too general championing of these approaches may be obscuring some important realities. These are as follows:

1. Preoccupation with large-scale systems has encouraged a tendency among training and OD people to use “cookbook” interventions and techniques that are often inappropriate for the organization. Concurrently, many HRD people are

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neglecting the basic skills of group process, diagnosis, readiness assessment, and political acumen that would make their efforts more relevant and functional.

2. An indiscriminate advocacy of employee-involvement teams as the cure for what ails organizations is dysfunctional. HRD and OD specialists need to recognize that different working configurations are effective for different purposes and at different times. This includes understanding that developing the potential contribution of exceptional individuals and key leaders is essential for surviving and flourishing in a highly competitive environment.
3. There are two central purposes of HRD: the improvement of organizational effectiveness and the development of individual growth and competence.

The significant contributions of OD and training to organizational effectiveness have been increasingly recognized by management. A number of HRD professionals have gained access to top management. They facilitate strategic planning sessions, implement company-wide quality and customer-orientation programs, help develop more rapid product-development cycles, and conduct large-scale employee-involvement efforts. HRD managers, like most managers, enjoy being involved in large, important issues, which usually translates to involvement with systems and groups—the bigger, the more important.

Programs designed by successful HRD professionals have served as models for others who, understandably, want to emulate their success. Unfortunately, attempts to transfer principles and methods directly from one organization to another—as though they were universally applicable—have frequently resulted in frustration and failure. General inclusion groups (GIGs) are formations such as quality circles, problem-solving groups, semiautonomous work groups, and employee-involvement groups. These formations are generally based on the principle of participation by everybody involved in the activity or issue being addressed. In contrast, individual initiative networks (IINs) are configurations of autonomous individuals and their supporters, usually comprised of volunteers (either self-selected or recruited by the network leader).

With appropriate training and direction, GIGs have proven useful for incremental organizational improvement. They have also demonstrated significant limitations, particularly if the change required is radical rather than incremental.

However, even when GIGs are given broad charters, have strong encouragement from management, and generate great enthusiasm, their results are frequently disappointing. Often, group members concentrate on their own organizations and specialties and ignore cross-functional interfaces—or they are confused even about where to begin.

One manager of a research-and-development organization that I worked with tells of three separate GIGs, composed of competent engineers and technicians, who were charged with developing recommendations for significant reductions (25 percent or more) in time required for new-product development. The goal, which they set themselves, was recognized as important to business survival. Over the course of several meetings, the following patterns were observed in their interactions:

Issue dispersion. Early discussions ranged over a wide area without focusing on specific issues. When the group was encouraged by both a consultant and its manager to select one or two key approaches, members continued to waver among possibilities. Their eventual result seemed as much an abdication as a recommendation: “Appoint a single project manager with decision-making authority.”

Solution dispersion. Group members made few recommendations for major changes in procedures or structures. Those that were proposed received little attention or were side-stepped. Group members were most engaged and talkative when they discussed who could be blamed for existing problems.

Change minimization. After the initial series of meetings, each group was asked to meet on its own to develop specific change recommendations. The quality of recommendations varied among the groups, but even the better ones were limited in scope and would not have resulted in anything near the targeted 25-percent reduction in time.

General-inclusion-group members often approach their tasks with caution. They may be willing to join in discussions that invite them to identify their own problems and solutions rather than having them defined by the manager. But that does not mean that they are ready to explore new horizons. More often, they trudge through familiar terrain after making sure that the trail is safe. Safety frequently involves adherence to informal, perhaps unconscious, guidelines such as the following:

- Avoid threatening others' interests (and they will avoid threatening yours).
- Be careful about making proposals that could affect your job (or the group you represent). You may wind up with more work to do, and management is unlikely to relieve you of any of your present duties.
- Avoid the inevitable risk involved in significant changes.
- Avoid personal discomfort or embarrassment in group discussions; don't depart from group consensus.
- When unsure about what to do, delay by engaging in long discussions of details, semantics, and general principles.
- “Don't fix anything that ain't broke.”

The intent of this is to point out the norms, pressures, and inhibitions that affect GIGs. Safety and conservation of the status quo are powerful motivators within most social groups. Well-trained and well-led GIGs have been useful in incremental quality improvement and production problem solving, but even these GIGs tend to produce solutions that are extensions of their current operations, not innovations.

THE INDIVIDUAL INITIATIVE NETWORK

When refinements or improvements of existing procedures are required, trained groups may perform well. However, in today's competitive global environment, improvement of existing procedures may not be sufficient. When new, inventive approaches are required (for example, redefining markets, redesigning structures or major processes), it may be useful to turn again to the vision, initiative, and determination of exceptional individuals, working in voluntary combination to achieve an extraordinary purpose.

As leadership focuses on strategic issues, its perspectives become increasingly abstract. Problems and opportunities appear in the guise of data, trends, policies, and so on. The concept of real people performing their jobs often becomes indistinct and peripheral. However, a thoughtful examination of the day-to-day workings of organizations reveals that, at all levels, important determinants of organizational performance are the thoughts and actions of individual people. Whether it is a chief executive assuming the responsibility for pursuing a new acquisition, a middle manager making a commitment to adopting employee-involvement groups in his or her division, an individual contributor doggedly following through on a technological inspiration, or an hourly employee sacrificing free time in order to qualify for a new job, acts of individual courage count.

The individual initiative network (IIN) brings these venturesome people together in voluntary association with others who can contribute to and support their initiatives. The IIN can be a temporary, personally selected advisory group for the CEO. For a middle manager, an IIN may consist of other managers who have similar interests and/or a training specialist, a consultant, and one or two subordinate managers who are enthusiastic about a particular idea—people who want to make it happen. For the individual contributor, an IIN may consist of a few technicians, a marketing specialist, and perhaps his or her own manager. For the hourly employee, the IIN may be a mutual support group of classmates.

The distinguishing characteristics of the IIN include the following:

- An IIN is not usually derived from a typical organization-wide-participation or employee-involvement program. An IIN usually begins organically in response to a problem or opportunity.
- IINs are driven by the individual, often idiosyncratic, visions (sometimes obsessions) of their initiators. These leaders frequently are pathfinders. They are not necessarily popular either within their organizations or among business educators.
- IINs are purpose driven, and their fuel is a mixture of persuasion and power. IINs are usually self-organized, with few of the inhibiting norms of GIGs. Sometimes IINs lack the social sensitivity of GIGs, and this can work against them in the implementation stages of their projects, when the cooperation of nonmembers is required.

- The energy and cohesion of an IIN derives from its purpose, rather than from its relationships. Thus, when the purpose is met, or when it fails, the IIN tends to disband quickly.

What distinguishes the IIN from other groups is the generative, single-minded drive of its leader(s)—and the way in which that drive is transmitted to other members. IIN leaders may not always be the most personable or accommodating people. They may be egocentric, stubborn, and impatient, characteristics that research reveals are common to entrepreneurs. But such single-minded, innovative risk takers have been and continue to be essential to a successful organization.

The drive of the IIN leader is illustrated by the earlier story of the R&D manager who sought to reduce new-product-development time. Disappointed with the lack of substantive recommendations from his three GIGs, but undaunted, the manager personally assumed the responsibility to reduce product-development time by 25 percent or more. After considerable thought and discussion with several of his peers and lower-level engineers and technicians, the manager good-humoredly introduced himself as “cycle time Czar—from product concept to delivery.”

From his conversations and from observations at various levels in the manufacturing function, the manager recognized a series of important obstacles in the disparate scheduling systems used by the R&D and manufacturing organizations. In collaboration with the manufacturing manager, he assigned a small group of engineers and technicians to adapt the R&D system to conform with the manufacturing system. This effort clarified several previously unrecognized interface problems and enabled significant corrections to be made.

In its early days, U.S. industry's unique strength was said to have been its “rugged individualism.” If we think of individualism as creativity and the courage to venture, it is an exciting prospect.

THE CHALLENGE FOR HRD PROFESSIONALS

HRD professionals have an opportunity to advocate and contribute to the major changes that are required to maintain—and, in some cases, restore—the United States' competitive edge. If these professionals limit their efforts to the encouragement of broad employee involvement in problem solving and other response-oriented activities, they will probably not attain their full potential. An approach that takes into account ways of building on individual strengths is likely to be more productive. Some suggestions for expanding the potential of both GIGs and IINs include the following:

- Recognize the differences between and uses and limitations of individual initiative networks and general inclusion groups.
- Develop “inventories” of specially skilled individuals such as initiators, organizers, and implementers. Assist in building connections between these people and provide training for them in business planning, “political” and group

processes, and so on. Encourage them to work in self-organizing teams and provide support.

- Recognize new, continually fluid models of organizational change. Although the classic model of change has been “unfreeze-change- refreeze,” our current era may necessitate a new model of “unfreeze-catch the wave-ride it.”
- Integrate information and telecommunications technology into OD and training and into thinking about the group work environment.
- Implement approaches to minimize envy, suspicion, and opposition from others toward those who volunteer or are recruited for IINs.
- Train GIG members to avoid “group think,” especially in the early stages of exploring issues. (For example, encourage structured debates between those who hold different points of view.)
- Educate employees in constructive followership as well as leadership. Help them to recognize both the values and the pitfalls involved in the consensus-seeking process. Encourage the personal “grounding” and self-esteem required to stand up to prevailing opinion with both civility and conviction during the debate and deliberation phase of decision making and to support decisions once they are made.
- Encourage employees to “discover opportunities outside the formal business plan and make things happen outside the formal job description.

Sources of Individual Focus

Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, and Fritz Perls were among the seminal contributors to the OD field. The works of all three were predicated on the uniqueness of the individual. They saw each person as a free agent with an inborn tendency to realize his or her own potential. Maslow, in particular, presented a model for the development of the person that included the “peak experience”—an individual encounter with the best within oneself, an opportunity for the person to surpass his or her ordinary level of functioning or perception and reach a new height of performance or insight.

This orientation has declined significantly in the last decade. Even those few current approaches that are focused on the individual are usually “validated” according to statistical distributions from mass testing. A number of current “trait” inventories ask people to answer a series of questions, add up their scores, and consult the table provided in order to find their categories. It is as if we have become more committed to slotting our characteristics into pigeon holes than to exploring the unique aspects of our selves.

We live in an age of demographics. Demographics, the statistical study of tendencies in human population distributions, is a valuable tool for predicting market-segment reactions. Nonetheless, we must remind ourselves that market segments are convenient abstractions, and if the manager (or the HRD professional) forgets to “walk

among them,” individual people may be reduced to depersonalized units. Perhaps this depersonalization is one cause of the serious problems of stress, substance abuse, and depression found in our society.

Good products are made of good parts. Better communities, better teams, and better coalitions can be built if they are built of confident, competent, and congruent individuals.

As we have discussed, refocusing on individuals is neither easy nor very fashionable at present. In a backlash to the 1960s, the last two decades were times of concentration on systems, cultures, and other large-scale abstractions. Comfort, acceptance, and support can be derived from group affiliation. Identity, freedom, personal strength, and self-realization must all be discovered on one's own.

■ THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION AND THE PERCEPTION OF PROCESS

Anthony G. Banet, Jr.

Group psychotherapists have compared their function in the psychotherapy group to the work of an orchestra conductor, a catalyst, a detective, a midwife, a captain of a ship. They have called themselves parents, teachers, guides, facilitators, healers, helpers, coaches, social engineers.

However this complex and difficult leadership position is regarded, the group psychotherapist's primary task function is to work those immediate process issues that offer the greatest promise for group members' growth and behavior change. "Working the issues" involves three major components: accurate perception of the unfolding of the group process; appropriate and helpful intervention designed to produce change; and follow-through with the diverted process after change has been initiated.

Despite alleged differences (whether real or apparent) between psychotherapy groups and other varieties of personal growth and training groups, it is hoped that this discussion of the leadership function will be widely applicable to many groups, psychotherapeutic or not.

The psychotherapy group is a small group of people (six to twelve members) that employs a trained psychotherapist to help individuals in the group overcome personal deficiencies and make constructive changes in their behavior. Some special characteristics of the psychotherapy group: (a) the members feel that they need help in personal, interpersonal, marital, or vocational areas; (b) members are selected by the psychotherapist to participate; (c) the relationship between group members and the psychotherapist is contractual, with the psychotherapist assuming primary leadership responsibilities; (d) the group meets on a regular basis over a period of time; (e) verbal interaction is the group's usual, but not exclusive, mode of working.

The group psychotherapist's mission is to provide an environment in which the individual group member can accomplish his or her aims: develop awareness of what he or she is doing, accept or own responsibility for his or her own behavior, and act in accordance with his or her newly discovered awareness and ownership.

THE GROUP PROCESS

At any given moment in the life of a group, a variety of events are occurring. One member yawns; another is preoccupied with resentment toward his wife. The

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psychotherapist is impatient. All but two members are seated on the floor. Another member debates whether to disclose the information she gave her individual psychotherapist yesterday. Two members discuss in whispers their scorn for a popular newspaper advice column.

Much is happening. A member addresses the group; attention now focuses on the speaking member. Private events give way to interaction, which is a prime attribute of the psychotherapy group and the reason for its existence.

Group process is the interaction, over time, of two or more of the elements classified in Table 1. More specifically, as defined by Foulkes and Anthony (1957), it is “the interaction of the elements of the (group) situation in their reciprocal relationships and communications, verbal and nonverbal.”

Table 1 classifies the various internal and external forces that have impact on the group process and that are to be monitored by the group psychotherapist. The elements reflect the fact that any group member is an individual who exists in a permanent system outside the group and who joins a temporary system—the psychotherapy group—to change his or her way of being in the permanent system.

In Lewinian terms, the elements of process compose a momentary field of all forces that actively influence the group life at any given point in time (Lewin, 1935). Behavioral elements, most visible and measurable, are at the top of each of the three categories in Table 1; the elements listed toward the bottom of each section are more covert and inferential. Some elements are always of importance in the psychotherapy group, others only rarely; but, as Mills (1967) emphasizes, there is “no naturalistic nor *a priori* grounds for excluding sectors of elements” if the group is to become an environment for change.¹

Group Elements

These refer to phenomena that occur while the group is meeting. The *interaction* system is the pattern of interpersonal behavior and communication between members; it is *how* interaction happens in the group. It includes how members are addressed, how they cluster or pair off, whether they speak to individual members or to the entire group, etc. The *group emotion* is the feeling tone, the emotional climate: groups may be playful, angry, fearful, hard at work, depressed, excited. The group emotion may be collectively produced or may be the result of the special influence of one or two powerful members. The *normative system* consists of the set of shared ideas about how members should feel, think, and behave. Group norms may be heavily influenced by the psychotherapist, especially if he or she sanctions certain types of behavior and discourages others. The *group culture* is separate from the set of group norms. It includes preferences and standard operating procedures, such as sitting on the floor, asking permission to go to the bathroom, touching each other, making “inside” jokes, the degree of formality or

¹ I am indebted to Mills (1967) for his cogent discussion of the sociological aspects of group interaction. Table 1 is a modification of his classification, appropriate to psychotherapy groups.

Table 1. Classification of Process Elements That Compose the Momentary Field of Active Influences on Group Life²

GROUP	MEMBER	CONTEXTUAL
Interaction System: The pattern of interpersonal behavior and communication among members	Behavior Style: How the member tends to behave and communicate while in the group	Physical and Social Contacts: The pattern of behavior and communication outside the group with group members or others
Group Emotion: The predominant mood or feeling in the group; the feeling relations among members	Personal Feeling State: The needs, drives, urges being experienced	Emotional Relations: The type and quality of the feeling relations between group members and outsiders
Normative System: The set of shared ideas about how members, as a group, should feel and behave while in the group	Internalized Norms: The degree to which a member incorporates the group norms into his or her own system	Contractual Relations: Relationships between group members and outsiders (spouses, children, parents, employers, etc.) that have obligations attached
Group Culture: The collectively defined preferences and standard operating procedures for working in the group	Beliefs and Values: Explicit and implicit definitions of reality; preferences for given ideas, philosophies, world views	Cultural Interchange: Feelings about the way group membership is perceived by others; how the group culture can/does interact with the outside world
Executive System: The group's capabilities for developing consciousness; how group leadership is defined and regarded; feelings of members toward the leader and the leader's feelings toward them	Ego: The person's capabilities for assessing realities; his or her strengths, genetic endowment, self-concept; how he or she feels about himself or herself; his or her ability to plan and his or her change potential; intrapsychic events	Freedom-Control Relations: How members interact with outside authority figures; degree of dependence on the outside world for nurturance, safety, etc.

informality. The *executive system* includes how group leadership is defined and regarded, how or whether leadership functions are shared, members' feelings for (or about) and perceptions of the psychotherapist, his or her feelings for (or about) and perceptions of members. The group's capacity to develop consciousness of itself, that is, to become its own leader, is also part of the executive system.

² Adapted from Mills (1967).

Member Elements

Process events generated by individual group members while they are in the group meeting are member elements. The member's *behavior style* includes his or her methods of verbal and nonverbal communication, body posture, speech habits; tendencies toward self-disclosure or self-projection; monopolizing or withdrawing, etc. The behavior style may or may not reflect the *personal feeling state*, the *needs, drives, or urges* that the member experiences while in the group meeting. There may be considerable variation among individual members in their awareness of body sensations, expectations, comfort level, impulses, wishes and fears. *Internalized norms* refer to the set of group "shoulds" incorporated by the individual member. For the psychotherapy group member, group norms may conflict with norms gathered from other settings. Norms govern specific behaviors, whereas *beliefs and values* are explicit or implicit definitions of reality (self, the group, outside events) that indicate the ideas or philosophies that the member prizes, prefers, fears, or rejects. The *ego* refers to the member's capabilities for assessing reality, diagnosing his or her current situation, and altering his or her style, habits, feelings, and beliefs according to new circumstances. It includes the member's self-concept, self-regard, strengths, intelligence, genetic endowments, defense system, and level of vulnerability.

Contextual Elements

Often screened out by the here-and-now focus of the training group, contextual elements may assume considerable importance in the psychotherapy situation. The context is the environment in which the group member experiences his or her difficulties and distortions most painfully: It is here that he or she wants to change his or her behavior. Because the psychotherapy group meets only periodically, the "back-home" situation of members is an ever-present reality.

It is usually assumed in group work that a member's behavior in the group corresponds closely to his or her behavior outside the group. Because of his or her knowledge of the member's history and context, the psychotherapist can help the members see the parallels between their own group behavior and their behavior in their own context. Interventions that associate current group events with contextual phenomena have high therapeutic potential.

Contextual elements include events that occur among group members when the group is not in session, as well as interactions with people unrelated to the group. It is common for social and sexual relationships to develop among group members, and such contextual events may acquire critical importance during the succeeding group sessions.

Physical and social contacts refer to interactions with people (other group members or nonmembers) outside the group setting. *Emotional relations* are the member's feelings about affective relationships with group members or others outside the group. These include such attitudes as inadequacy and suspicion and ideas of reference. *Contractual relations* are relationships with obligations attached: with spouse, children, parents, employers, or legal authorities, including also a member's financial obligations.

Cultural interchange refers to the member's position in his or her culture—whether he or she feels included, excluded, or alienated; how he or she feels membership in the group (i.e., being labeled “sick” or a “patient”) is regarded by others outside the group—and the relationship between the culture of the group and the culture of the context. Another cultural aspect is the member's inclusion in outside groups (class, socioeconomic, racial, religious) that may influence his or her or others' behavior within the group meeting. *Freedom-control relations* represent a member's attitudes toward authority and responsibility and the influence these perceptions have on his or her and other members' behavior.

PERCEPTION OF GROUP PROCESS

The elements of process constitute a field of bewildering complexity. They vary widely in their significance, visibility, and *pragnanz*.³ The psychotherapist, in order to perform the vital function for the group, must be able to coordinate his or her perceptions of process elements and to focus on those that are, at the same time, sufficiently ripe, visible, and important.

What makes the task of the psychotherapist so difficult is that he or she must be able to perceive what lies under the surface and to form judgments and take action on the basis of his or her perceptions. Like the video director, the psychotherapist must choose one image from several pictures presented by several different cameras. The decision is difficult, but the psychotherapist does have a variety of tools to aid in the perception of group process.

Objectives

Much has been written in praise of objectives (Mager, 1962); a precise objective allows a group to know when it has reached its goal. Unfortunately, however, the goals of psychotherapy groups rarely are clearly defined: “setting people free,” “working through a neurosis,” “reconstructing a defense system.” Psychotherapy groups also may be designed to serve specific *functions*—such as remotivation, support, emotional re-education, or socialization—rather than to meet specific *objectives*.

Psychotherapeutic objectives are often vague because few people come to psychotherapy with a clearly stated objective. Psychotherapists sometimes regard a group member's ambiguities as a license to aim at the total reconstruction of the member's personality. But such an overwhelming objective may promote interminable group membership.

A therapeutic contract (Egan, 1970, 1972) is a useful way for a psychotherapy group to specify its objectives. The contract allows the therapist to describe which process variables he or she will focus on, which variables he or she will screen out, and

³ A German term meaning “readiness,” used in Gestalt therapy.

what his or her expectations are. It also allows members to set time limits for decisions and to circumscribe specific areas of behavior change.

Group members' objectives are rarely unanimous. Great disparity in objectives is prized by some psychotherapists and avoided by others. Generally, the more explicit the objectives, the sharper the focus of the group, allowing the psychotherapist to concentrate intensely on one or two elements of process. Precise objectives, of course, do not automatically reduce the importance of all other process elements. Some events may acquire such intensity that they cannot be ignored. For instance, social or sexual contacts between group members outside the group may so influence the process of the group meeting that contracted objectives cannot be pursued. In this situation, objectives can be suspended temporarily or renegotiated.

Theory

The psychotherapist uses theory as a set of lenses to enhance his or her perception of process. A comprehensive theory can aid his or her immediate observation and help him or her to predict future process; it may also serve as a guide to appropriate interventions.

Group Theory

A set of formal or informal assumptions about group life gives the psychotherapist a chance to predict how individuals will behave in the group, what group phenomena are likely to occur, and how the group will grow and develop over time. A group theory reveals order and pattern in a seemingly random or chaotic situation.

Most theories of psychotherapy groups describe the group meeting in metaphorical terms that indicate what is happening in the group, what will happen, and how the psychotherapist will perceive and interpret the happening.

The group as family is a prevalent metaphor in psychoanalytic literature. The psychotherapist may construct the group to heighten transferences to family figures—mother, father, or siblings. The group-as-family becomes a setting in which members relive past events and receive corrective emotional experiences, this time guided by the parent-psychotherapist. In such a group, process elements such as behavior style or group culture may be unimportant, while ego-context interactions may be highly significant.

The group as primal horde—the Tavistock model originated by Bion—focuses only on group and contextual elements, completely ignoring individual member process elements, thus producing an intense examination of authority relations and other “basic assumptions” of the group.

The group as a community of learners is a metaphor that allows the group to see itself as a safe and supportive community in which members can learn about themselves and the process of change. In this model, contextual process elements may be of little or no importance.

The group as theater—Gestalt therapy—focuses on one-to-one interaction between psychotherapist and individual group member while other group members become observers. As the primary interactive event is the transaction between the leader and a member's ego, such a group may never focus on group elements.

Not all metaphors for the psychotherapy group are explicit; some psychotherapy groups resemble classrooms, others seem to be quasi-religious in character. For some therapists, the model may change from session to session. Group metaphors determine how the psychotherapist conceives his or her task and which process elements he or she regards as critical. A psychotherapist may be eclectic, but never atheoretical.

Developmental Theory

Group movement over time, usually occurring in phases, is the concern of developmental theory. Issues crucial in the first few meetings (such as safety, confidentiality, and influence) give way to other issues (degree of self-disclosure, interdependence) as the life of the group proceeds.

Developmental theories differ in particulars (Bennis & Shepard, 1970; Kaplan & Roman, 1963; Rogers, 1970), but there is considerable agreement in the perception of phases. Generally, initial phases of development are concerned with power, authority, and dependency relationships; later phases revolve around questions of intimacy and autonomy. The therapist who is aware of the group's probable development will heighten the accuracy of his or her perceptions.

Table 2 indicates the perceptual focus given to the elements of process by various representative theories and objectives. Elements within the *unshaded area* are seen as important and critical; elements within the *shaded area* are ignored, controlled, or specifically excluded. The initials referring to process elements are keyed to the elements of process as categorized in Table 1. (For example, "IS" refers to "Interaction System," which appears at the top left of Table 1.)

Ground Rules

The psychoanalyst Sandor Ferenczi, it is reported, instructed his analysands to eat, drink, urinate, and defecate as infrequently as possible between analytic sessions, so that all possible energy could be reserved for their time together. Limitations such as these can be hazardous, but many group workers find it advantageous to set some ground rules, primarily to sharpen the perception of process. A therapist may forbid contact between members outside the group, refuse to see clients individually while they are members of the psychotherapy group, or may decide to see each group member in individual sessions.

Most behavioral guidelines for group participants (many produced in training-group practice: Pfeiffer, 1972)—such as speaking for yourself, avoiding probing questions, looking at the person you are talking to—are aimed at clarifying communication and heightening encounter between group members.

Table 2. Major Group Approaches Classified According to Process Elements

IS	BS	PSC
GE	PFS	ER
NS	IN	CR
GC	BV	CI
ES	E	F-CR

A. Communications Skills Workshop

IS	BS	PSC
GE	PFS	ER
NS	IN	CR
GC	BV	CI
ES	E	F-CR

B. Classic Psychoanalytic Group Psychotherapy

IS	BS	PSC
GE	PFS	ER
NS	IN	CR
GC	BV	CI
ES	E	F-CR

C. Gestalt Therapy

IS	BS	PSC
GE	PFS	ER
NS	IN	CR
GC	BV	CI
ES	E	F-CR

D. Tavistock Model

IS	BS	PSC
GE	PFS	ER
NS	IN	CR
GC	BV	CI
ES	E	F-CR

E. Classic T-Group

IS	BS	PSC
GE	PFS	ER
NS	IN	CR
GC	BV	CI
ES	E	F-CR

F. Group as Community of Learners

IS	BS	PSC
GE	PFS	ER
NS	IN	CR
GC	BV	CI
ES	E	F-CR

G. Value Clarification Focus

IS	BS	PSC
GE	PFS	ER
NS	IN	CR
GC	BV	CI
ES	E	F-CR

H. Transactional Analysis

IS	BS	PSC
GE	PFS	ER
NS	IN	CR
GC	BV	CI
ES	E	F-CR

I. Classic Basic Encounter Group

Key to Abbreviations

IS	(Interaction System)	BS	(Behavior Style)	PSC	(Physical and Social Contacts)
GE	(Group Emotion)	PFS	(Personal Feeling State)	ER	(Emotional Relations)
NS	(Normative System)	IN	(Internalized Norms)	CR	(Contractual Relations)
GC	(Group Culture)	BV	(Beliefs and Values)	CI	(Cultural Interchange)
ES	(Executive System)	E	(Ego)	F-CR	(Freedom-Control Relations)

Ground rules also help a group use its time efficiently, enabling it to concentrate on work in those cells of the Hill Interaction Matrix (Hill, 1973) where personal and interpersonal confrontations occur. In terms of process perception, ground rules sharpen the images that the psychotherapist receives from the group.

One ground rule—maintaining a here-and-now (rather than there-and-then) focus—has acquired considerable importance. Such an emphasis greatly enriches the psychotherapeutic potential of the group and saves the group from dreary recapitulations of past events.

Amplification

Since many process elements occur below the surface, the psychotherapist often finds it helpful to intensify, or amplify, the process event to make it visible to all members of the group. Amplification also allows the psychotherapist to check the accuracy of minimal cues.

Repetition of words, feedback checks for distortion, and nonverbal expression are all ways of intensifying process elements not clear to the group. Such clarification is the purpose of many activities used in human relations training, and these experiences—trust activities, influence lineups, and “making the rounds”—can be useful in the psychotherapy situation as well.

Amplification is not the process element itself; it merely heightens awareness of the element. For example, cohesion does not occur because group members are touching one another; rather, they touch to manifest more intensely the psychological cohesion that is present. If amplification fails to increase awareness, the psychotherapist must reconsider the cues.

Explicit objectives, theory, ground rules, and amplification lighten the task for the group psychotherapist. In a seven-member group, at any given moment, there are at least 966 potential interactions between process elements; with tools to aid perception, the psychotherapist can reduce the number to three or four.

THERAPEUTIC INTERVENTION

The psychotherapist's efforts to communicate his or her perceptions to the group members are *facilitative interventions* aimed at helping the group develop a consciousness of itself and its behavior. For a group of learners or trainees, heightened awareness can be sufficient to initiate change and the sharing of leadership functions. For members of a psychotherapy group, however, heightened awareness, although necessary, is usually insufficient.

Not every grunt uttered by the psychotherapist is an intervention. The therapist may make contributions as a member of the group, ranging from small talk through maintenance functions to working his or her own issues. As a participant-observer, he or she may make facilitative interventions to heighten group awareness. As the leader, the

most prestigious and powerful individual in the group, his or her primary function, of course, is to provide help.

Therapeutic interventions are a therapist's strong statements of confrontation or support of significant behaviors; these statements are designed to modify, halt, accelerate, or divert the direction of the group process so that group members can move from awareness to ownership and action.

Cohen and Smith (1972) discuss intervention in terms of "critical incidents" occurring in the group process and provide a model for the varieties of leader response to such incidents. A critical incident is a group phenomenon "judged important enough by a group leader to consider, consciously and explicitly, a decision to act in a way assumed to have an important impact on the group."

A modified version of Cohen and Smith's "intervention cube" model is presented in Figure 1. The intervention cube is a method of classifying the dimensions of facilitative interventions according to focus, type, and level. In their training of trainers, these theorists have found the intervention cube useful in investigating and categorizing the different styles of leadership intervention. As they see it, the leader's "awareness of an intervention style may lead him to adopt a more healthy mix of interventions as well as allow him to experiment with new styles and chart his progress."

Focus

The target to which the therapist directs his or her intervention is its focus. He or she may intervene with an individual, into an interaction between several group members, or with the group as a whole.

Type

The type of intervention describes both its content and the way it is communicated to its target. The therapist may use several different types of intervention.

Meaning Attribution

This type of intervention describes or suggests a definite meaning to the process event targeted. The meaning may be in terms of theory ("Whenever Charlie shows his Child, your Parent gets hooked"), association ("You're doing with Marleen what you do with your wife—raising hell and then withdrawing"), or metaphor ("The group wishes to murder its leader but fears the chaos that would follow in his absence"). Meaning attribution attempts to connect hereandnow events with significant events in the member's past or context.

Evocation

Therapist behaviors sometimes are attempts to elicit specific emotional responses from the group. Asking a member to "stay with" his or her anxiety or requesting the group to report the fears that perpetuate a silence are examples.

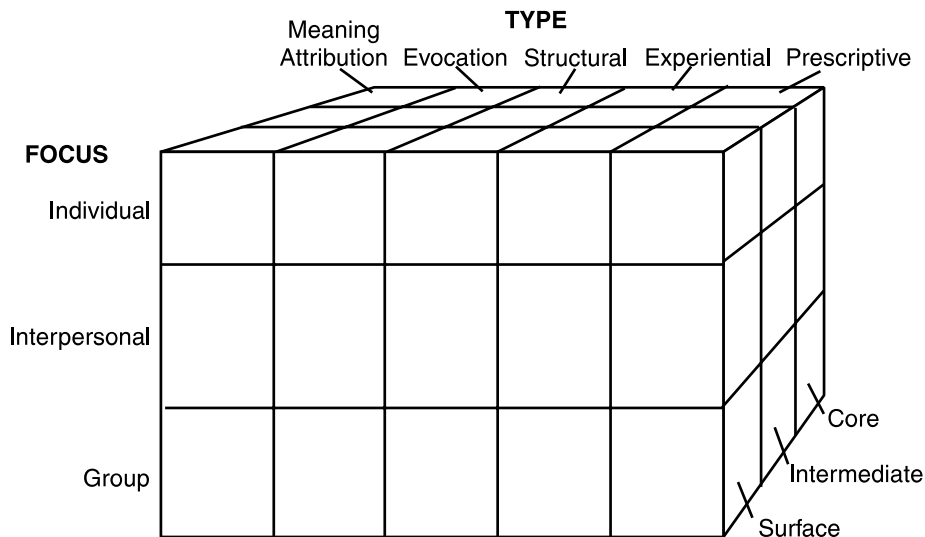


Figure 1. The Intervention Cube: A Classification of Therapeutic Interventions According to Type, Focus, and Level⁴

Structural

All varieties of a therapist’s nonverbal or physical behavior are structural interventions—such as holding, shaking, or wrestling with a group member. Or a therapist may urge a member to experiment with body movements or physical contact. Structures—*ad hoc* activities to carry awareness through to action—also include role plays or simulations.

Experiential

This type of intervention is a direct report of the therapist’s inner experiences and feeling responses to events occurring in the group. Such feedback is especially powerful because of the therapist’s role potency.

Prescriptive

When the therapist instructs members of the group to test new behavior in their contextual fields and report the results back to the group, he or she is using a prescriptive intervention. The purpose is to motivate group members to action beyond the group session.

Level

The third dimension of the intervention cube concerns the level of the intervention. Level refers to the visibility of process elements, ranging from highly visible, measurable behaviors at one end of the spectrum (the process elements in the top row of

⁴ Modified from Cohen & Smith (1972).

Table 1—Interaction System, Behavior Style, and Physical and Social Contacts) to inferential, intrapsychic phenomena on the other end (the process elements in the bottom row of Table 1—Executive System, Ego, and Freedom-Control Relations). Level is not a measure of the importance of the target element, but only of its perceptual availability. The *surface level* refers to publicly observable behavior (such as a speech pattern); the *intermediate level*, to complex chains of behavior (such as value systems or group culture); and the *core level*, to hidden events, which the psychotherapist—based on his or her understanding of human behavior—infers. A fuller discussion of the importance of choosing the appropriate level of intervention can be found in Harrison (1968).

Style

After classifying therapeutic interventions according to focus, type, and level, we still have the question of therapist style—which means the therapist’s preference for (or habit of) making certain kinds of interventions in the group process. Some styles may be rather fixed—as, for example, with a psychoanalytic therapist whose interventions are consistently on a core level. A Gestalt therapist may initiate interventions with evocative, surface statements to an individual and then move toward structured core interventions, while a Tavistock-trained therapist may make group-focused, attributive core interventions. Other, more eclectic, therapists may make widely varying interventions during a single group meeting.

The therapist’s style of intervention has important consequences. Intervention at the surface level may miss troublesome forces or hidden agendas. Consistent use of an individual focus may hinder group cohesion, whereas overuse of corelevel interventions may create unwanted dependence on the expertise of the therapist.

A therapist’s ability to classify his or her interventions is a measure of his or her awareness of his or her own behavior in the group; it does not suggest that the therapist should be calculating. Knowledge of the variety of interventions possible can, instead, help develop flexibility. A useful selfinventory on style can be found in Wile (1972).

Matching accurate process perceptions with effective therapeutic responses requires all the skill, invention, and experience that the psychotherapist has. This function depends less on previous training than on present creative powers.

FOLLOWING THROUGH

No matter how powerful, timely, or precise the psychotherapist’s intervention, it does not heal. It only invites the individual group member to grow and change. It is not growth and change.

Some new behaviors need to be learned only once, but for the member of the psychotherapy group, change is difficult. Because of this, the responsibilities of the group psychotherapist continue. The follow-through of therapeutic intervention involves reinforcing a group member’s decision to change and facilitating this new awareness. Following through expresses the therapist’s continuing care for those who look to him or

her for help. For the psychotherapist, it means living with the impact of these interventions and observing their outcome.

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■ INTERACTION PROCESS ANALYSIS

Beverly Byrum-Gaw

“If you want an opposing opinion, look to Fred.”

“Anne talks more than anyone else in the group.”

“Leave it to Toby to crack a joke.”

“David has kept this group together.”

“This group has an issue with conflict.”

We make observations and draw conclusions about the members of our groups and the group process. A helpful tool for making sense of what happens in a group is Bales' interaction process analysis categories (Bales, 1950). This approach provides a focus for descriptive reports from which inferences can then be drawn.

Interaction process analysis is designed to analyze two basic types of group behavior: that oriented toward accomplishing the task and that oriented toward maintaining the group's socioemotional atmosphere. The socioemotional dimension is further subdivided into positive and negative answers and questions, while the task dimension is considered neutral. Twelve categories of behavior (verbal and nonverbal) exist under these two dimensions (Figure 1; see Bales, 1950).

A tally is made for each member's acts occurring in any of the twelve categories during a specified time period. A verbal act is a simple sentence. A nonverbal act is any vocal or bodily movement that appears to have meaning in the categories given. A message can be composed of a number of different acts. If an act indicates an emotional reaction as well as a task-related question or answer, it is tallied under each of the appropriate categories.

USES OF INTERACTION PROCESS ANALYSIS

An observer can use this basic method of analysis in a number of ways to increase the participants' awareness of their individual interaction styles and the group's awareness of its process.

Individual Participation

By analyzing the tally sheet, a participant can discover his or her level of participation. Additionally, since each category of action corresponds to a role within the group, the participant can identify his or her typical role behaviors.

Originally published in *The 1980 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators* by J.W. Pfeiffer & J.E. Jones (Eds.), San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company.

<i>Socioemotional Dimension (Positive)</i>	A	1. Shows solidarity; raises others' status; gives help, reward
		2. Shows tension release; jokes, laughs; shows satisfaction
		3. Agrees; shows passive acceptance; understands; concurs; complies
	B	4. Gives suggestions, direction (implying autonomy for others)
		5. Gives opinions, evaluation, analysis; expresses feelings, wishes
		6. Gives orientation, information; repeats; clarifies; confirms
<i>Task Dimension (Neutral)</i>	C	7. Asks for orientation, information, repetition, confirmation
		8. Asks for opinions, evaluation, analysis, expression of feeling
		9. Asks for suggestions, directions, possible ways of action
<i>Socioemotional Dimension (Negative)</i>	D	10. Disagrees; shows passive rejection, formality; withholds help
		11. Shows tension; asks for help; withdraws out of field
		12. Shows antagonism; deflates others' status; defends or asserts self

Figure 1. Bales' Interaction Process Analysis Categories

Interpersonal Interaction

The richest use of interaction process analysis is at this level. Leadership and subgrouping can be identified. Although these two phenomena obviously have meaning for the individual participant, they involve interaction and are therefore nonexistent without other group members.

Leadership

An accurate but involved method of determining leadership is to record the originator and the target of each act rather than simply to put a check on the tally sheet. For example, Fran (Member 1) comments to Mike (Member 2), "I appreciate your work"; this act would be recorded in category 1 as 1-2. Her direction to the group ("Okay, let's get down to business") would be recorded as 1-0 (0 indicating group-directed remarks). Tallying each act in this way yields a clear picture of who initiates, who receives, and

who offers the most group-directed statements. This participant will be the leader, a finding consistent with research on leadership behavior.

A tension exists between the often opposing forces toward task and toward socioemotional maintenance. Because task achievement and member satisfaction are both important outcomes of group work, these forces must be balanced. Since one person will find it difficult to focus on task and on maintenance simultaneously, both a task leader (the one who is seen as contributing most to directing task accomplishment) and a socioemotional leader (the one who is best liked) will emerge. Leadership, then, becomes differentiated into two specific functions. The task leader will initiate and receive more acts from the task and negative socioemotional dimensions, while the maintenance leader will initiate and receive more acts in the positive socioemotional category. The tally sheet can be utilized to identify the two members most often performing these necessary leadership behaviors.

Once the leaders have been identified, a closer look at frequently used categories can reveal information about the leaders' styles. An autocratic leader tends to give more verbal directions and commands (4), answers and opinions (5), and expressed concern for productivity (5 and 9), while appearing nonverbally dominant (12). A democratic leader tends to lead the group to come to its own conclusions by giving suggestions (4), asking questions (7, 8, 9), and encouraging suggestions and participation (1, 7, 8, 9). Nonverbally the democratic leader appears animated, attentive, and friendly (1, 2, 3). A laissez-faire leader does little other than extend the group's knowledge by giving information (6) while nonverbally exhibiting attentive and friendly behavior (1, 3).

Subgrouping

Subgrouping can be analyzed in two ways. The first way is to determine which members initiate and receive reciprocally with each other in both verbal and nonverbal modes. While one member of the subgroup may talk more than another, reciprocity can also be exhibited through nonverbal emotional reactions (1, 2, 3). The second method is based on the fact that members of a subgroup will have positive supportive responses to one another. Subgroups that support the leader(s) by validating the leader(s) and one another can be differentiated from subgroups that oppose the leader(s) by disconfirming him or her (or them) while supporting one another.

Group Phenomena

Building on information from the personal and interpersonal levels, interaction process analysis can be further used to look at whole-group phenomena. Because a group progresses through phases of development that are related to the twelve categories, the group's history can be recorded using this method of analysis.

Phases of Development

The first phase of development is *orientation*. During this phase, members struggle with ambiguity to define their problem or situation to everyone's agreement. This phase is characterized by acts in categories 6 and 7. The second phase of development is *evaluation*, during which members cooperate to establish the norms and standards that the group will follow in completing its task. In this phase, individual value differences must be transcended; acts in categories 5 and 8 are characteristic. The last phase of development is *control*. During this phase of concern about internal influence and external environment, the pressure to finish the task shifts the focus to determining leadership for solving the problem. This phase is characterized by acts in categories 4 and 9.

Maintenance Problems

Throughout the phases of development, problems of maintenance can be noted concurrently. *Decision making* is characterized by agreement and/or disagreement (3 and 10); *tension management*, by being involved or withdrawing (2 and 11); *group integration*, by a show of solidarity or antagonism (1 and 12). As the group moves from the orientation to the control phase, both positive and negative reactions increase as members become more involved and closer to their goal.

Explanation of Task Achievement/Nonachievement

In order to accomplish the group's task, as has been noted, an equilibrium between task and maintenance must be maintained. This dynamic homeostasis can exist only if positive acts occur more frequently than negative acts. Thus, at the group's termination, the tally sheet can be used as a tool to explain the achievement or nonachievement of the task. During the group's progress, interaction process analysis can be used as a predictive tool. If positive acts predominate, there is evidence of solidarity and cohesiveness, and the group is likely to achieve its goal. If negative acts predominate, there is evidence of dysfunctional strain and discord; the group is unlikely to achieve its goal.

Group Generalizations

At a more abstract level, some generalizations about group behavior can be based on this model.

Sequence of Acts. Questions seem to be followed by answers, and agreement or disagreement then ensues.

Percentage of Acts. More answers and opinions are offered than questions asked (56 percent to 7 percent). Positive acts occur twice as frequently as negative ones (25 percent to 12 percent).

Group Size and Balance. As group size increases, so does the release of tension (2), the giving of suggestions and information (4 and 6), and the showing of solidarity (1), while decreases occur in the showing of tension (11), agreement (3), the asking for opinions (8), and the giving of opinions (5). Groups with an even number of members show frequent disagreement (10) and antagonism (12) with infrequent requests for suggestions (9).

Role and Status. Status (as determined by the number of acts received) increases as the importance of a member's role (as determined by the category used most frequently) and/or the member's control of the group's direction increases. Role differentiation (as determined by members performing acts in some categories significantly more than in others) and status differentiation increase as problems increase (as determined by negative acts). Control (as determined by positive acts received in response to task direction) and rewards (as determined by positive acts) increase as role differentiation increases. Strain (as determined by negative acts) increases as status differences increase.

Solidarity. As determined by reciprocal positive acts, solidarity between members of unequal status increases the strain to equalize status (as determined by the leveling out of acts received). As status becomes equalized and solidarity increases, the exercise of control, task emphasis, and therefore the achievement of goals decrease.

SUMMARY

Bales' method of interaction process analysis provides an explanatory tool to increase personal, interpersonal, and group awareness, thus facilitating the exercise of intelligent choice. Furthermore, its predictive potential allows a group and its members more control over their existence—the course they will follow and whether that course leads to the satisfaction of group members and the accomplishment of the group's goals.

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■ MAJOR GROWTH PROCESSES IN GROUPS

John E. Jones

Groups exert powerful influences, and these pressures can be either beneficial or detrimental to the welfare of members. Many different types of groups can foster the growth of the individuals who comprise them. The most basic model is the family, but it is possible for membership in work groups, peer groups, workshop groups, or therapy groups to result in increased effectiveness in behavior. A combination of processes that can be engendered in a group can create both the conditions for and the methods by which members can learn about themselves in supportive ways. The five major growth processes that can be observed in groups are *self-assessment*, *self-disclosure*, *feedback*, *risk taking*, and *consensual validation*. Each of these processes will be examined separately, but it is important to remember that it is their interaction that accounts for much of the immense potency of social intercourse for shaping the behavior of individuals. The goal in unleashing these processes is to assist individuals in making “wise” choices—based on three criteria: *awareness of self*, *awareness of options*, and *willingness to take responsibility for consequences*.

Figure 1 depicts the interdependence of these processes, the centrality of self-assessment, and the importance of the trust condition to support each process. Although it is not necessary for these processes to be initiated in a given sequence, the one in which they will be discussed here roughly parallels the development of many groups that are put together for personal growth.

SELF-ASSESSMENT

The core of personal learning is looking clearly at oneself. Unfortunately, people are the only animals capable of self-deception, and our ability to distort information about ourselves is almost limitless. The key to individual growth in any effort that can be described as humanistic is self-assessment. The first criterion of the “wise” choice is self-awareness. Omphaloskepsis, or navel gazing, may result in increased muscular flexibility or even altered states of consciousness, but it may not provide an adequate basis for self-understanding.

In any group when members are looking critically at themselves, there is the likelihood that new insights will emerge. If the group exists to promote growth on the part of its members, then it needs to emphasize the need to relate what happens in the group to individuals. The key questions often are:

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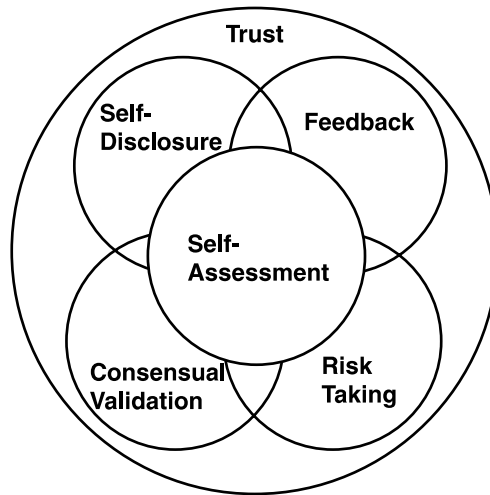


Figure 1. Major Growth Processes in Groups

- Who am I?
- What am I up to?
- Where am I going?
- What difference does it make anyway?

The concept that an individual has about self is a remarkably stable aspect of personality. It has a profound effect on how a person behaves or chooses not to behave. Our self-concepts come from “significant others,” usually in the formative years. Sometimes what we have learned about ourselves from those whom we have trusted shapes large parts of our lives. Children who hear “You can’t” internalize “I can’t.” We all have self-concepts although we may not be aware of what they are. When we are threatened, we defend our views of ourselves, and when we are in a high-trust situation, we open ourselves to learning. It is as though this hypothetical construct, the self-concept, is surrounded by a membrane that is thick under threat and permeable under trust.

In order for group members to be able to see themselves more clearly, additional processes must be followed. Interacting with others can provide new data about self. For me to know myself well I must show myself to others.

SELF-DISCLOSURE

Talking about oneself in a group setting is just one form of disclosure.¹ Telling one’s life story is a potentially useful way of discovering patterns. Sharing feelings with others can be both cathartic and enlightening. But we mediate our self-disclosure by choosing what

¹ Actually we “talk” about ourselves almost continually, but in modes other than verbal (Jones 1972): our nonverbal language (gestures, postures, etc.) and our symbols (hair, clothing, etc.).

to reveal, in accordance with our perceptions of what is appropriate in the situation. Group norms can have a highly significant effect on how individuals show themselves. In an atmosphere of trust we hold back much less than when we are threatened.

Disclosing oneself to others in a group setting is an investment in membership. It signals a willingness to be looked at honestly and expresses trust in others. It enlarges the arena for possible transactions with the other members. A group experience in which people only talk about themselves, however, is of limited usefulness. For me to know myself well I must not only show myself to others, I must also find out about myself from others.

FEEDBACK

The third core growth process is feedback, or the sharing of interpersonal perceptions and reactions. I give feedback by telling others how their behavior affects me. This process is the original source of our self-concepts. In a trusting climate what we say to one another about one another can change the ways we see ourselves. When we receive feedback from someone we know and trust, it usually has more effect than when it comes from a stranger or someone we mistrust. In a group situation in which members hear about how others see and react to them, there is, of course, the possibility of both constructive and destructive “learning.” Feedback is powerful, especially when it is requested, and it can result in a narrowing of one’s choices as well as a clearer understanding of self (Hanson, 1975, 1981).

Feedback needs to be managed well. When an individual solicits concrete, descriptive statements from others about the effects of his or her behavior, that person’s self-concept membrane is probably most permeable. If the feedback is targeted toward the growth goal of the individual, the data are likely to be most useful. But for me to know myself well I must not only show myself and obtain information from others, about myself—I must also take risks.

RISK TAKING

Some areas of self are not directly accessible through reflection or discussion. We must take risks to reach them. Each of us has untapped potential. Trying new ways of behaving can help us to discover parts of ourselves that we may have been afraid to explore and that may disconfirm certain aspects of our self-concepts. Obviously, some risks are foolish (the probability of negative outcomes is too high) and others have little growth potential (failure is unlikely). When people are “trying on” new behavior in a group, they not only expand their response repertoires, but also disclose new parts of themselves to one another.

If the group is marked by high trust, members are likely to receive support for experimenting with their behavior, especially when they announce what they are doing. This is one of the keys to trust building. Talking about trust does not instill interpersonal

confidence. Trust comes when we work shoulder-to-shoulder on commonly agreed-on objectives. The experience of success and of validated expectations of one another causes us to feel safe with one another. This condition is different from gullibility or naivete in that it is based on experiencing one another's support and cooperation. Showing myself, receiving feedback, and trying new behavior all help me to know myself better; but to know myself well requires that I have an accurate view of the whole.

CONSENSUAL VALIDATION

If I tell you that you are stupid, you can “consider the source” and dismiss the judgment. If ten people agree that you are stupid, you may admit the possibility. Feedback that contains themes, or common threads, is more powerful than feedback that is different from each individual. I develop the idea that I am loveable (or competent, stupid, etc.) by hearing that message about me from more than one person whom I trust.² The consensuality of that experience “validates” the information in that it increases the odds that I will internalize the characterization. This does not mean that the feedback is correct; it simply means that it effects a change in my view of myself.⁴

Probably the most powerful process occurring in groups is this consensual validation. We are “in-formed” by the consistency across people of messages about us. This process can be a mechanism for “correcting” our self-concepts, for counteracting our tendency to deceive ourselves. The practical implication for growth is that we compare others' perceptions of and reactions to us and look for commonalities.

IMPLICATIONS FOR WORK GROUPS

If it is desirable that individuals learn from their behavior on the job (as opposed simply to doing tasks), it is necessary that they have opportunities to attempt new tasks, receive feedback, and experience support and rewards for development. The work group can provide a highly effective means for growth by committing itself to interpersonal sharing. Norms of openness, solicitation of feedback (and confrontation), experimentation, and tolerance for varying perceptions must be established and maintained. Simply providing one-to-one appraisal, as in the annual performance review, throws away the potency of consensual validation. Making interpersonal perception checking a routine aspect of work capitalizes on the potential benefits to individuals of working together in groups.

Some caveats are in order, however. It is important to remember that work groups are almost always put together primarily to perform tasks that require members' cooperation, not primarily to support individual learning. Changing this purpose can subvert the goals of the group. Task primacy means that self-disclosure, feedback, and

²Sullivan (1947), who originated the concept of consensual validation, also coined the term “significant others” to denote persons who we trust.

risk taking need to be encouraged only in relation to the tasks of the group. All other aspects of the individual are out of bounds. For example, I may quite legitimately ask in staff meetings how my coworkers are responding to my behavior, but it would probably be inappropriate to expose my private life to them in such settings.

IMPLICATIONS FOR GROWTH GROUPS

Growth groups are assembled to provide data to individuals and give them a place to try new ways of behaving. The major growth processes discussed earlier are the principal vehicles for change, and these processes should be initiated deliberately. Hill (1973) found that the most beneficial work in therapy groups was, in his words, “confrontation on relationships.” We want to promote high trust, and we do that by modeling, and encouraging others to engage in, self-assessment, self-disclosure, feedback, risk taking, and consensual validation.

It follows that if we want the individual to grow in self-awareness as a precondition to making wise choices, we must ensure that the group mirrors the array of data sources in that person’s usual environment. The composition of the group is important in that if there is too much homogeneity, the individual may not learn how other kinds of people may react to him or her. Conversely, if the group is too heterogeneous, some individuals may experience anxiety over being “different” and may not participate fully. A good rule of thumb is one of controlled variety: maximum difference, with the proviso that no person feels unable to identify with any other member.

In growth groups the core activity is individuals looking at themselves. This activity is enhanced by self-assessment, self-disclosure, feedback, risk taking, and consensual validation. When a climate of trust is sufficiently established, these processes occur easily and routinely. However, groups can become inattentive to the need to maintain these processes, so it is useful to set aside intervals to assess their effectiveness.

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■ GROUP SIZE AS A FUNCTION OF TRUST

Patrick Leone

In designing workshops or training activities, human resource development (HRD) professionals are often faced with determining the size of the group. Typically, the decision is based on the content of the program. For example, if the facilitator has information to present, he or she bases the size of the group on logistics such as the size of the room and the capacity of the public-address system. However, if skill development is the goal, the facilitator plans for smaller groups. In any case, the factor of trust is generally ignored in determining group size.

This article offers a method for making the group-size decision on the basis of the trust level present among the participants. This method takes into account people's fear of speaking in front of groups and of being seen as incompetent or inadequate. The principle behind the method is that all other things being equal, the amount of trust an individual feels in a group is inversely related to the size of the group; as trust increases, the size of the group can increase with no resulting decrease in open communication.

An example of this principle is seen in staff meetings called by senior executives to share information and lead discussions with large numbers of middle managers. A senior executive may gather forty or fifty middle managers from as many as three levels below his or her own status and present some ideas. Then the executive is surprised when people are slow to respond. This type of gathering is the most intimidating format for receiving responses from middle managers. Those who offer comments risk embarrassing themselves in front of the executive, their managers, their peers, and perhaps even their subordinates. A preferable alternative is for the executive to meet separately with groups of four to six people so that the threat of making a contribution is not so great. Another alternative is to break the larger group into subgroups of four to six and assign facilitators to record people's ideas and then report to the total group. Either of these alternatives shows sensitivity to people's fears, acknowledges that the issue of trust affects participation, and yields better information than the total-group approach.

Every size of group is useful for certain purposes and is legitimate as long as the facilitator is sensitive to the needs of the participants. The following paragraphs discuss how the issue of trust is borne out with different sizes of groups:

Individual Work. When the facilitator's objective is to have the participants generate information, it is useful to ask them to focus privately on a topic and pinpoint their ideas and feelings—and perhaps even write down their thoughts. This approach is appropriate as long as the participants know in advance that they are not required to

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share their ideas and that they can be the judges of how much or how little they share in the total group. After the participants have been given a few moments to think, it is important for the facilitator to use language that *invites* rather than *pressures*. Then only those who are comfortable with the level of risk involved will talk in front of the group. Informing people in advance and using inviting terminology can increase the participants' feelings of safety in this situation.

Pairs or One-on-One Interaction. Pairs are ideal for opening up communication and building trust. They are also one of the safest methods for sharing information. Two individuals can share their ideas with each other without fear of negative responses from numerous people. Each person is concerned with the reactions of his or her partner only, and the partner is more likely to feel responsible for listening and giving positive feedback in this situation. As a result, this is a powerful way to short-circuit people's fear of speaking in front of a group. Pairs are particularly useful when the participants are strangers to one another and do not know the facilitator.

Trios. Although adding one individual to the pair does not noticeably increase the number of individuals in the situation, it adds a radically new element. At any given moment, a trio is a pair with an observer. The observer can take an anonymous or impersonal stance, as in the case of a participant who is monitoring people's communication patterns during a skill-building activity. This stance immediately elicits the fear response from the speakers—which, in turn, leads the speakers to watch their words and guard their thinking lest they embarrass themselves. One way to manage this dynamic in skill-building sessions is to ask one participant (a) to identify a situation, (b) to observe the other two participants as they model how to implement a skill in that situation, and (c) then to practice the skill. This alternative puts the observer in the position of learner rather than evaluator.

Subgroups. The ideal size for a subgroup is four to six people. Often it is useful to combine two pairs or two trios into groups of four or six. The information gathered and the trust built in the pair or trio situation can then be transferred to the subgroup. Subgroups are ideal for generating ideas in brainstorming sessions. Also, when brainstorming is conducted appropriately—with the subgroup members generating ideas quickly and not commenting on their viability until later—the participants have a chance to build some confidence before they must assess one another's ideas. This method is useful for generating a large amount of information in a short time and for encouraging rapid learning.

Whole Groups. Sharing information or building skills in a large group setting is generally difficult. Although the typical reporter method of bringing small-group information back to the whole group can be helpful, some alternatives are possible. The facilitator can build up group trust by being careful never to punish or penalize individuals who make risky statements or ask questions that show a lack of knowledge. The facilitator can develop a climate and group rules that allow participants to

experience success in taking risks and to feel confident in their contributions to the total group.

Generally, leaders of large groups have acquired a great deal of experience, which is—after all—part of the reason they are the leaders. However, experienced leaders sometimes forget that not everyone shares their confidence about contributing in a large-group situation. Leaders and facilitators of large groups need to remind themselves periodically that public speaking is a common fear. They must function as the architects of trust, openness, and learning—not merely as conveyors of information.

Good tactics in the large group situation include the following:

1. Complimenting the questions and praising the input of others.
2. Paraphrasing questions to prove that they have merit.
3. Presenting a point of view and then asking for feedback. For example, the leader might say, “This is my current opinion, and I would very much like the members of this group to respond to this, so we can see if I have missed something.” Although this tactic requires a great deal of security on the part of the leader, great leaders have the confidence to make themselves vulnerable.
4. Adding new meaning to a question, tactfully but openly. For example, a question may grasp only half of a situation; the leader can answer the question directly and then go on to provide additional information that conveys to the group how important the question was.

In planning group activities, the facilitator or the program designer should consider the level of trust among the participants as well as the level of trust between the facilitator and the participants. If the total group size cannot be altered to fit the situation, then smaller groupings (pairs, subgroups, and so on) should be woven into the training design.

■ DEFENSE MECHANISMS IN GROUPS

Paul Thoresen

Growth through group experience is often painful. Despite the fact that most of us choose to take part in group activities to learn more about ourselves, experiment with new behaviors, and improve interpersonal skills, it can be expected that we will resist the process because it is frightening and demanding. The pressures to engage in self-disclosure, intimacy, and confrontation may bring about changes in our conceptual framework, precipitate anxiety, shame, guilt, and other uncomfortable feelings. There is a natural tendency to avoid such feelings, and each of us has developed his or her own preferred means. Avoidance behavior or defense mechanisms are usually well-ingrained and unconscious. Each of us brings his or her own particular set to the group. Because these defenses interfere with individual and group growth, it is important to recognize and deal with them effectively.

Although all defenses are essentially evasive in nature, such maneuvers may be categorized by whether the individual moves toward (fight) or away from (flight) the source of conflict or chooses to manipulate other group members (group manipulation).

FIGHT DEFENSES: These are based on the premise that “the best defense is a good offense.”

Competition with the facilitator: The person who struggles to control the group or “out-do” the trainer may be attempting to prove his or her group prowess in order to avoid dealing with his or her own behavior.

Cynicism: This may be manifested by frequent challenging of the group contract and goals, skeptical questioning of genuine behavior, and attacks on stronger, threatening members.

Interrogation: A barrage of probing questions keeps one on the defensive. An individual who habitually cross-examines others in the group under the guise of “gaining helpful information and understanding” may be fighting to keep the spotlight safely away from himself or herself.

FLIGHT DEFENSES: These are the most frequently used means of avoiding honest, feeling-level involvement in group process.

Intellectualization (head trips, dime-store psychology): These are processes by which individuals deal with their own emotions in objective, diagnostic, or interpretative manners so that they never come to grips with their own gut-level feelings (e.g., “I guess I’m angry with you because you remind me of my older sister”). Even entire groups may resort to becoming involved in apparently worthwhile but evasive, drawn-out discussions of social and general behavior issues.

Generalization: Closely related is the tendency to make general, impersonal statements about group behavior instead of applying them directly to oneself or specific participants. For example, a

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tense person states, "People can really get anxious when there are long silences," when the person really means, "I am very uptight with this silence."

Projection: Here the individual attributes to others traits that are unacceptable in himself or herself (e.g., someone competing for attention in the group may attack another person for using more than his or her share of the group's time).

Rationalization: This is an attempt to justify maladaptive behavior by substituting "good" reasons for real ones (e.g., "I am not getting very much out of this group because there are not enough people my age, and I just can't relate with the group members," or "If only I were in that other group, things would be better").

Withdrawal: This defense may vary in intensity from boredom to actual physical removal of oneself from the group. Consistently silent people may be passive learners but are not growing interpersonally. Groups that fall silent frequently, especially after dramatic moments, are also in flight. The tendency to deal with past interaction issues instead of the "here and now" is another form of withdrawal.

GROUP-MANIPULATION DEFENSES: Participants frequently maneuver other members into specific kinds of relationships in order to protect themselves from deeper involvement or confrontation.

Pairing: Members seek out one or two supporters and form an emotional subgroup alliance in which they protect and support each other.

"Red-Crossing": This may occur both within or outside subgroups. In conflict or confrontation situations, the member mediates for or defends the person under fire. The assumed contract is "Let's keep it safe; I'll come to your aid if you come to mine."

Focusing on One: An entire group may find itself spending excessive amounts of time and energy on one individual. By keeping the spotlight on a single person for an extended time period, the opportunities increase for large numbers of participants to fall silent or keep the action away from themselves.

Even when recognized, the task of dealing with each of these defenses is not an easy one. Occasionally, an appropriate nonverbal or other structured activity can be an effective means of uncovering evaded feelings. However, there are no simple, consistently effective methods or responses for dealing with these defenses. Generally, once the evasive maneuver is recognized, the person(s) involved should be confronted, keeping in mind the tenets for effective feedback. As an atmosphere of mutual trust is established, the group participants are apt to lower their defenses and risk experimenting with new growth producing behaviors.

■ GUIDELINES FOR GROUP MEMBER BEHAVIOR

J. William Pfeiffer

Over years of facilitating groups, I had created in my mind a list of optimum behaviors for participants. Unfortunately, as I began facilitating a group, the way that I would surface these preferred behaviors—“developing group norms”—would reinforce my authority role. Each norm that emerged involved me in confrontations with the participants, centered around my apparent disapprobation of their behavior. My pattern of injecting norms as they occurred (e.g., “look at the person you are talking to” or “speak for yourself”) was a rich source of data for the group to process, but it was tending to make dealing with authority and confrontation predominate issues.

To avoid this recurring phenomenon, it occurred to me that it would make more sense (and be more growth inducing) if I would be “up front” and explicit about my expectations concerning participant behaviors right from the beginning.

I prepared a list of the norms that I had been continually “enforcing,” and, as I began a week-long human relations group, I listed these norms on newsprint and posted the list in the group meeting room at the beginning of the first session.

My original list looked like the one in Figure 1.

1. Keep in the here and now.
2. Speak only for yourself.
3. Try to maintain eye contact when you are speaking to someone.
4. Minimize head trips.
5. Avoid gunnysacking.
6. Avoid red-crossing.
7. Avoid being judgmental.
8. No dime-store psychology.
9. Do not attempt to answer hypothetical questions.
10. We all share the responsibility of avoiding dysfunctional silence.
11. “I feel” does not mean the same as “I think.”

Therapy charges:

Friends	\$.50	Parents	\$2.50
Spouses	\$1.00	Other groups	\$5.00

Figure 1. T-Group Ground Rules

My opening approach was to explain the jargon in the list (e.g., red-crossing or gunnysacking).

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The two most frequent reactions to this position that helped to get the group moving are as follows:

1. Occasionally participants challenge the concept of being told “what to do.” We deal with this on the spot with the possibility of renegotiating any of the guidelines that are not consistent with the goals of the group.
2. Very frequently, participants who “know the ground rules” will “correct” themselves or other participants (and sometimes, gleefully, the trainers).

The result of this approach to opening a human relations group has been to free me, as the trainer, from some role restrictions as an enforcer.

“SHOULDISM”

Much of the current thought and practice in the human potential movement (especially the Gestalt approaches) is counter to a series of shoulds (which is what my ground rules list really is). My response to this line of questioning is that shouldism and oughtism should¹ be avoided when they attempt to deal with the way people feel as opposed to the way people behave. The group movement (at least to me) is an educational effort that attempts to modify behavior. Therefore, behavioral guidelines are not only acceptable but essential.

GOOD VS. FUNCTIONAL

As we work on modifying behavior (growth) in my groups, I try to establish a norm other than the good-bad continuum and replace that concept with a functional-dysfunctional continuum. The measure of the functionality of any given behavior is relative only to the reference group. A value cannot be placed on a behavior in an existential, contextless vacuum. Behaviors that are contrary to the guidelines for group-member behavior are neither good nor bad in themselves but may be dysfunctional to the growth of the group members.

BEHAVIOR VS. PERSONAL WORTH

Another key issue centered around the guidelines is that I work to reinforce the concept that I can dislike someone’s behavior without disliking the person. We may “be what we eat” but we certainly are not what we do.

My original ground rules are of the Mt. Sinai variety, i.e., thou shalt not’s. This is consistent with my personal style, but they are clearly inappropriate for trainers with other styles. Two colleagues of mine²—both of whom have softer interpersonal styles than I do—have modified the ground rules of Figure 1 to those in Figure 2.

¹ There is something slightly paradoxical about a position that says that a person *should not* have should nots.

² John Jones and Tony Banet.

Things to do:

1. Be aware of both your feelings and thoughts.
2. Listen actively to everyone. No person's being heard should get lost.
3. Be as open and honest as you can while being sensitive to the needs of others. Be constructively open.
4. Keep your attention on the "here and now."
5. Whenever possible make statements rather than ask questions.
6. Accept responsibility for your own learning, and collaborate with others in theirs.

Things to avoid:

1. Dime-store psychology. Study the impact of behavior rather than its "causes."
2. Red-crossing. Avoid putting band-aids on people who are capable of working out their thing. Give support without cutting off learning.
3. "Counseling" that gives nothing.
4. Requiring people to be like you or to justify their feelings. Accept.
5. Pretending that things aren't the way they are.

Other considerations:

1. Everyone who is here belongs here because he or she is here, and for no other reason.
2. For each person, what is true is determined by what is in that person, what he or she directly feels and finds making sense in himself or herself, and the way he or she lives inside himself or herself.
3. Decisions made by the group need for everyone to take part in some way.
4. What happens here is confidential to the degree that each person owns his or her own data.
5. Trainers have trouble following these guidelines, too.

Figure 2. Guidelines for Group Sessions

A third list³ gives a still milder focus. (See Figure 3.)

1. Everyone who is here belongs here because he or she is here, and for no other reason.
2. For each person, what is true is determined by what is in him or her, what he or she directly feels and finds making sense in himself or herself, and the way he or she lives inside himself or herself.
3. Our first purpose is to make contact with one another. Everything else we might want or need comes second.
4. We try to be as honest as possible and to express ourselves as we really are and really feel—just as much as we can.
5. We listen for the person inside living and feeling.
6. We listen to everyone.
7. The group leader is responsible for two things only: protecting the belonging of every member and protecting each member's being heard if this is getting lost.
8. Realism: If we know things are a certain way, we do not pretend they are not that way.
9. What we say here is "confidential": no one will repeat anything said here outside the group, unless it concerns only himself or herself. This applies not just to obviously private things, but to everything. After all, if the individual concerned wants others to know something, he or she can always tell them.
10. Decisions made by the group need for everyone to take part in some way.

Figure 3. Ground Rules for Group Sessions

³ Adapted from E. T. Gendlin & John Beebe III. (1968). An experimental approach to group therapy. *Journal of Research and Development in Education*, 1, 19-29.

EXPLICIT OR IMPLICIT?

I contend that all group facilitators have ground rules or guidelines tucked away in their “trainer heads” (e.g., Schutz’ list in *Here Comes Everybody*). I believe the issue concerns not whether norms for desirable group behavior exist implicitly within the group setting but whether it is helpful to the group for the facilitator to make his or her group behavior biases explicit—and I contend that it is.

■ TRANSCENDENCE THEORY

J. William Pfeiffer

One of the most significant ways in which individuals differ is in their means of managing the dissonance that inevitably occurs in their lives, i.e., an individual's emotional system functions smoothly until such factors as conflict, thwarting of expectations, threats to self-esteem, and being confronted with the hostility of others create emotional disharmony. This paper attempts to explore responses to dissonance and to suggest a model for conceptualizing growthful and life-enriching functional accommodations to that inevitable dissonance.

Conflict-engendered dissonance, probably the most prevalent type, is the least easily managed. The Judeo-Christian ethic fosters a pattern of passive-aggressive responses by promoting "turning-the-other-cheek," conflict avoidance, and an attempt to deny the emotional reality of the dissonance. In fact, Western culture engenders guilt in individuals who are unable to manage conflict in the "Christian" manner. It places a potent moral value on pseudo-acceptance rather than open manifestation of hostility. This adjustment, which appears on the surface to be accepting, is, in fact, a system-exhausting suppression of hostility. For the purposes of the transcendence model, this state of passive-aggressive response to dissonance is labeled Level I.

It is at this level of accommodation that most individuals enter a human relations training group. Frequently, the goal of the group is centered around freeing members from the constrictions of their Level I responses in order that they may learn the ability to express hostility overtly. For most group members, this is a difficult step and a true achievement if they find that they are able to respond openly to conflict. For most individuals it means overcoming an ingrained behavior pattern and frequently produces an exhilarating sense of freedom. Much of the euphoria experienced by individuals in their first human relations growth group is a result of the release from the discomfort of suppressed hostility.

It is appropriate that this goal of open expression of emotion should be sought after in the human relations training group, and the trainer who focuses on helping individuals move to Level II responses—overt expression of hostility—is facilitating the growth process. However, the ability to express overt hostility is too often seen as an end product rather than as a means to an end. Progressing from a Level I response to a Level II response is a meaningful and necessary step in an individual opening himself or herself to more self-actualizing behavior. The immediate response to conflict, even though it may only take the form of a cathartic release of emotional toxin, is growthful.

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There is, however, the potential for an individual to transcend to a more constructive response pattern, Level III—introspective sharing.

To illustrate the three levels of response, we will examine a situation that has high potential for conflict-engendered dissonance: a circumstance involving a lack of punctuality. If I make an appointment with someone for three o'clock and that person arrives at three-thirty, I have, according to the transcendence model, three response choices. The conventional response, definitely Level I, is for me to attempt not to show my anger. I may even enter into the "excuse" interaction by being supportive, e.g., reassuring the late comer that I "understand" that "those things" happen or that I have had the same experience myself. However, the hostility that was building up from 3:01 until 3:29 cannot be dissipated by "forgiving" the lateness. It is, at best, suppressed. If I respond to the situation at Level II, I will be openly angry, vent my feelings, and clear my system of the hostility. However, my Level II response does not take the other person's needs into account, and it does not help me understand why the lack of punctuality has upset me so much. My system can be emptied of anger, but I have nothing positive with which to replace it. Moreover, I have probably made the person who has come late angry and/or defensive. He or she must in turn choose a response. That choice may be Level I, to suppress his or her anger, in which case it will be difficult for him or her to function smoothly with me. He or she may also choose to vent his or her hostility. What can result is that a potentially important issue for the parties involved will be reduced to "blowing off steam."

Anger is a secondary emotion; it is impotent in that it can supply no data other than the empirical fact of emotional upset. It is imperative that the anger be "turned over" to reveal the primary emotion behind it. In order to find the real issues and deal with them in a productive way, I need to respond on Level III—introspective sharing. If I can keep from suppressing my hostility and can further resist the temptation to dissipate my hostility by becoming openly angry, then, by sharing the fact that I am upset, we can explore together what my concerns really are. What may be revealed by our exchange is that I interpret the other person's lateness as a message that I am not a valuable person, not worthwhile, and not important. For me, this is a highly threatening implication, which may be alleviated by sharing my concerns about my relative worth. The result may be more than just a resolution of the conflict; it may be a growthful resolution.

If I can begin to respond to dissonance with introspective sharing, then I am no longer limited to Level I responses. Revelation of hostile feelings is no longer guilt-inducing or threatening to me. Furthermore, I have transcended the need for Level II responses, although I have learned that I need no longer fear releasing the natural hostility I feel from conflict-engendered dissonance. More importantly, I know that I am no longer uncomfortable about telling others "where I am" emotionally when I am feeling hostile. However, I cannot go from responding at Level I to responding at Level III without first developing the ability to respond at Level II. A Level I person is not able to reveal to another that the hostile feelings exist. He or she may, in fact, not be able

to admit their existence to himself or herself; therefore, there is no way to share feelings which, in one way or another, are being denied.

The weakness of the existing model of human relations group experience results from the too frequent assumption that to master the ability to overtly express feeling data (hostility in particular) is “to arrive” in human potential sense. This goal is desirable but is only the second of three possible levels of response. Only by learning the intermediate ability are we able to transcend to the more constructive level of response as indicated in Figure 1.

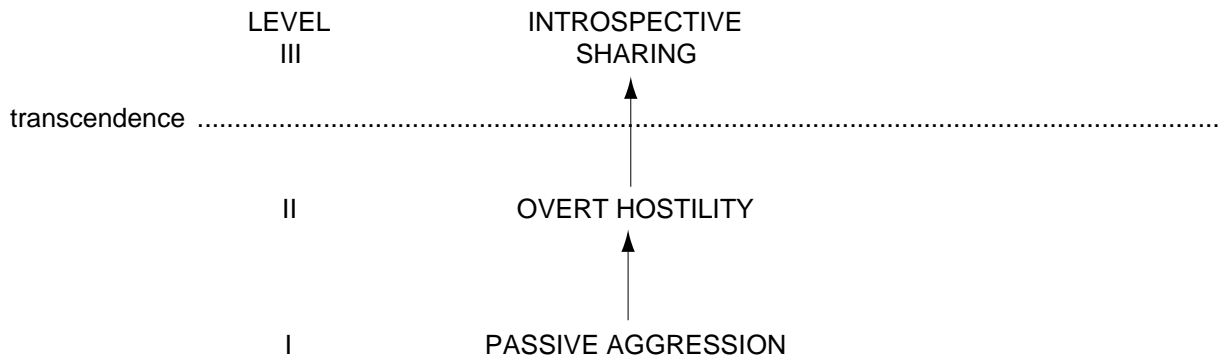


Figure 1. Accommodation of Dissonance

THE MYTH OF INDEPENDENCE

The concept of transcendence is generalizable to other human-interaction models. One thrust of human relations training is toward making individuals more independent of others. The dependent person does not take risks for fear of upsetting the dependent relationships he or she nurtures. Without risk-taking, an individual cannot really grow because he or she is not free to experiment with behaviors that might provide the means through which he or she can grow. If the individual is able to move from dependence to independence, then he or she moves from a state of necessarily high trust to a state of extremely low trust. If he or she is independent of others, he or she is self-sustaining and need not trust others for comfort, security, love, or other needs. Independence precludes involvement with others, which might necessitate trust. It is his or her “own thing,” and he or she alone is responsible for it. Moving from a state of child-like, must-trust-for-survival dependence on others (the point at which many people enter a human relations group) to a state of independence is a very positive step. It allows the person to risk the rejection or displeasure of others because he or she is not dependent on them. This risk taking often takes the form of freedom to express feelings both verbally and nonverbally. In the joy of this new-found freedom, the newly independent person feels sure that he or she has come to terms with the world in the most effective way possible, often with disastrous results when he or she re-enters the “real” world after the experience of a human relations training group.

In a sense, once people have taken the risk to become independent, their behavior no longer can be considered risky, because they have “nothing” (their dependent relationships) to lose by this free expression of themselves. Their behavior, which may seem to dependent people to be risky, is, in fact, “riskless.”

As in the model of transcendence as it relates to dissonance (Figure 1), the dependent state may be labeled Level I, in parallel with the passive-aggressive state; and the independent state, Level II, in parallel with the overtly-hostile state. Level III, then, is the state of interdependence, in which the person is sometimes dependent and sometimes depended-on. (See Figure 2.)

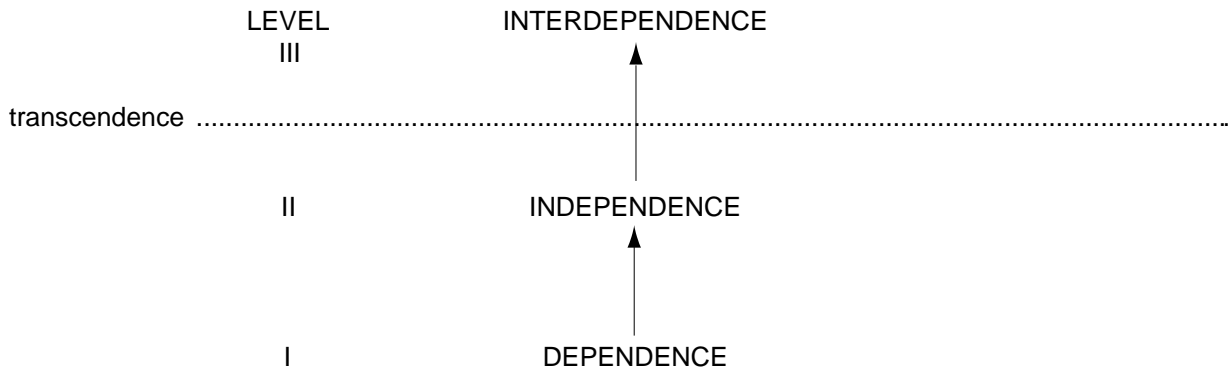


Figure 2. Dependency States

Interdependence is central to Gibb’s TORI Theory and is the essential state to which individuals must transcend in order to function most productively in terms of their own needs and the needs of others. As with the parallel state, introspective sharing, the individual cannot go immediately from a state of dependence to a state of interdependence. A dependent person who has never experienced independence is not aware that he or she has the strength that will allow him or her to sustain another who needs to be dependent for a time.

Level II has limitations that are very pronounced in terms of sustaining interpersonal relationships with others, because the Level II person functions without others. It is only when he or she transcends to Level III that his or her caring for others can become caring involvement. Therefore, on Level I, the dependent person lets others care for him or her but often does not risk expressing his or her own caring for fear of rejection. When he or she proceeds to Level II, he or she can risk expressing caring; however, Level II people do not trust others enough to allow themselves to become vulnerable (in the way they were in their dependent state) by acknowledging their need for being cared for. When they become sure of themselves in their independent state, they may transcend to interdependence, in which they can become involved in relationships with others in which each depends on the other for caring and each feels secure in expressing caring. As in the three levels of accommodation of dissonance, the interdependent individual has transcended his or her need for independence and has moved to a more productive level. Again, it is often the goal in human relations training

groups to facilitate independence, and this is a desirable goal; however, it should not be the end of growth, but merely an important step in the process toward self-actualization.

TRANSCENDENCE IN TRANSACTIONAL ANALYSIS

In a third human-interaction model, transactional analysis, Level I can be thought of as the state in which the individual usually has either his or her *Child* or *Parent* in control. (His or her *Adult* exists and is functioning, but it is not well-developed.) The existential position is “I’m not-OK, You’re OK.”¹² Since the “not-OK” *Child* is the primary factor in determining the individual’s behavior, he or she will probably respond to dissonance in a passive-aggressive way. He or she cannot risk open hostility with his or her *Parent* or the *Parent* in others. A person’s archaic *Parent* “tapes” produced by Judeo-Christian ethical demands caution him or her: “It’s not nice to fight!” “Don’t argue; just do as you’re told!” “I know what’s best!” These directives reconfirm his or her being “not-OK” and leave the person frustrated and angry, but silent.

If the *Adult* in the individual has been allowed to develop and is processing reality in an efficient manner, the person may transcend to Level II. On this level his or her *Adult* discovers that there are times for open expression of hostility and that, realistically, the individual cannot be productive if he or she is continually in the dependent, “not-OK” mode. Therefore, the now-stronger *Adult* will be in control on those occasions when the data of the situation indicate that the dissonance should be acted on. The *Adult* makes it possible for the *Child* to risk the parental disapproval of both the *Parent* within himself or herself and the *Parent* within those with whom he or she is in conflict. At this second level, the existential position remains “I’m not-OK, You’re OK,” though the *Parent* may manifest “I’m OK, You’re not-OK” in the games the individual plays to help take the pressure off the “not-OK” *Child*.

If the *Adult* is processing reality in such a way that the individual is able to redefine his or her existential position as “I’m OK, You’re OK,” he or she may transcend to Level III—the emancipated *Adult* (Figure 3.) It is at this level that the individual can experience true intimacy and interdependence, which foster introspective sharing.

Level III allows the natural *Child* (pre-“not-OK”) to emerge once more and encourages the nurturing *Parent*. Both the natural *Child* and the nurturing *Parent* are healthy elements in an intimate, interdependent relationship with “self” and with others who have transcended to Level III. As in the previous illustrations, the individual must achieve Level II before transcendence to Level III is possible. For the individual to become the emancipated *Adult*, he or she must first have developed a well-functioning *Adult* at the second level. There is no possibility for the “not-OK” *Child* to become the natural, “OK” *Child* again without the reality testing of a strong *Adult*.

¹See T. Harris, (1969), *I'm OK, You're OK*, New York: Harper.

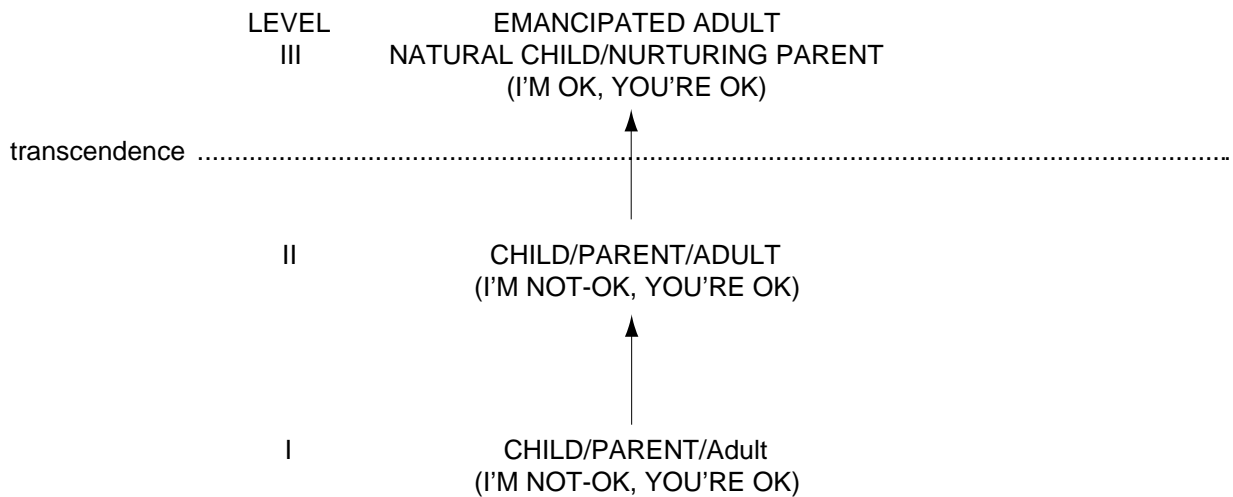


Figure 3. Transactional Analysis

RELATING ON LEVELS I, II, AND III

Within the conceptual framework of transcendence, true communication or genuine relating can happen only in transactions between individuals at the same level or between those at contiguous levels of functioning. In other words, an individual engaged in introspective sharing on an interdependent, emancipated-*Adult* level cannot truly communicate with a passive-aggressive, dependent individual whose irrational *Child* or prejudiced, perhaps punitive *Parent* is in control: there is no common ground for understanding to occur. A Level II individual is able to communicate with a Level I individual because the “not-OK” *Child* is a part of both of them: this is their common ground. Likewise, a dependent individual cannot relate in an interdependent way since he or she is not yet aware of his or her ability or has not yet developed the ability to function independently. Communication will break down when it is essential for him or her to perform an independent function within the interchange. He or she must first share the capability of independence in common with the other individual. Finally—because according to the present theory—the passive-aggressive individual denies his or her hostile feelings, he or she cannot communicate with an individual who needs to share feelings of hostility in order to achieve an introspective level of conflict resolution. Figure 4 illustrates the parallel nature of the three models of transcendence.

CONCLUSION

Transcendence may be viewed in light of an adolescent’s rites of passage. He or she asserts independence and becomes overtly hostile when conflicted. He or she is, however, still essentially a child who is slowly developing a discerning, responsible, decision-making capability that will finally result in maturity. He or she is actively testing and sorting through all the ethics, mores, and disciplines that he or she has been asked to take for granted from birth. From time to time he or she may appear to be

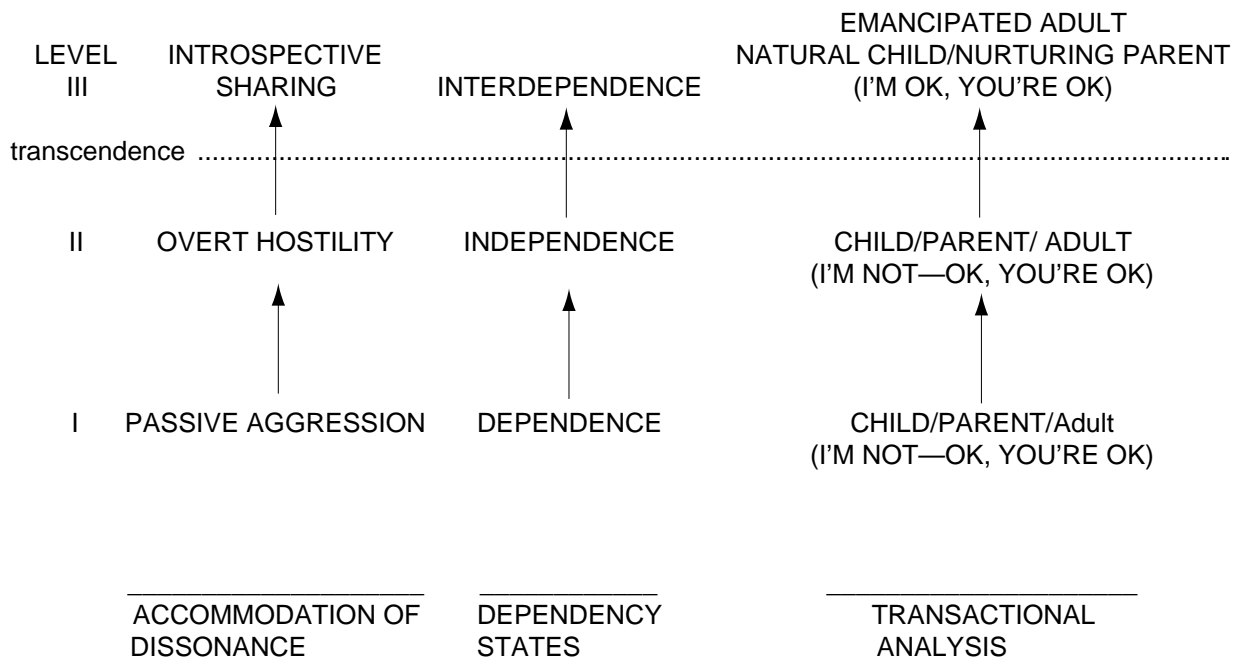


Figure 4. Transcendence Models

rejecting the valuable with the worthless, the proven judgements with the prejudices. He or she “trusts no one over thirty” and trusts peers only as projections of himself or herself. Yet, without this turmoil, which is in effect a complex computer program that must somehow be made to run, there is no way for his or her emergence to be complete. If the process is thwarted, the individual may never reach Level II, the keystone to maturity, much less Level III, where personal fulfillment lies.

The human relations training-group facilitator must continue to focus on the development of Level II capabilities in participants, because this is an essential step in the self-actualizing process. However, the facilitator needs also to introduce the concept of Level III responses and work toward this goal with those participants who are ready to make the transcendence.

■ SYNERGY AND CONSENSUS-SEEKING

John E. Jones

There is a myth about group productivity that is sometimes humorously expressed as, “A camel is a horse put together by a committee.” It is probably more accurate to say that a camel is a horse put together by a very bad committee. There is a tendency to think about the outcomes of groups activity in terms of one’s experience with an array of unproductive efforts rather than in terms of possibilities. Almost everyone has been a member of groups whose outcomes were less than dramatic.

Ordinarily, task groups are put to work without any effort being expended toward building the group as a functioning unit. The most common lack is processing how work gets done, discussing how members feel about what is happening, and exploring what they are willing to contribute. Individual members are presumed to know how to be effective group members, and democratic mechanics such as voting are presumed to result in collective judgments that are satisfactory because people are “involved.”

One value that often gets introjected into people who grow up in our culture is to win, to be number one, to beat out someone else, and this results in highly competitive behavior in group situations. There is a presupposition that competition gets better results. In ambiguous situations, individuals are likely to inject a competitive element because that posture in relation to other people has been overlearned. This tendency is rationalized in statements such as “It’s a dog-eat-dog world,” and “Free enterprise is the answer.”

Closely related to the phenomenon of competition is the cognitive style that is sometimes referred to as “either-or” thinking. We tend to oversimplify situations by reducing them to dichotomies, to discrete, mutually-exclusive categories, and to polar opposites. This way of looking at the world gets translated into human relations in win-lose, zero-sum terms. “Either you’re for me or you’re against me.” “Who’s in charge?” “If he gets an A, that hurts my chances.” “If I give it all away, I won’t have anything left.” “More of this means less of that.” We often are impatient with paradoxes, such as “Giving is receiving,” “Good and evil can coexist,” and “Being unselfish is selfish.”

Synergy means looking at what appears to be opposite or paradoxical in terms of its commonalities rather than its differences. It is looking for meaningful relationships between what are often thought of as dichotomous elements of a situation. It is an attempt to break out of the either-or mentality to look for bridging abstractions, to look for wholes rather than parts. One is thinking synergistically when such seeming

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opposites as work and play, sensuality and spirituality, now and not-now, aggression and kindness, etc. are seen as fused.

Applied to groups, the concept of synergy means looking at outcomes in a non-zero-sum way. Collaboration in planning, problem solving, etc., generates products that are often better than those of any individual member or subgroup; whereas competition often means creating not only winners but also powerful losers, who can make the price of winning high. Collaboration and competition are seen as meaningfully-related processes, both of which can result in incremental outcomes owing to group interaction. Consensual validation of points of view held by individuals in interpersonal interchange can cause the outcome to exceed that of people working parallel to each other. A synergistic outcome results from the “groupness” that is greater than the sum of the parts of the group.

Work groups can obtain synergistic results when the process of working heightens sharing and functional competition. The mechanics of democratic decision making get redefined to achieve consensus as the goal (members of the group reach *substantial* agreement, rather than unanimity) rather than splitting the group into a majority and one or more minorities around an issue. Conflict becomes viewed as an asset rather than something to be avoided. Winning becomes a group effort rather than an individual quest. Individuals who do not “go along” are seen as catalysts for improved production rather than as blockers. “Horse trading” is viewed as failing to look at polarized points of view on a larger plane.

Consensus-seeking is harder work than formalistic modes of decision making, but the investment in energy expended to make the group function effectively without violating its members can have a dramatic payoff. A number of suggestions can be made about how consensus can be achieved.

1. Members should avoid arguing in order to win as individuals. What is “right” is the best collective judgment of the group as a whole.
2. Conflict on ideas, solutions, predictions, etc., should be viewed as helping rather than hindering the process of seeking consensus.
3. Problems are solved best when individual group members accept responsibility for both hearing and being heard, so that everyone is included in what is decided.
4. Tension-reducing behaviors can be useful so long as meaningful conflict is not “smoothed over” prematurely.
5. Each member has the responsibility to monitor the processes through which work gets done and to initiate discussions of process when it is becoming effective.
6. The best results flow from a fusion of information, logic, and emotion. Value judgments about what is best include members’ feelings about the data and the process of decision making.

A sculptor viewing a block of granite can see a figure surrounded by stone. In an analogous way, a decision that is best can be seen inside group effort, if we can find ways of chipping away the excess. Consensus-seeking offers promise of marshalling group resources to produce synergistic outcomes without denying the integrity of members.

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■ HIDDEN AGENDAS

Any group works on two levels: the level of the surface task with which the group is immediately concerned, and the level of the hidden, undisclosed needs and motives of its individual members. Participants' aspirations, attitudes, and values affect the way they react to the group's surface task. Such individual "hidden agendas" siphon off valuable energy that could be used for accomplishing the task at hand and for group maintenance.

Understanding how these hidden agendas work in the life of a group helps the group achieve its common goal more efficiently.

INDIVIDUAL NEEDS

A person joins a group in order to fulfill or express certain personal needs. His or her behavior as a member of that group is neither random nor haphazard; it is keyed to his or her personal motivations, which may be social or emotional, explicit or hidden to the group, known or unknown to that individual.

Needs, of course, take different forms and can be satisfied in different ways for different people. Physical and security needs are basic: An individual must have food, shelter, and warmth in order to maintain life; if the individual is not to be overwhelmed by anxiety, he or she must also achieve some security and stability in the environment.

When such basic survival needs are met, other needs press for satisfaction. An individual has social, ego, and self-fulfillment requirements as well. These are the needs that can best be fulfilled in a group situation; thus, their satisfaction is often the individual's motivation for joining a group.

As individuals seek acceptance from others, social needs become apparent; when these are filled, the person's ego presses for its satisfaction. Finally, as the individual begins to understand his or her own unique identity, he or she can become fully himself or herself.

HIDDEN NEEDS

Hidden beneath the surface of the group's life are many individual, conflicting currents: its members' needs for belonging, acceptance, recognition, self-worth, self-expression, and productivity.

Such needs are personal and subjective, but they are not necessarily "selfish." Looking for the satisfaction of personal needs through group membership is both

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“normal” and “natural.” We are not concerned here with the question of how or whether these needs should be satisfied, but with their effect on the group as a whole.

If *one* individual’s needs block another from achieving his or her needs, or if such personal needs hinder the group from accomplishing its goals, then we become concerned. We want to legitimize the individual’s fulfillment of his or her needs in ways that do not raise obstacles for other members of the group.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR LEADERS

The leader should keep in mind the fact that a group continuously works on both the hidden and the surface levels. Hidden agendas may prevent the group from moving as fast as participants would like or expect.

What can be done about hidden agendas:

1. The leader can look for hidden agendas and learn to recognize their presence.
2. A group member may help surface hidden agendas. He or she may say, for example, “I wonder if we have said all that we feel about the issue. Maybe we should take time to go around the table and ask for individual comments so that we can open up any further thoughts.”
3. Hidden agendas can be brought into the open and discussed. But not all hidden agendas can be confronted successfully by a group; some are best left under the surface.
4. The leader should not criticize the group for the presence of hidden agendas; they are legitimate and must be worked with just like the surface task. The amount of attention that should be given to the hidden agendas depends on the degree of their influence on the group’s task.
5. The leader should help the group find the means of solving hidden agendas. Problem-solving methods are needed, though techniques vary.
6. The group should spend some time evaluating its progress in handling hidden agendas. The last fifteen minutes of a meeting devoted to such evaluation is often very helpful.

Better and more open ways of dealing with hidden agendas should become apparent through experience. And as groups mature, hidden agendas are often reduced, thus increasing the amount of energy the group has to devote to its surface tasks.

■ THE SHADOW OF ORGANIZATION DEVELOPMENT

Stanley M. Herman

Much current theory and practice in organization development (OD) derives from what might be called conventional human relations assumptions. These underlying values, powerful though often unexpressed, affect both clients and consultants. They are primarily derived from a set of biases in favor of “positive” emotions and attributes. As a result, other aspects of human interaction that involve “negative” emotions and attributes have been neglected. I believe this bias has been a severe limitation on the OD field.

“POSITIVE” AND “NEGATIVE”

In the Gestalt orientation (the theoretical base for the OD approach advocated here), the “negative” emotions are not neglected. Through concepts of polarization and integration, a person’s whole range of emotions is valued. Integrated individuals are able to experience both love and hate. They can exert dominance without being or thinking of themselves as tyrants; they can experience submission without feeling crushed. If individuals and organizations are to realize their potential for vitality and growth, they need to be aware of both their “negative” and “positive” aspects.¹

OD Values

Conventional human relations values current in OD include:

- Logic and rationality
- Trust and openness
- Collaboration and participation

Originally published in *The 1974 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators* by J.W. Pfeiffer & J.E. Jones (Eds.), San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company. The concept of the Shadow is used in the psychology of C.G. Jung to characterize those aspects of an individual’s personality that he or she has not integrated into his or her self-image. The Shadow thus often contains characteristics that seem negative, alien, and threatening to the individual, and he or she frequently rejects them. In so doing, he or she denies part of himself or herself. He or she is incomplete and unbalanced, using important life energy in an internal struggle against himself or herself. Since the struggle to repress the Shadow can never be completely successful, he or she is also troubled by its intermittent appearance in his behavior. The author wants especially to express his thanks to Dr. Irving Polster of the Gestalt Institute of Cleveland for his helpful criticism of this paper.

¹ For the sake of clarity and emphasis, this contrast is made in strong terms (Gestalt fashion). It may seem extreme to some readers. There has been, however, movement toward a broader and more realistic approach to human dynamics on the part of some OD consultants and practitioners.

- Affection and responsiveness
- Group interest

While these values are appropriate and important, OD has frequently neglected or designated values at the other end of the spectrum of human interaction. For example:

- Authority and control
- Caution and reserve
- Autonomy and separateness
- Competition and aggressiveness
- Dislike and resistance
- Self-interest

This sometimes-explicit, sometimes-implicit renunciation of the “negative” or “shadow” qualities has weakened a good deal of OD effort by depriving it of the vigor and energy that are frequently inherent in the negative thrust. Equally important, this tendency has, I believe, only increased clients’ guilt feelings and their inability to cope with the “tough” parts of their worlds.

In contrast, in the Gestalt approach to OD, negative behavior is not denied. Clients are encouraged to become fully aware of what they are experiencing (rather than what they or the consultant thinks they should be experiencing) and to work out viable relationships based on their own unique qualities and dynamics instead of on the consultant’s idea of good human relations practice.

Full exchanges that acknowledge the reality and health of the negative as well as the positive aspects of human behavior are encouraged. Genuine behavior change (rather than “acted change”) requires that the individual become completely aware of his or her present behavior and responsible for it.²

CHANGE IN INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS

In the Gestalt framework, change in interpersonal problem relationships occurs in a variety of ways.

Change in other people’s reactions to an individual’s behavior occurs when they understand his or her behavior more clearly and are willing to deal with him or her in his or her context.

For example, in one team-building session, a powerful and vocal manager, who was seen by many of his subordinates as harshly critical and punitive, was encouraged to intensify his behavior even further in the group setting. It soon became clear to all that

² Stanley M. Herman, “A Gestalt Orientation to Organization Development,” *Contemporary Organization Development* (NTL Institute of Applied Behavioral Science, 1972) pp. 69-89.

he was expressing his own frustrations (“It keeps me from getting ulcers,” he later explained) rather than punishing his subordinates.

In another case, a manager intensely involved in her own specialty was perceived by her peers to be totally unwilling to listen to their points of view. After they had expressed their complaints fully, they recognized that her intensity was also a strength for their team.

Change in individuals’ views of themselves (e.g., lessened feelings of self-contempt or failure) occurs when they fully experience and acknowledge their own behavior. When they feel better about themselves, it is likely that others feel better about them, too.

For example, an organization member who was accused by his peers and his manager of being both sarcastic and aloof first denied the charge. As we worked together, however, he acknowledged that his sense of humor was ironic, and that in trying to control it, he only made himself appear aloof as well.

When he was asked to dramatize his ironic humor with group members, he was delighted with his own performance. The others were, too. In this case, a positive change in relationships continued long after the group session. The manager still made ironic (or sarcastic) comments, but he was no longer seen as aloof and most people appreciated his wit.

Change in actual behavior occurs when the “unfinished business” (e.g., old resentments) stimulating that behavior is cleared up, allowing new and clearer perceptions of others to emerge.

In one case, a long conflict between a department head and his senior subordinate had developed. The subordinate finally acknowledged that she resented her department head because she believed that she should have been promoted to that position several years before. In a “two-chair polarization” exercise in which she played both her own and her manager’s parts, she slowly and steadily struggled through her unfinished resentments (of *herself* primarily) and later began to make real contact with her boss.

Change in the response of the individual to others results when their expectations of him or her are clarified. The individual recognizes for the first time that he or she is being asked for help and cooperation and not being criticized.

There may be an *acceptance of the status-quo* resulting in no substantive change but less tension. Often such acceptance, by reducing pressures, actually seems to precipitate later real change.

Most frequently, of course, there may be a *combination* of two or more of the above.

CONTRASTS BETWEEN CONVENTIONAL HUMAN RELATIONS (CHR) AND GESTALT (G) APPROACHES

Group vs. Individual

CHR: Focus on group helping and team building

G: Focus on recognition and mobilization of individual strength

In conventional human relations (CHR) theory, the emphasis is on building mutual understanding and cooperative behavior. People are encouraged to help one another. Stronger members of the team look after “weaker” members. Roles such as “gate keeper” and “summarizer” are encouraged. Group pressure is applied to the dominant members of the group, especially when their domination seems to inhibit the less-aggressive members. Group members take responsibility for one another’s welfare.

In the Gestalt (G) orientation, each individual is encouraged to take responsibility for himself or herself. “Helping weaker members” is not encouraged. Each person takes charge of his or her own action (or inaction) and discovers his or her capacity for initiating (and suppressing) behavior. Instead of discouraging a dominant member through pressure, attention is directed toward the passive member so that he or she may interrupt the dominant member and *get what he or she wants through his or her own action*. Oversimplified, this approach attempts to strengthen the “weak,” rather than weaken the “strong.” As a result, the entire group is strengthened.

An example may serve as clarification. In a typical CHR consulting intervention, if the consultant observes that one member of the group is having a difficult time expressing himself or herself in an exchange with a dominant member, the consultant points out to the dominant member the effect of his or her style of expression on the more passive member. Very frequently this intervention, especially when bolstered by others’ feedback, produces a feeling of guilt in the dominant member and an effort to restrain the strong, expressive style. However, since his or her natural forces are unchanged, this effort not only takes a great deal of energy but is frequently unsuccessful as well.

A G-oriented consultant would first focus on the reluctant team member and ask whether he or she has something to say. If so, the consultant might then ask the passive individual what it is that stops him or her from expressing himself or herself. If the reluctant member responds that he or she has a difficult time doing so, faced with the strongly dominant member, the consultant asks the reluctant person to consider the consequences to himself or herself if he or she were to be more expressive. The passive member is not, however, forced to be more expressive. The following dialogue is an example.

Consultant: John, I am concerned that you haven’t been saying anything, even though we have been discussing your area.

John: Yes, I know.

Consultant: Is there anything you want to say on this subject?

John: I guess so, but Mary comes on so strong that I’m a little reluctant to speak up.

Consultant: What is it that makes you stop yourself from saying what you want to say?

John: Well, I guess I just don't want to interrupt.

Consultant: What's your objection to interrupting?

John: I don't know. I guess maybe it seems impolite to do that.

Consultant: To whom would it be impolite?

John: To Mary, I guess.

Consultant: So you would rather keep yourself from saying what you want to say than be impolite. Is that it?

John: Well, I don't know. When I think about it that way, maybe not.

Bill (another group member): It doesn't seem to me that Mary holds herself back by being afraid of being impolite.

John: No, that's true. I never thought about it that way.

Consultant: It seems to me that you have to make the choice. You have to take responsibility for yourself and decide whether you are going to say what you want to say or not.

John: Yes, I guess I do. And I guess I will. I do have something to say. (Turns to Mary and addresses her.)

Why vs. How

CHR: Examination of situational elements of the interaction process: emphasis on *why*

G: Emphasis on what the individual does and *how*

In the CHR approach, the consultant helps those involved in their attempts to explain the situation by examining various interpretations, suggestions, and solutions. The approach is sequential and rational.

The G-oriented approach, on the other hand, is seldom analytical. It emphasizes the *now* and the *how* rather than the *then* and the *why*. Since there are almost invariably multiple explanations for every phenomenon in behavior, an intellectual understanding of why something happened frequently does little to help change perceptions or behavior.

In the G orientation, the consultant encourages the parties to become aware of what they are doing and what they are avoiding. For example, in the preceding dialogue, a CHR-oriented consultant might have asked John whether he was inhibited because he saw Mary as being in a stronger organizational position. Or the consultant might have explored John's past relationships with Mary and others in the group. If the consultant were psychoanalytically oriented, he or she might also have questioned John about his past relationships with authority figures.

Analysis vs. “Dramatization”

CHR: Analysis of “problem behavior” and methods for correcting it

G: Intensification or dramatization of “problem behavior” until a change in relationship occurs

In the CHR-oriented group, “problem behavior” patterns are highlighted and explicitly identified (usually through feedback). The individual receives proposals for changing his or her behavior. Even though these proposals are often offered as suggestions (i.e., the consultant makes it clear that there is, of course, no compulsion for the group member to change style), the disadvantages of the old style are made clear.

Not only is such an approach manipulative, but the behavior change that comes from it is frequently forced. Often the suppressed feeling is apparent in body tension, restlessness, or other signs. It would seem that restrained irritation or affection is seldom healthy for the individual or the group.

In the G-oriented group, members are encouraged to be aware of their feelings and behavior and to emphasize where they are rather than where they “ought” to be. The consultant urges them to dramatize the polarities in themselves, rather than to analyze and solve their “problem behavior.”

Leveling vs. Vitalizing

CHR: Aggressiveness and conflict seen as negative forces in system; manifest conflict seen as a sign of openness but something to be resolved as soon as possible

G: Aggressiveness and conflict valued as vitalizing forces; aggressiveness essential for creativity

In the CHR-oriented group, expressions of aggression or conflict are primarily seen as indications of trust and openness (“leveling”). However, in this approach, efforts are quickly directed toward analyzing the causes of disagreement and resolving them in a rational “problem-solving” manner.

Competitive behavior is not valued except when it is focused outside the group. Within the organization, the emphasis is almost invariably on cooperative and collaborative behavior.

Group aggressiveness and conflict are considered both natural and valuable in the G-oriented group. Rather than moving very quickly into problem solving (which often increases the likelihood of a later recurrence of the conflict), the G group attempts to polarize and further sharpen differences and conflict elements.

With the help of a consultant to highlight the issues, individuals are encouraged to express their feelings and beliefs, even to exaggerate them if necessary. People find that full argument is less embarrassing and “damaging” than they had imagined. Equally important, new perspectives emerge from this process.

In working with a situation of conflict, the “two-chair” approach mentioned earlier may be used in which the individual conducts a dialogue with himself or herself,

portraying both protagonist and antagonist.³ In this way, he or she is able to become aware of his or her resentments against the alienated parts of himself or herself and thus to eventually re-own those alienated parts. When both parties in the situation have had an opportunity to explore each other's position, they are then in a better position to deal with each other and with the remaining real issues between them.

For example, in a conflict situation involving a recently appointed high-level manager, who was black, and two of his peers, who were white, it was only after the black manager recognized that some part of his antagonism grew out of a feeling of being patronized as a black man that he and his white peers were really able to deal with more substantive issues between them.

External vs. Internal Feedback

CHR: Emphasis on others' feedback

G: Emphasis on an individual's own internal feedback

The cycle of interaction generally proceeds as follows in the typical CHR-oriented group: The individual acts; he or she receives feedback about his or her actions and their effect on others; he or she then has the choice of whether or not to modify his or her behavior in response to this feedback, particularly if it is negative.

A number of training programs throughout the country use this approach in managerial development. As noted in a recent brochure advertising sensitivity training: *The age-old continuing wish of men and women to see themselves as others see them has the most practical basis for those who supervise or serve in key roles in our society. To increase the effectiveness of our relationships with others, we need to know more accurately how they see us—what we do that is useful and what we do that detracts from our usefulness.*

Thus, others' feedback may be used as a guide by the recipient in modifying his or her behavior and thereby increasing his or her effectiveness. If the individual is not ready to make such behavior modification, however, the changes frequently prove to be forced, temporary, and ineffective.

In the G-oriented group, the feedback of others is de-emphasized and the focus placed on the individual's own awareness of his or her behavior.

For example, in a CHR group, an individual might get this feedback: "Joe, I feel frustrated. You seem very evasive and that produces a negative reaction in me. I wish you would be more direct." In the G group, Joe could well be encouraged by the consultant to be more evasive with others in the group, but in a deliberate way.

One member of a management group spoke in halting, theoretical generalizations. When, at the consultant's suggestion, he consciously communicated with other members of the group in the most abstract and theoretical way he could, his voice, manner, and delivery showed increasing strength and then humor. He became quite animated and energetic, much to his own pleasure and the enjoyment of his peers.

³ For illustrations see Perls, F.A., *Gestalt Therapy Verbatim*, Real People Press, 1969.

Later he became aware that he used his hesitancy and abstract manner to avoid being challenged. He also discovered his own capacity to use a more direct style when he wished to do so.

In the G-oriented group, the consultant looks at current behavior not as something to be corrected or changed, but rather as something that needs emphasis and increased awareness on the part of each individual. If such behavior is dysfunctional, change will occur naturally.

Interdependence vs. Autonomy

CHR: Emphasis on interdependence

G: Emphasis on individual autonomy and competence: the capacity to choose independent, competitive, or collaborative behavior

Interdependence may very well be a requirement in some organizations, particularly if the organization is responsible for complex technology systems. However, it is not, or ought not to be, a goal in itself.

Often, groups are exhorted by consultants and CHR-educated managers to work together and to find the synergy in their cooperation. This striving sometimes contributes to considerable frustration when the actual requirements of the task do not require interdependence.

In the G-oriented approach, interdependence is recognized when it is a requirement of the situation or task to be done. However, when it is not required, the group is not encouraged to strain for interdependence. What is important is increasing the ability of the individual or the group to operate independently, cooperatively, or competitively—whichever is appropriate.

Open vs. Up-Front Values

CHR: “Open” values

G: “Upfront” values (which may also be “closed”)

The CHR-oriented group approach places a high value on trust and openness, and quite frequently group pressures toward openness and intimacy are very strong.

While the G-oriented group does not discourage openness in relationships, neither does it discourage individuals from being “closed” when that is their explicit choice. If, under these circumstances, the group applies pressure on the individual to be more sharing, the consultant often will support the individual’s right to remain separate and to restrict his or her sharing. When the individual recognizes that he or she can choose to say “no,” he or she can then say yes more fully and freely when that is what he or she wants to do.

Experimentation vs. Awareness

CHR: Learning and experimenting with new concepts and new behavior

G: Increasing awareness of present behavior and its completion

In the CHR-oriented group, members are encouraged to learn, primarily from feedback, and then to try out new methods of behaving and interacting with one another. Attention is focused on such areas as the improvement of communication, active listening, nondefensiveness, etc. The search for the “right way” or the “most effective way” of interacting often encourages systematized behavior in accordance with some particular prescribed model such as Theory Y or “the manager’s role.”

In the G-oriented group, spontaneous behavior is highly valued, rather than the fulfillment of prescribed role behavior. Thus, in allowing themselves to be authentic, individuals may well behave from time to time in ways that are less than “ideal.” But an authentic exchange between human beings who allow themselves to be as they are—“good” *and* “bad”—brings about more genuine and more satisfying relationships. There is surely room for a great deal of diversity in behavior styles.⁴

Observer vs. Advocate

CHR: Consultant as a neutral and objective observer of process

G: Consultant as activist, director, and participant

The consultant in a CHR-oriented group frequently feels (especially in dealing with conflict issues) that he or she should be objective, fair, and uninvolved and, at best, do as little leading of the group as possible. CHR-oriented consultants frequently speak of “the group’s needs,” and they believe it is inappropriate to pursue their own needs. Many of these consultants indicate considerable concern that group members may become dependent on them.

In the G-oriented group the consultant is much more likely to take an active part and to act and react impulsively, not merely as a model to others, but also to suit his or her own needs. The consultant’s assumption, particularly when working with industrial groups consisting of people with relatively high ego strengths, is that group members need not be unduly protected. The consultant does not fear that they will become dependent on him or her if he or she is freely himself or herself in the group, allowing them to see his or her strengths and weaknesses. Since the consultant has no special image to maintain because of his or her particular professional function, he or she may experience and express the full range of emotions—including anger, affection, confusion, pride, inadequacy—just as the other members of the group may. With this attitude, members recognize the consultant for what he or she is, an ordinary human being with a special set of traits and particular skills.

⁴ I do not really take most “problem behaviors” very seriously. Whether a style is polite or harsh is not terribly important. What counts is whether or not you are organized and in control and you work coherently. And to *that* I do pay a great deal of attention.

Another contrast worth noting is that most CHR-oriented consultants, while encouraging the expression of emotion in personal growth groups and work groups, generally treat the expressed feelings as “data” to be considered rationally—a kind of intellectualization of emotion. The G-oriented consultant relies less on intellectual theory and more on intuition (his or her own and others’) and on faith in the high value of authentic behavior.

Organizational Culture vs. Individual Competence

CHR: Focus on changing organization’s culture

G: Focus on increasing individual’s competence, whatever the culture

A frequent phrase heard among many OD consultants is “changing the organization culture.” Sending managers off to human relations training is not enough, say the consultants; we need to affect the norms and values back at the organization. If patterns are not changed in the “back-home” culture, the consultants warn, the manager returning from his or her positive experience at a sensitivity lab will be confronted with lack of support or even rejection from fellow managers because of his or her new, more open style.

This means that the organization must find ways to encourage modes similar to those developed in the training group. The demise of more than one company’s OD effort has been attributed to its failure to do just that.

In the CHR framework certain underlying assumptions are clear. First, the desired and encouraged direction of change is toward the “positive” emotions, especially group support, interdependence, and participation. Second, it is generally assumed that these values are better for the organization than the “negative” emotions—frequently in terms of both humanitarian and efficiency criteria. Third, it is also assumed that making these new values operable in the organization requires consensual support by others, i.e., that it is too dangerous to be open, sharing, and collaborative if others are not. Thus, the individual manager can change only if the system can be altered to support him or her.

It will come as no surprise that the G-oriented approach is more individualistically focused, encompassing the negative as well as the positive emotions as sources of human energy and vitality. Few business or government organizations could seriously be categorized as tyrants. (It is likely that people who run that kind of organization do not hire OD consultants anyway.) Styles of management can, however, vary significantly on the spectrums of permissiveness-control, participation-directiveness, etc. One side of the continuum is not necessarily better than the other, either from the standpoint of effectiveness or humanitarianism.

With this set of assumptions, then, the G-oriented consultant is less likely to focus on changing the “culture”⁵ and more likely to help clients identify *what they want, what*

⁵ While I acknowledge that in the organization development context “culture” may be a useful term, I also find it, and other works like it, to be lifeless abstractions frequently used in “behavioral science conversations” as substitutes for specific situations. In the G-oriented framework, abstracting can be a way of avoiding.

prevents them from getting what they want, and what alternatives are available to them. When these questions have been addressed, clients may deal with greater clarity and vigor with others in the organization, and they may do so in whatever style they find most promising, given the present “culture” and their own requirements of themselves.⁶

One implication of this point is that effective development of team members does not always require that all meet together in dealing with their concerns and conflicts. The individual may recognize and mobilize his or her strength through private consultations and transfer his or her improved effectiveness back into the working environment.

CONCLUSION

The values of today’s CHR practitioners derive, I believe, from liberal-democratic biases and traditions. In reaction against the mass exploitation and mechanistic outlook of the early days of industrialization, we have fostered and justified gentility, participation, and rationality. In so doing we have often neglected or denied power, directiveness, and impulse, and these “negative” aspects are as vitally important to being a complete person as are their more comfortable, “positive” counterparts.

⁶ I believe that for the most effective development of organization relationships, as well as for the individual, it is important for the client first to become aware of his or her own stance, including fears, projections, alienations, etc. He or she frequently discovers that many worries become far less terrifying when reduced to concrete action possibilities rather than vague abstractions.

■ ROLE FUNCTIONS IN A GROUP

Donald Nylen, J. Robert Mitchell, and Anthony Stout

The members of an efficient and productive group must provide for meeting two kinds of needs—what it takes to do the job, and what it takes to strengthen and maintain the group. Specific statements and behaviors may be viewed at a more abstract level than the content or behavior alone, i.e., in terms of how they serve the group needs.

What members do to serve group needs may be called functional roles. Statements and behaviors that tend to make the group inefficient or weak may be called nonfunctional behaviors.

A partial list of the kinds of contributions or the group services that are performed by one or many individuals is as follows:

A. TASK ROLES (functions required in selecting and carrying out a group task)

1. *Initiating Activity*: proposing solutions, suggesting new ideas, new definitions of the problem, new attack on the problem, or new organization of material.
2. *Seeking Information*: asking for clarification of suggestions, requesting additional information or facts.
3. *Seeking Opinion*: looking for an expression of feeling about something from the members, seeking clarification of values, suggestions, or ideas.
4. *Giving Information*: offering facts or generalizations, relating one's own experience to the group problem to illustrate points.
5. *Giving Opinion*: stating an opinion or belief concerning a suggestion or one of several suggestions, particularly concerning its value rather than its factual basis.
6. *Elaborating*: clarifying, giving examples or developing meanings, trying to envision how a proposal might work if adopted.
7. *Coordinating*: showing relationships among various ideas or suggestions, trying to pull ideas and suggestions together, trying to draw together activities of various subgroups or members.
8. *Summarizing*: pulling together related ideas or suggestions, restating suggestions after the group has discussed them.

B. GROUP BUILDING AND MAINTENANCE ROLES (functions required in strengthening and maintaining group life and activities)

Originally published in *The 1976 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators* by J.W. Pfeiffer & J.E. Jones (Eds.), San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company.

1. *Encouraging*: being friendly, warm, responsive to others, praising others and their ideas, agreeing with and accepting contributions of others.
2. *Gate Keeping*: trying to make it possible for another member to make a contribution to the group by saying, “We haven’t heard anything from Kim yet,” or suggesting limited talking time for everyone so that all will have a chance to be heard.
3. *Standard Setting*: expressing standards for the group to use in choosing its content or procedures or in evaluating its decisions, reminding group to avoid decisions that conflict with group standards.
4. *Following*: going along with decisions of the group, thoughtfully accepting ideas of others, serving as audience during group discussion.
5. *Expressing Group Feeling*: summarizing what group feeling is sensed to be, describing reactions of the group to ideas or solutions.

C. BOTH GROUP TASK AND MAINTENANCE ROLES

1. *Evaluating*: submitting group decisions or accomplishments to comparison with group standards, measuring accomplishments against goals.
2. *Diagnosing*: determining sources of difficulties, appropriate steps to take next, analyzing the main blocks to progress.
3. *Testing for Consensus*: tentatively asking for group opinions in order to find out whether the group is nearing consensus on a decision, sending up trial balloons to test group opinions.
4. *Mediating*: harmonizing, conciliating differences in points of view, making compromise solutions.
5. *Relieving Tension*: draining off negative feeling by jesting or pouring oil on troubled waters, putting a tense situation in wider context.

From time to time, more often perhaps than anyone likes to admit, people behave in nonfunctional ways that do not help and sometimes actually harm the group and the work it is trying to do. Some of the more common types of such nonfunctional behaviors are described below.

D. TYPES OF NONFUNCTIONAL BEHAVIOR

1. *Being Aggressive*: working for status by criticizing or blaming others, showing hostility against the group or some individual, deflating the ego or status of others.
2. *Blocking*: interfering with the progress of the group by going off on a tangent, citing personal experiences unrelated to the problem, arguing too much on a point, rejecting ideas without consideration.

3. *Self-Confessing*: using the group as a sounding board, expressing personal, nongroup-oriented feelings or points of view.
4. *Competing*: vying with others to produce the best idea, talk the most, play the most roles, gain favor with the leader.
5. *Seeking Sympathy*: trying to induce other group members to be sympathetic to one's problems or misfortunes, deploring one's own situation, or disparaging one's own ideas to gain support.
6. *Special Pleading*: introducing or supporting suggestions related to one's own pet concerns or philosophies, lobbying.
7. *Horsing Around*: clowning, joking, mimicking, disrupting the work of the group.
8. *Seeking Recognition*: attempting to call attention to oneself by loud or excessive talking, extreme ideas, unusual behavior.
9. *Withdrawal*: acting indifferent or passive, resorting to excessive formality, daydreaming, doodling, whispering to others, wandering from the subject.

In using a classification such as the one above, people need to guard against the tendency to blame any person (whether themselves or another) who falls into "nonfunctional behavior." It is more useful to regard such behavior as a symptom that all is not well with the group's ability to satisfy individual needs through group-centered activity. People need to be alert to the fact that each person is likely to interpret such behaviors differently. For example, what appears as "blocking" to one person may appear to another as a needed effort to "test feasibility." What appears to be nonfunctional behavior may not necessarily be so, for the content and the group conditions must also be taken into account. There are times when some forms of being aggressive contribute positively by clearing the air and instilling energy into the group.

E. IMPROVING MEMBER ROLES

Any group is strengthened and enabled to work more efficiently if its members:

1. Become more conscious of the role function needed at any given time;
2. Become more sensitive to and aware of the degree to which they can help to meet the needs through what they do; and
3. Undertake self-training to improve their range of role functions and skills in performing them.

■ D-I-D: A THREE-DIMENSIONAL MODEL FOR UNDERSTANDING GROUP COMMUNICATION

David G. Smith

Group leaders are required to be able to make more than “gut level” responses to members’ behaviors. Stated simply, group leaders must determine what needs to be done—and then do it. Observation, however, indicates that this process is often reversed. An understanding of group-communication patterns as they interact with a leader’s theory of human behavior will assist in establishing a better sequence of events.

GROUP-LEADER BEHAVIOR DETERMINATION

A variety of methods have been formulated for classifying and characterizing communication patterns within groups. Bales’s technique (*Interaction Process Analysis*, 1950) and the *Hill Interaction Matrix* (1963) are two of the most notable. Both provide a wealth of information on group interaction and are invaluable tools for the analysis of group member behavior. Unfortunately, their inherently complex rating systems and postgroup analysis designs preclude immediate usefulness for the group leader.

Decisions regarding leader intervention in group process require immediately available data based on group behaviors. These data must be easily translatable into a model that allows the selection and application of appropriate intervention strategies. Three simple questions can guide the group leader in choosing an intervention:

Question 1. What is happening now?

Question 2. What should be happening?

Question 3. What might I do to elicit the desired behavior?

Answers to questions 2 and 3 are determined by the group leader’s working theory of human behavior. To be of practical value, the theory should generate a group-leader behavior system (technique) that can be demonstrated to yield the desired results.

This lecturette provides a methodology for answering question 1, “What is happening now?,” through (1) the introduction of D-I-D, a systematic format for the observation and classification of group-member behavior, and (2) the presentation of limited examples demonstrating ways in which these observations might be interpreted and translated into group-leader behavior.

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D-I-D: A THREE-DIMENSIONAL MODEL

The letters D-I-D represent *directionality*, *immediacy*, and *developmental phase*. These three dimensions are posited as meaningful variables on which group-leader behavior decisions are based.

Directionality

This dimension assumes that any communication has both a source and target(s). The source of communication is always the self. The target, however, may be the self (me talking to me), other(s) (me directing my communication to one or more individuals, either members or leaders, within the group), or the group (me directing communication to the group at large). Self-to-self (S-S), self-to-other (S-O), and self-to-group (S-G) communication patterns are progressively more complex, each providing decreasing levels of control over the response. Observation of ongoing developmental and counseling groups indicates a high frequency of S-S (intrapersonal) communication very early in the group. The S-S communication drops off almost immediately to be replaced largely by S-O (interpersonal) communication as individuals test other members and define group norms. Mature groups exhibit high levels of S-G (intragroup) communication, supplemented by purposeful S-O interaction around specific topics. The translation of S-S patterns into S-G or S-O patterns becomes normative in the mature group (see Tuckman, 1965). A typical pattern of group communication directionality is presented in Figure 1.

Immediacy

Location of communication on the immediacy dimension is determined by the relative proximity of the topic to the sender. Time, physical location, and psychological space are the three critical variables that need to be assessed in locating the communication on the “there-and-then” to “here-and-now” continuum. A statement of anger at being interrupted by another group member is a classic example of here-and-now communication. A discussion of “people who don’t listen to others” is much more of the there-and-then type. There-and-then communication is also typified by a vagueness of sentence subjects (e. g., “they” or “people”) and the frequent use of weakening modifiers (e.g., “sort of,” “rather,” “somewhat”).

Developmental Phase

William Schutz (1958) theorizes that group interaction always follows a sequence that “begins with inclusion, is followed by control, and finally by affection. This cycle may recur” (p. 168). (A reversal of this sequence over the last three intervals of group interaction prior to the group’s anticipated termination is also a part of this theory.)

The inclusion (I) phase involves being in or out of the group and is characterized by anxiety-based individual behaviors such as overtalking, withdrawal, and reporting previous experience. The problem is identity—Who am I going to be in this group?

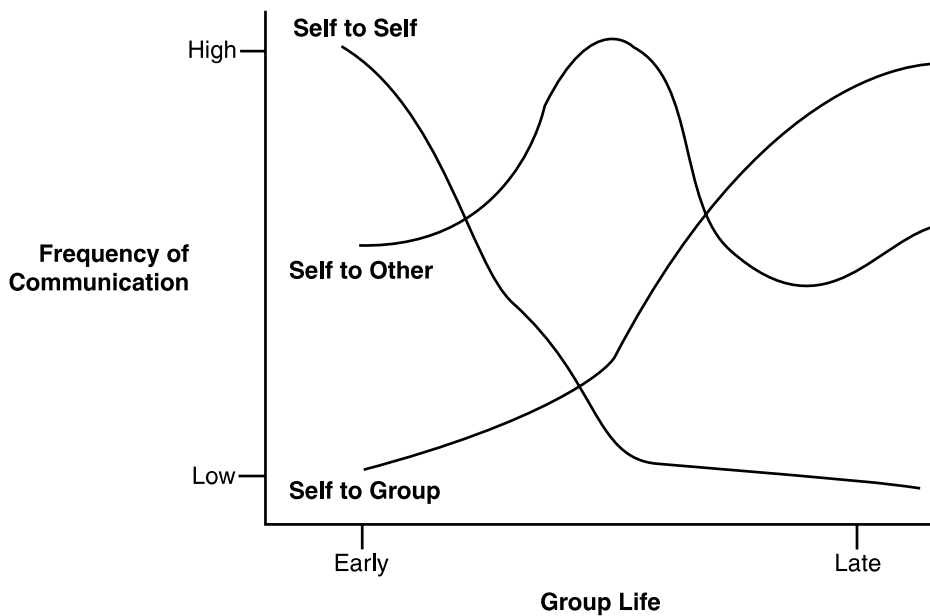


Figure 1. Relative Amounts of S-S, S-O, and S-G Communication over the Life of a Developmental Group

Control (C) is marked by competition, structuring, rules, leadership struggles, and the like. How much power do I have? How responsible am I for what goes on here? Typified by pairing, the expression of both hostile and positive feelings, jealousies, and heightened emotional feelings, the affection (A) phase centers around the question “How intimate will I be?” These phases or problem areas are sequentially emphasized throughout the group’s development and provide distinct behavioral evidence of current issues of concern.

Directionality, immediacy, and developmental phase may be combined into a three-dimensional model of group communication. This model provides a strategy by which the group leader may locate and identify complex communication patterns, thereby allowing comparison of operant versus ideal patterns as defined by the leader’s theory. In evaluating these dimensions it may be helpful to view them as the sides of a cube (see Figure 2).

CONCLUSION

The D-I-D cube offers a concise methodology for defining and describing current (and past) group behavior. It can, when thoughtfully applied, answer clearly question 1, “What is happening now?” The group leader thus has the data necessary for the design of effective intervention strategies. Furthermore, when shared with students, clients, and group participants, the D-I-D cube provides a set of common referents allowing all concerned parties the opportunity to fairly appraise the current group circumstances.

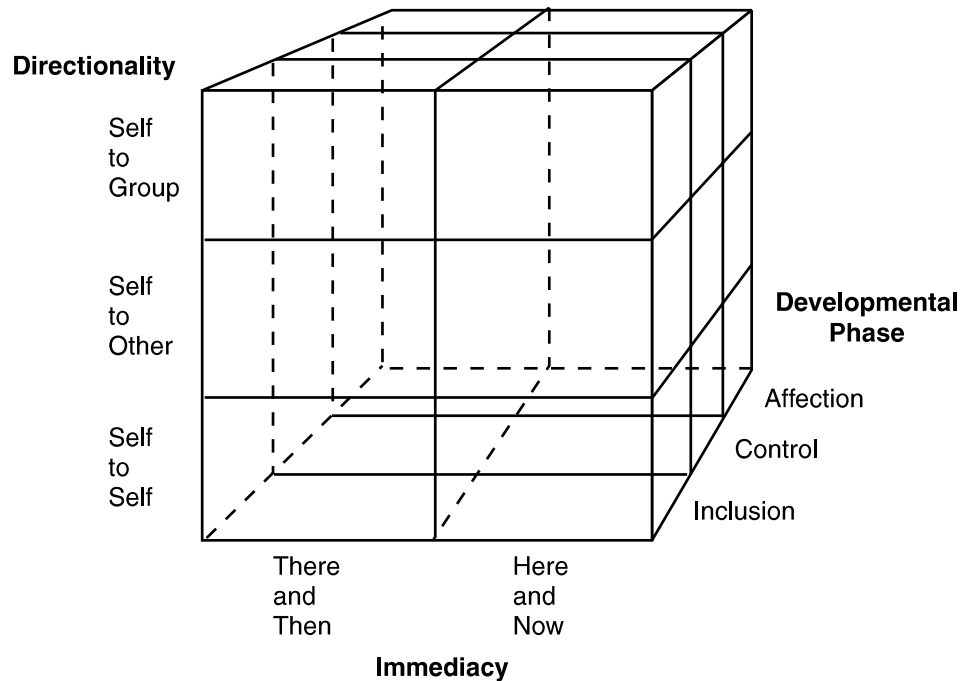


Figure 2. Dimensions of Group Communication

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■ STRUCTURE AS AN INTEGRATIVE CONCEPT IN MANAGEMENT THEORY AND PRACTICE

Joan A. Stepsis

At present, a confusion exists in management theory between leadership-management styles (based on people vs. production concerns) and structure, which is the methodology by which people and tasks are meshed. While certain styles and structures are highly correlated (e.g., an authoritarian style and a directive structure, or a “country-club” style and a permissive structure), the two concepts are not synonymous.

The failure to differentiate between style and structure has led to a definite bias in much of the literature in the human relations and organization development field. Certain structures have been linked to nonhumanistic orientations, other structures to a high concern for people, and yet other structures to a high concern for both people and task. For example, many management texts show a 9,9 style (reflecting high concern for people and for task) linked exclusively to the use of collaborative/participatory structures, thereby implying that if a manager deviates from this structure, he or she is changing his or her basic orientation—becoming either less people oriented or less task oriented or both.¹

However, this need not be true. Directive strategies do not necessarily signal an authoritarian leadership style (low trust and low concern for people’s needs), nor do permissive strategies necessarily identify a country-club leader (low task-production concern). The use of either a more directive or a less directive structural strategy may be totally appropriate to a particular group of people and the requirements of a certain task. The manager with a high concern for both people and production has the goal of meshing individual needs and organizational goals (tasks). In order to accomplish this goal, he or she should be skilled at utilizing a wide variety of structural alternatives. The key, of course, to the successful application of structure is the accurate diagnosis of both personnel and task.

A thorough understanding of structure can provide an integrative framework for conceptualizing management problems and can serve as a primary tool for effective management practice.

This paper will (1) define the concept of structure to differentiate it from stylistic and ideological considerations, (2) review major structural interventions at both managerial and organizational levels, and (3) demonstrate how structural concepts can be applied to management problems.

Originally published in *The 1977 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators* by J.E. Jones & J.W. Pfeiffer (Eds.), San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company.

¹ See Hersey & Blanchard (1972), Chapter 4, for a concise review of the literature in this area.

DEFINING STRUCTURE AND STRUCTURAL ALTERNATIVES

Structure may be defined, simply, as the method chosen in any given situation to relate people to tasks. The appropriateness of a given structural intervention depends on the diagnostic skills of the interventionist.

Two separate diagnoses need to be made. The first is of personnel—their motives, levels of emotional and intellectual development, individual and collective work experience and organizational history, familiarity with one another, interpersonal sensitivity, and past responses to structure. The second diagnosis must analyze task requirements. On the basis of these analyses a strategy is chosen to integrate or mesh a particular individual or set of individuals with the job to be accomplished.

The goal of the manager, then, is not just to make people “happy,” nor is it simply to get the job done at any cost. Rather, the manager’s goal is to discover appropriate strategies for integrating personnel with tasks. In a sense, the interventionist performs a behavioral experiment and can determine its success only when the outcomes show that morale among the personnel is at a satisfactory level and that productivity is acceptable.

In meshing individual needs and organizational goals, the manager needs to find strategies by which individuals can satisfy their own needs while performing the tasks necessary to achieve the goals of the organization. The manager is, then, a kind of liaison between the individual and the organization. As such, he or she must be aware of the structural alternatives from among which he or she can choose.

STRUCTURE AT THE MANAGERIAL LEVEL

A “manager” might be the supervisor of a work group in business or industry, a classroom teacher managing the education of a group of young children or graduate students, or a parent managing the socialization of his or her own children. The term “manager,” as it is used here, is applicable to a wide variety of situations in which a person is asked to accomplish organizational or societal goals with or through others.

Directive Structure

When a manager retains all decision-making functions pertaining to the accomplishment of organizational tasks, he or she is employing a directive structure. The director assigns work, determines how it will be accomplished, sets standards, enforces standards, and evaluates outcomes.

For the majority of us, directive structure is the most familiar way to relate people to tasks. Children growing up in a family are frequently exposed to this strategy; as parents attempt to manage the family and perform the everyday tasks necessary to family life, they usually assign to the children certain tasks, determine how they are to be done, when, and to what standard. They also determine the rewards and punishments associated with the accomplishment of tasks.

If parents are reasonably sensitive to their children’s developmental requirements at various ages and stages, and if they assign tasks in accordance with the children’s needs, this application of directive structure likely does little harm; at the same time, it prepares children to fit into similar structures at school and, later, on the job.

However, those parents who lack sensitivity to their children’s needs may assign tasks too difficult for their children’s abilities at a particular age, or they may set standards too high, or they may fail to provide their children with the opportunities to work out their own procedures for accomplishing tasks. As a result, some of us grow up with a sense of enduring failure and inferiority, others develop resentments toward direction of any kind, while still others become overly dependent on other people and incapable of providing their own structure.

For the majority of us, however, the major drawback of a relatively pervasive use of directive structure at home, at school, and in youthful job experiences is simply the lack of exposure to other models for structuring work. As a result, when we think of structure, many of us see only two alternatives: directive structure or no structure at all. In other words, directive structure is structure. But as Figure 1 shows, there are in reality several ways to relate people to their jobs. It is not simply a matter of structure vs. nonstructure but of choosing the appropriate type of structure for a given situation.

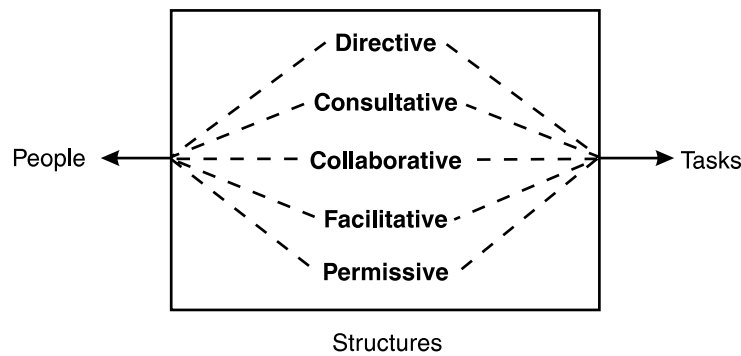


Figure 1. Structural Alternatives—Managerial Level

Consultative Structure

When the manager retains the final decision-making authority but confers with subordinates—individually or as a group—prior to making decisions pertaining to the accomplishment of tasks, he or she is using a consultative structure. The manager seeks ideas and information from subordinates and checks with them regarding their preferences about the organization of the work. These consultations are a datagathering activity, and the manager’s decisions are actually influenced by this input. Manipulative strategies aimed at gaining subordinates’ cooperation by feigning interest in their ideas and opinions do not qualify as consultative structures.

As a way of relating people to tasks, consultative structure should not be confused with the terms *consultation* and *consultant* as used in the field of organization development. In doing their work of helping others to accomplish their goals, consultants choose from among the same structural alternatives as do managers; one consultant (e.g., the expert consultant) may use a directive strategy, while another consultant (e.g., a process consultant)—or another job—may call for a facilitative strategy.

Collaborative Structure

In collaborative structures, the determinations necessary for task accomplishment are made by the people involved regardless of nominal ranks or identities. The nominal, traditional, or authorized leader—be it parent, teacher, or supervisor—relinquishes the decision-making authority to the group (which includes the leader). The “group” can consist of as few as two people—a “manager” and one “subordinate”—and this strategy may be utilized only for certain categories of tasks or it may become the standard method of accomplishing work within the unit. A family, for example, might use a collaborative structure when planning weekend recreational activities but not when setting up the family’s monthly budget. Collaborative strategies are, of course, central to the concept of participatory or team management.

Facilitative Structure

In a facilitative structure, the nominal leader relinquishes to subordinates—as individuals or groups—all decision-making authority pertaining to task accomplishment and takes on a supportive but peripheral role. His or her task becomes that of facilitating—helping to clarify task requirements, options, and strategies for achieving organizational goals and to clarify the intra- and interpersonal factors that may be important to the decision-making activities. A teacher, for example, might facilitate the work of students involved in a class project. The teacher aids the process, but the students decide how the work will proceed, who will do what, etc. T-group and encounter group leaders commonly utilize such a strategy.

Permissive Structure

When a permissive structure is being utilized, the nominal leader has relinquished all decision-making authority, and subordinates are essentially on their own to structure their own efforts toward task accomplishment. Again, such a structure might be established for only very specific types of tasks, or it might be the preferred mode of operation. Obviously, the appropriateness of such a structure depends on the nature of the personnel involved and the type of task they are attempting. A mature individual or

group with a clear understanding of the task at hand may be safely delegated such decision-making authority while the nominal leader attends to other matters.

STRUCTURE AT THE ORGANIZATIONAL LEVEL

The same alternative structures described at the managerial level may be applied to larger units within an organization and to the organization as a whole.

An organization is defined as a social unit designed to accomplish some task or goal. Like the manager, the organization requires a structure with which to relate people and tasks in order to achieve its overall goals.

Directive Structure

The classical and bureaucratic models for structuring an organization essentially parallel the concept of directive structure at the managerial level. Just as does the directive manager, the directive organization determines for its members what tasks are necessary to achieve organizational goals, how these jobs are to be defined, how they are to be accomplished and by whom, what methods will be used for evaluation, and which criteria are the basis for rewarding the efforts of individual members. Decision making is controlled by regulations and by the channeling of pertinent information only to appropriate personnel.

Directive organizations want personnel in leadership positions to behave as directors and to enforce the policies, norms, and regulations of the organization. They do not encourage or sanction sharing or relinquishing decision-making authority, since directors are solely responsible for outcomes in their own areas and are rewarded or punished as a consequence. Figure 2 shows an example of this structure.

This structure is, again, familiar to most of us; for many, this type of structure is synonymous with organizational structure.

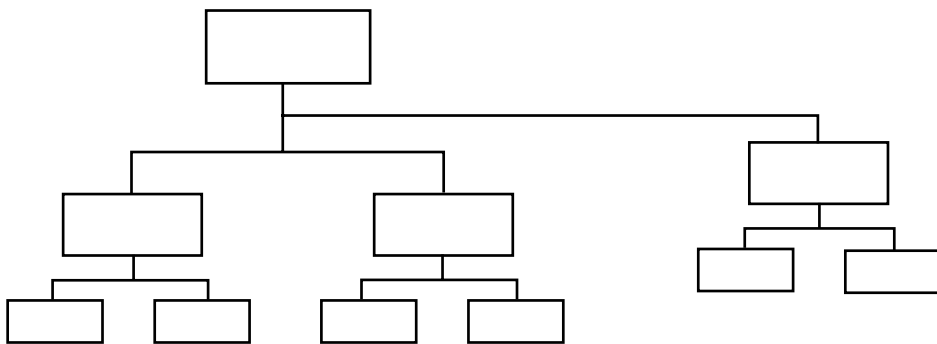


Figure 2. Directive Structure—Organizational Level

Consultative Structure

The primary difference between an organization with a directive structure and one with a consultative structure lies in their norms and expectations for the utilization of human resources in decision making. In a consultative structure, leaders are expected to set up mechanisms for conferring with subordinates prior to making important decisions concerning the accomplishment of tasks. Such mechanisms may include individual and/or group consultations. It is the leader, however, and not the group, who is held responsible by the organization for outcomes. Diagrammatically, this situation is depicted in Figure 3.

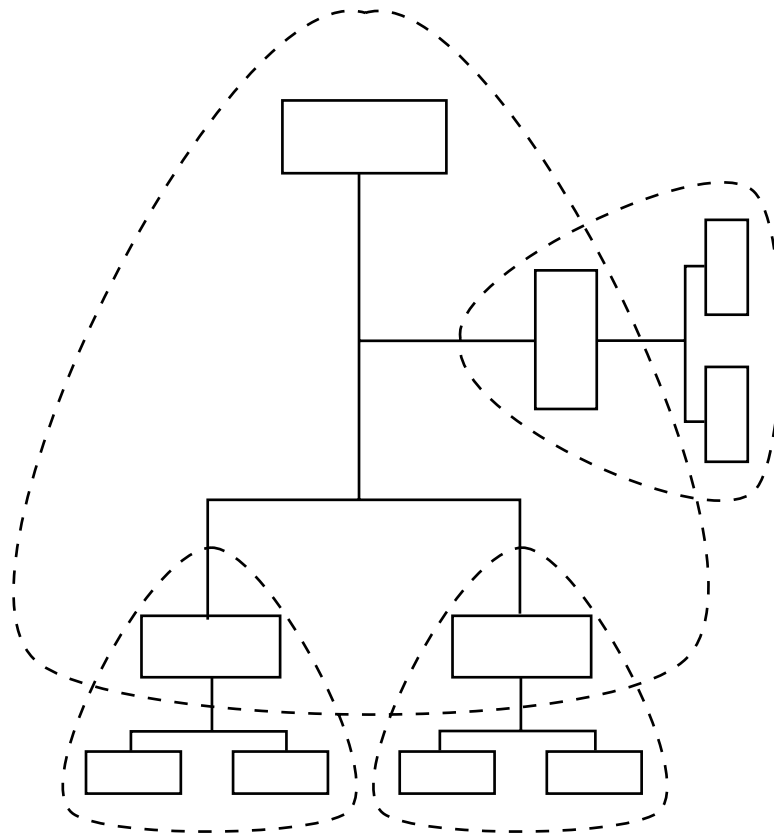
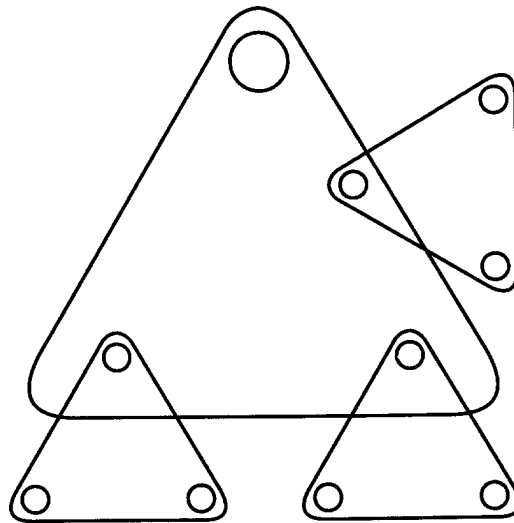


Figure 3. Consultative Structure—Organizational Level

Collaborative Structure

At the organizational level, collaborative structure requires a major change in organizational functioning, since decisions are now made at a group rather than an individual level. Subunits function as teams rather than as manager-subordinate units. Team leaders serve as representatives or links to the higher levels of the organization. Subunits have much greater freedom in organizing their division's task functions as well



**Figure 4. Collaborative Structure—Organizational Level
(Likert's link-pin structure)²**

as in establishing methods for evaluation and criteria for rewards, promotions, etc. Likert's (1967) link-pin or System 4 structure is illustrative (see Figure 4)

In this structure, the “lines” of authority have disappeared. Management at all levels is now a team endeavor and therefore much more responsive to subordinates' needs, wishes, etc. Teams make their decisions on the basis of input provided by “link-pins” from above and below. People are held accountable as units, not as individuals. Since “rewards” and “promotions” are dictated within the teams rather than awarded by those above, responsiveness to fellow employees is heightened. Lateral communication is improved. However, a significant investment in time must be made to develop teams and to conduct joint problem-solving sessions.

Facilitative Structure

A major deviation from our usual sense of how an organization should be structured is required for a facilitative structure. In this model a staff of facilitators (perhaps an OD unit) serves an integrative function by linking and meshing the subunits of an organization. The structure of these subunits may vary widely.

The facilitators link the subunits to each other and to the administrative core of the organization, which handles problems common to all units—facilities, finances, etc. The facilitators are liaison people whose decision-making authority is limited to their role as facilitators. Their job is to provide opportunities for linkage among the largely autonomous subunits.

A medical arts facility can serve as an example of the application of this structure. In such a facility, an administrative unit might operate the physical plant for a collection of autonomous practitioners—some working alone and others in group practices. A team

² Adapted from R. Likert, *The Human Organization*, New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967. Reproduced with the permission of McGraw-Hill.

of facilitators might serve to bridge the gap between these subunits by overseeing periodic meetings, channeling communications, aiding in the resolution of inter- and intra-unit conflicts, and conducting activities designed to diagnose emerging problems. (See Figure 5.)

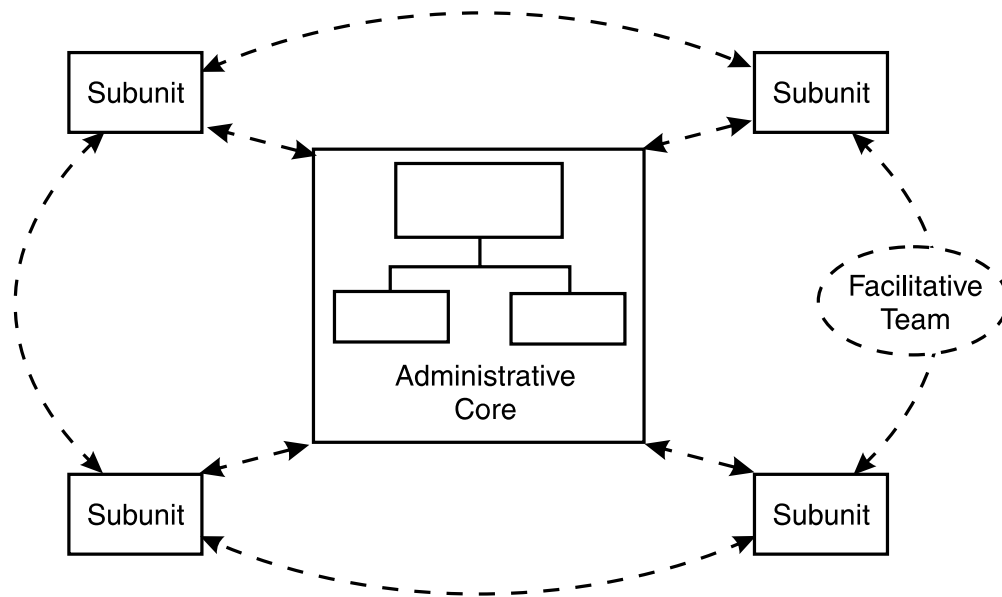


Figure 5. Facilitative Structure—Organizational Level

Permissive Structure

A central unit or parent organization that farms out its work to independent, autonomous contractors illustrates permissive structure at the organizational level. The central or core unit does not organize or oversee the work of the subunits but simply receives and evaluates finished “products.” No attempt is made to link the various subunits as in the previously described model. (See Figure 6.)

CONSIDERATIONS FOR CHOOSING APPROPRIATE STRUCTURES

Although determining appropriate structures is largely dependent on accurate diagnostic efforts, there are also some general considerations that play an important role in making structural choices.

Time

The first area of general consideration is *time*. Occasionally, the most appropriate structural intervention as determined by a thorough diagnosis of people and tasks might not be cost-effective in view of time constraints. For example, the time input necessary to build a team that could effectively collaborate in problem solving might represent an investment too costly to a young organization, given its need for immediate decisive

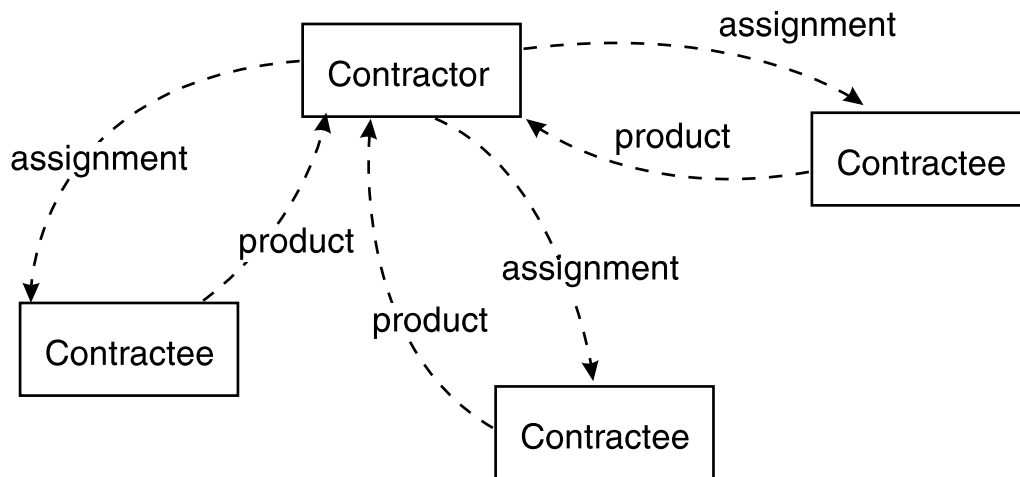


Figure 6. Permissive Structure—Organizational Level

action. In such cases a compromise strategy could be chosen that would provide for immediate decision making by the most informed members of the group and at the same time initiate a team-building process that would pave the way for future collaborative efforts. Such compromise strategies are realistic and necessary and can be looked upon as developmental or progressive strategies rather than as failures to achieve the ideal.

Organizational Context

A second and more difficult issue is that of *organizational context*. Often constraints are placed on a manager's freedom to implement what he or she deems to be the most appropriate strategy for integrating personnel and tasks. As previously discussed, organizations as a whole, as well as smaller managersubordinate subunits, have a primary identifiable structure—the most common of which is the directive or bureaucratic design. By definition, units with such a design do not reward innovative structural patterns that shift the authority of decision making and accountability to subordinates. Thus the individual manager is frequently placed in the unenviable situation of having to utilize strategies that he or she considers inappropriate and ineffective in order to preserve his or her own credibility and promotability in the system. Of course, a similar situation could just as easily arise in an organization that prides itself on a nondirective or permissive structure if a particular manager sees a need to act in a more directive fashion (e.g., a teacher in an "open" school).

This problem of organizational context is made more difficult by our tendency to associate various structures with ideologies and personality characteristics rather than to view structure as a technical problem. Therefore, the utilization of a directive structure might be seen as a sign of strength of character by one set of individuals and as evidence of despotism by another. Alternately, the implementation of a collaborative, facilitative, or permissive strategy might be viewed by one group as indicative of weakness and lack

of decisiveness and by another as indicative of humanism, flexibility, and equalitarianism.

Only when those within an organization who are in positions to support and encourage structural innovation move beyond these value-laden orientations will managers at all levels be given the opportunity to experiment with and gain expertise in establishing and maintaining a variety of structural alternatives.

APPLYING STRUCTURAL CONCEPTS

The following examples are designed to illustrate the process of integrating people and tasks through the use of structure. The first example demonstrates structuring at both organizational and managerial levels. Several shorter examples illustrate the applicability of the process to a variety of management situations.

In Education

Organizational Level

Organization X is in the business of education. Being a private organization, it must make a profit in order to survive. Its administrative core is basically bureaucratic (directive), but otherwise its structure is permissive. The organization functions by contracting its courses to independent instructors and consultants on the basis of their training and reputations. It assumes that these individuals are competent to design and deliver the courses with a minimal input from the parent organization. The administrative core does the marketing, makes travel arrangements, and provides a coordinator at each distribution point, who sees to facilities, equipment, registration of students, etc. The evaluation of instructors is handled through rating sheets filled out by the participants and returned to the home office by the coordinator. If the ratings are good, instructors continue to be contracted for courses—if the ratings are poor, instructors are terminated, that is, simply not offered another course contract.

A permissive structure is well suited to the requirements of personnel and the accomplishment of tasks in this situation. The instructor-consultants are highly trained professionals competent to deliver their product with a minimum of direction. With a nationwide distribution pattern, it would be nearly impossible for the home office to direct these instructors even if it chose to do so. Furthermore, the best instructors would probably seek work elsewhere if an excessive number of constraints were placed on their freedom to conduct courses and determine course content as they saw fit—thus leaving the organization with only the more mediocre and job hungry of its present pool of personnel.

The independent contracting of personnel on a per-course basis allows the organization to draw from a large nationwide pool of professionals while avoiding the problems and politics of careers, tenure, and fringe benefits. Hiring and firing also do not require extensive administrative procedures, union involvement, or grievance committees.

Thus the organization can deliver to its consumers an acceptable product, maintain a pool of competent personnel, and make a profit—while utilizing a permissive organizational structure.

Managerial Level

On the managerial level, each instructor is embedded in a permissive organization that provides only a basic description of the course to be offered and that has taken care of the administrative details. The manager is uniquely free to establish his or her own classroom structure.

Let us say that the instructor is to present a course in basic accounting skills and knows that the primary goal of the organization is to cover the material in such a manner as to satisfy participants in terms of both content and process so that they will be motivated to register for further course offerings.

Now, let us suppose that by checking with the coordinator, the instructor discovers that most of his or her students are competent, highly motivated individuals seeking to advance their careers in management. He or she can assume that most will be more interested in mastering the course content than in merely getting a passing grade.

Given this knowledge of overall individual and organizational motives, the instructor can safely choose the structure that will best serve as a vehicle for the specific subject matter of the course.

In this case the instructor chooses a consultative structure—gathering data from students during the first class session as to backgrounds, skill levels, and preferences for class procedures prior to formulating a final plan for the class. Since most students at an introductory level are not qualified to design a course in accounting, the instructor does this for them. However, he or she is careful to take into account their procedural preferences (lecture, small-group work, student presentations, etc.) so as to make the class enjoyable as well as educational and thereby enhance the possibility that they will return for other classes sponsored by the organization.

Another instructor, responsible for a class in group dynamics, might choose a facilitative structure, given similarly motivated students but a different task—to provide training in group dynamics rather than in accounting skills. Again, if the students are pleased with the training they have received, then not only their goals but those of the organization have been achieved.

In Child Management

This same basic strategy for choosing a structure can be applied to any management problem—for example, child management.

Bobby, age 8, states that he would like to go to the neighborhood grocery with his friend Tim, also age 8. The store is about one-half mile away and across a fairly busy street not protected by a traffic signal. Bobby has not done this procedure before without an adult, although his friend Tim has gone alone many times.

The parent, as manager, must determine a structure that will mesh the individual needs of the child with the parent's goals. Society asks parents to manage children in such a way as to foster physical and psychological well-being—that is, to protect them physically and to socialize them for their future role as citizens.

His parent's options are the same as those of any other manager: (1) make the decision for the child, (2) talk it over with the child to get his ideas but reserve the right to decide, (3) make a joint decision on the basis of a discussion of pros and cons, (4) facilitate the child's making a decision, and (5) tell him to do what he wants to do.

If his parents are sensitive, they think, "My task is to protect my child from danger but also to help him develop into an independent adult capable of making decisions. Is my child developed enough intellectually and emotionally at this time to weigh the possible consequences of this venture, and, if he decides to go, does he possess the skills he needs to complete the journey safely?" On the basis of this assessment of the child's present needs, the parent determines a structure and implements it.

The parent might, for example, decide that an opportunity for independent decision making at this point outweighs the possible dangers involved and might, therefore, choose a facilitative approach as most appropriate. The parent then invites the child to discuss the venture and helps him to clarify the potential hazards and to generate and evaluate his various options. The child could, for example, go alone with Tim, have the parent check out his street-crossing skills in front of their own house or accompany him and his friend to the busy street to see them safely across, or postpone the trip until he felt more skilled and ready. Finally, the child is allowed to make his decision and carry it out. A follow-up discussion between parent and child might be held to evaluate the results.

In Business and Industry

Helen Atwood supervises a group of component assemblers in an electronics factory. The organizational goals are to produce electronics equipment effectively and efficiently, to make a profit, and to maintain a good reputation as a manufacturer and also as an employer, so as to reduce turnover and absenteeism and to attract good workers.

The people who assemble the components are mostly women with families who have completed high school but have little interest in, or understanding of, electronics. They assemble components to make money either to support their families or to supplement the family income. They enjoy the socializing opportunities that their jobs provide.

Given the goals of the organization and the characteristics of the personnel, the supervisor favors directive strategy for managing the technical aspects of the work. However, she frequently gathers the group together to discuss individual and group concerns involving working conditions. Knowing that the organization wants to be seen as a "good" employer and that her workers desire opportunities to relate to each other,

she chooses a participatory problem-solving strategy in dealing with scheduling, breaks, instances of lateness, complaints, etc.

Although Helen makes all technical decisions and closely supervises her workers' output, she is not seen as authoritarian but instead is characterized by the workers as people oriented—a manager who takes care of her personnel. Her close supervision is interpreted as evidence of her caring attitude. This manager has successfully meshed the needs of personnel and the goals of the organization.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

A model for analyzing managerial problems that uses structure as an integrative concept has several distinct advantages. It encourages us to shift our thinking away from the personality characteristics and values of the management trainee to focus on his or her skills. What are the trainee's diagnostic skills? Does he or she have the tools to assess people—their motivations, special problems, level of development? Is the trainee skilled in task analysis? And does he or she have experience and expertise in establishing and maintaining a variety of structural alternatives? Management training thus becomes skill training rather than ideological debate.

Also, by viewing management as essentially structural engineering, we begin to see that such apparently diverse fields as child management, classroom management, and industrial management are all variations on a theme. In each case and at every level, the strategy is the same—to assess personnel, to analyze tasks, and to choose an appropriate structure to integrate the two. Each area, of course, has a different type of population with a different set of needs and characteristics to be assessed, and each task requires a different technology, but the core strategy of every manager is the same: given the context, he or she must choose the structure that will satisfy individual needs and accomplish the tasks necessary to achieve the goals of the organization or society.

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■ TOLERANCE OF EQUIVOCALITY: THE BRONCO, EASY RIDER, BLOCKBUSTER, AND NOMAD

Robert C. Rodgers

An important consideration that affects the productivity of planning in work groups is the degree of equivocality in the task undertaken. The word *equivocality* comes from the Greek word *equivoque*, which means “having a double meaning.” An *equivocal* task can be defined as one having two, entirely opposite, interpretations.

According to Weick (1969), the greater the equivocality of the task undertaken, the greater is the activity of information seeking, which is directed toward “making sense” out of what appears uncertain and confusing. More simply, whenever we become confused we alert ourselves to information that lends clarity to our initial confusion.

For example, on his way to work, Joe must pass through a tunnel that is normally not congested with traffic. One morning, accompanied by two coworkers, he arrives at the tunnel entrance and finds traffic stopped. He is faced with an equivocal situation. He wants to pass through the tunnel, but he does not know whether transit is blocked because of an accident, heavy traffic, or flooding in the tunnel. He begins actively to seek out information that can explain his equivocal state of affairs: He looks at his watch—8:30 a.m.; he asks one of his riders to tell him what she can see from her side of the car; he looks when the other rider points to a red flashing light in the distance. The eyes and ears of all three are alerted to seek out and to accept whatever information is available, until they learn that the problem is a stalled car inside the tunnel. Some (Green, 1966) have argued that the greater the degree of equivocality in the task assignment, the more intense, also, is the information-seeking activity.

Similar to Weick’s concept of equivocality is Cyert’s (1963) argument that planning is an “uncertainty-absorbing activity.” Organizations strive to achieve “manageable decision situations,” says Cyert, by “avoiding planning where plans depend on predictions of uncertain events and by emphasizing planning where the plans can be made self-confirming” (p. 119).

FOUR TYPES

If we accept the proposition that there are large differences in the degree of equivocality (Weick) or uncertainty (Cyert) that individuals are willing to tolerate, as well as in the amount of information they consequently seek out, we can identify four personality types that commonly surface in task-oriented work groups. Those with a low level of

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tolerance for equivocality are commonly identified as “task-oriented” people and those with a high level of tolerance can be called “process-oriented” people.

The Bronco

With a low tolerance level for ambiguity, Broncos insist that the other members of their work group continually stop to evaluate what they have done or not done and where they are going. Bucking Broncos make such statements as “We’ve got a deadline to meet, you know”; “I don’t think we’ve really done anything yet; everything so far has been just talk”; “Come on, everybody, enough talk; it’s time to decide what to do.”

Continually redirecting the group’s efforts, the Bronco is forever dissatisfied with the group’s progress until the task has been accomplished.

The Easy Rider

Decision makers who “trust process,” Easy Riders are fully confident that they will arrive at the destination intended; in any case, they always enjoy the trip. Easy Riders do not like to stop to evaluate what has been accomplished; they are easygoing and accept the “happening” of the work group for itself. Comments that are often voiced by Easy Riders include “Don’t worry about what we’ve done so far, we’ll know where we are when we get there”; “Now is what counts, friends. If we’re satisfied with the ‘now’ of our work, the ‘later’ will work out by itself.” Easy Riders enjoy attending group meetings and trust that everything will come out in the wash.

The Blockbuster

This type is a tidy combination of the Easy Rider and the Bronco—easygoing today and pressuring tomorrow. Willing to settle into a moderate rate of activity today, Blockbusters nonetheless are determined to do a good job when the pressure is on. They can be heard to make such statements as “The deadline is not for two months. Let’s worry about details later”; “There’s plenty of time for that”; “It’s time to move out. Let’s work all weekend.” Blockbusters are the people who make sure that the job gets done in the end and are instrumental in tying all the loose ends together at the last moment.

The Nomad

As the “here today, gone tomorrow participants in the work effort, Nomads miss many work sessions, make contributions at erratic intervals, seem to be with the effort today but in fantasy land tomorrow. They say such things as “Oh, did I forget to return your call?”; “I seem to have lost that list. It must be somewhere.” Other work-group members, except Easy Riders, label the Nomad as unreliable and untrustworthy.

RESOLVING INTERPERSONAL DIFFERENCES

As facilitators and leaders of group interaction recognize, there is no such thing as a hidden technique for changing an individual's basic tolerance level for equivocality, yet interpersonal differences must be resolved if the group is to be effective.

The fact that a work group has an equivocal task assignment is a motivating force in and of itself; set into motion is information-seeking activity, which is intrinsically energizing. Attempts among group leaders to “tame” Broncos or to “activate” Nomads are usually dysfunctional. Nevertheless, the reality is that Broncos still buck, Blockbusters still postpone action, Easy Riders still enjoy the trip, and Nomads still have phones that remain unanswered.

Broncos' clearly expressed needs to chart their expectations of the future with detailed planning documents, to see what will happen before it happens, are largely reflections of their past life experiences. Only by continually looking back on past events do we make sense out of our present condition. Planning for the future, then, is partly an illusion. We plan for the future based on what we know of the past, thereby processing out some of the equivocality inherent in anticipating the future. “The future is unpredictable because the freedom of man makes him unpredictable. He is continually open to change, adopting and creating at rates we should not have believed possible before this generation” (Platt, 1970, p. 158). Each time we stop to plan for the future, we are really looking back on past accomplishments or failures and attaching meanings to them. Each meaning is unique, contingent on when and how often we stop to evaluate progress or set plans.

A METHOD OF PLANNING

It is no wonder that Broncos, Easy Riders, Blockbusters, and Nomads have disparate images of what has been or has not been accomplished. Their discussions about “where we are and where we are going” are likely to become frustrating to the members involved. What is important in planning is that the group members consider the frequency and timing with which they are willing to stop and evaluate what has been or has not been accomplished.

When the work group has decided how often and when it is willing to stop for planning purposes, it might want to consider further the merits of sloppy planning (Bateson, 1972), a consideration that does not necessarily have to alienate the Bronco, as long as a sound “stopping” routine is being carried out. If there is a grain of truth in the proposition that our vision of the future is based largely on meanings attached to past experiences and that future events can introduce unexpected knowledge, we can further argue that the work team's planning may at times best be loose, fragmented, and unordered—a proposition that would surely be comforting to Nomads and Easy Riders.

“Planning cannot, must not, be sloppy,” says the Bronco. “Planning reduces risk and elicits disciplined thinking; it must begin with a clear determination of the goals to be attained.”

“Perhaps,” says the Easy Rider. “But consider the possibility that the United States will spend one hundred billion dollars over the next decade constructing international airports, highways, mass transportation systems, and railroad networks, all meticulously planned, only to discover in 2000 that humans have learned how to teleport themselves across space by activating their wills. All the tight planning in the world goes down the drain in one big gurgle.”

The group facilitator cannot insist that Broncos become more like Blockbusters or that Nomads become more like Easy Riders, but he or she can encourage a loose regulation of the frequency with which members evaluate where they have been and where they are going. Although group members will still continue to attach distinctively different meanings to recent past events, such differences are more responsibly resolved when everyone is stopped at the same time.

According to Cyert (1963), a plan is a goal (something that is to be accomplished at some point in the future), a schedule (when it is to be accomplished), a theory (an explanation of how the world hangs together), and a precedent (a past event that will establish a *prima facie* case for the decisions of tomorrow). Of these four ingredients, many work groups often neglect the importance of scheduling.

Group activity lists (or schedules) are simple but powerful management devices that facilitate the processing of equivocal information on a routine basis, a fundamental result of the planning process. Such lists consist of activities each work-group member will engage in over a specified period of time, be it one week, one day, or one year. When the time period allotted has expired, the list is retrieved and reviewed (frequency of stopping is regulated), what has been accomplished is crossed off the list (equivocality is reduced), what has not been accomplished remains on the list (a form of sloppy planning because there is no requirement that all activities must be completed by the time allotted), and new activities are added, based on what the work group has learned (planning as a function of past experience as much as a function of future speculations). Focusing on specific activities to accomplish and times to evaluate progress is a facilitating, energizing process. Forcing Nomads to be like Broncos or insisting on loose or tight planning is dysfunctional and de-energizing.

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■ DIAGNOSING AND CHANGING GROUP NORMS

Daniel C. Feldman

“That is not the way we do things around here.” “That is a good idea, but it would never work here, because we operate a little differently.” “Something like that would never work in a place like this.”

Within an hour of meeting with a client, any consultant or training specialist is likely to meet this type of resistance to change. Such resistance stems from the informal rules and procedures that members of a work group follow; these rules and procedures are called group norms (Feldman, 1984).

Much of the literature in human resource development (HRD) and organization development (OD) has discussed resistance to change resulting from *formal* rules and procedures or built-in constraints within the organization. However, much of the resistance to change actually comes from the network of *informal* obligations, mutual expectations, and long-standing relationships that have developed in the organization over time. Although rarely written down or discussed, these norms regulate group behavior with a degree of consistency and power that even formal organizational dictates fail to engender.

HOW GROUP NORMS DEVELOP

Norms usually develop gradually and informally as group members learn what behaviors are necessary for the group to function more effectively. However, it is possible for this process to be condensed if group members agree consciously to establish a norm (Porter, Lawler, & Hackman, 1975).

Most norms develop in one or more of the following four ways: (a) as the result of explicit statements by supervisors or coworkers; (b) as the result of critical events in the group’s history; (c) as a result of primacy—the way things happen to have been done the first time; and (d) as the result of behaviors carried over from past situations. Both clients and consultants develop group norms in these ways.

1. *Explicit statements by supervisors or coworkers.* Norms that facilitate group survival or task success often are established through explicit statements by the leader of the group or powerful group members (Whyte, 1955). For example, a group leader might forbid the consumption of alcohol at lunch time because subordinates who have been drinking are more likely to have problems in dealing with customers or to have

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accidents at work. The group leader also might dictate norms about being late, making personal phone calls, and taking coffee breaks if too much time is being spent away from work. Some group members might encourage others not to divulge the group's weaknesses or problems to consultants; this frequently leads to a norm of noncooperation with consultants.

Consultants and trainers, too, use explicit statements to set norms. For example, new participants in training programs frequently are quiet, speak only when spoken to, and defer to authority. Trainers often make explicit statements that it is acceptable to interrupt a lecture to ask questions, to question a point made by someone else, and to be more informal than one may be at work. These explicit statements establish norms that are conducive to effective adult learning.

2. *Critical events.* An important incident in the group's history can cause such interpersonal embarrassment that it establishes a group norm. In one organization, the head of a unit invited the entire staff to his house for dinner. The next day, people discovered that not one member of the staff had attended. The unpleasantness that resulted from this incident established the norm of "no outside entertaining" for several years. In another organization, some employees availed themselves of the option of not signing performance-appraisal assessments with which they strongly disagreed. Within the week, these employees were fired, and the norm of "sign now, disown later" was quickly established. If a training program "blows up," a norm of "keep low, keep moving" during training programs is likely to develop.

Consultants and trainers also develop norms in response to critical events. Norms about not dating coworkers and not working with spouses often emerge after unpleasant incidents that cause awkwardness for other coworkers. A failure resulting from lack of coordination among team members might lead to a norm of weekly meetings or progress reports.

In an example from the book *Victims of Group-think* (Janis, 1972), one of President Kennedy's closest advisors, Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., had serious reservations about the Bay of Pigs invasion and presented his strong objections to the plan in a memorandum to Kennedy and Secretary of State Dean Rusk. However, Schlesinger was pressured by the President's brother, Attorney General Robert Kennedy, to keep his objections to himself. Robert Kennedy said to Schlesinger, "You may be right or you may be wrong, but the President has made his mind up. Don't push it any further. Now is the time for everyone to help him all they can." Such critical events led advisors to withhold their opinions and resulted in group norms about disagreeing with the President.

3. *Primacy.* The first behavioral pattern that emerges in a group often creates lasting expectations (Feldman, 1984). People generally continue to sit in the seats they sat in during the group's first meeting, even when those seats were not assigned and people could choose where to sit at every meeting. In many training programs, subgroups of participants develop their own "turf" in the room and are surprised or dismayed if others take "their" seats. These norms often have little real impact on task accomplishment but simply make life in the group more routine and predictable.

The first behaviors of trainers also create norms for training programs. If attendees are asked to participate in activities and group discussions from the beginning, they will expect to take an active role in their learning. On the other hand, if the first few sessions consist of lectures, with almost no audience participation, attendees will develop the norm of not volunteering to talk or generate discussions.

Primacy also affects HRD and OD efforts. If such programs are implemented in unionized companies, and union representatives are not included at the very beginning, they may assume that they are being ignored or excluded and may initiate norms of noncooperation and “work-to-rules.” If, at the beginning of an OD effort, the client is anxious and asks for reassurance by means of guarantees that there will be no problems, and the consultant reinforces this behavior and tries to reduce all uncertainty, the client is less likely to learn to live with the anxiety that all change engenders. On the other hand, if the consultant makes it clear from the very beginning that change may involve some pain and that there are no magic formulas, the client is more likely to deal competently with his or her anxieties and take more responsibility for the success of the project.

4. *Behaviors carried over from past situations.* Many norms in organizational groups emerge because individual group members bring expectations with them from other work groups or other organizations. Many clients behave toward consultants and trainers in one organization as they behaved toward those in another organization or situation, whether or not that behavior is appropriate.

In an article entitled “Those Who Can’t, Consult,” Owen (1979) reports some of the frustrations that clients have in dealing with strategic-planning consulting firms. These include consultant tricks such as redefining the problem in order to establish the consultant’s own criteria for success or failure and making sure that the client’s case is compatible with the consultant’s expertise. If clients have had bad experiences with previous consultants, they will develop defensive norms for dealing with future consultants. They may try to give the consultant no room to maneuver and dictate exactly what changes are to be made, they may demand that all communication be in writing, or they may insist on exhaustive proposals before any work begins. These norms may have little, or nothing, to do with the present consultant’s reputation but are carried over from past situations.

Consultants and trainers also develop norms that carry over from client to client, independent of the specifics of a particular organization. For example, consultants may insist on commitment from chief executive officers, no-cut contracts, and guaranteed access to certain data before beginning work, because these things have been promised but not delivered in past consulting projects.

WHY GROUP NORMS ARE ENFORCED

As Shaw (1981) suggests, a group does not establish or enforce norms for every conceivable situation. Rather, groups and organizations enforce norms that pertain to

behaviors that are perceived as important or significant to the unit. The distinction between task-maintenance duties and social-maintenance duties in groups helps to explain why groups bring these selected behaviors under normative control (Hackman, 1976).

Groups, like individuals, try to maximize their chances for task success and minimize their chances of task failure. Therefore, a group will try to develop behavioral patterns that protect it from interference from external groups and harassment from internal groups in the organization. Moreover, the group will attempt to increase the predictability of its members' behaviors. If group members can count on one another to act in certain ways in certain situations, the group will be able to accomplish its work more quickly and more effectively. Thus, group norms enable group members to anticipate one another's actions and to prepare quick, appropriate responses (Kiesler & Kiesler, 1970).

In terms of social maintenance, groups want to ensure the satisfaction of their members and to prevent as much interpersonal discomfort as possible. Therefore, they will enforce norms that help them to avoid embarrassing interpersonal problems (Hackman, 1976). Moreover, norms can serve an expressive function for groups; they will enforce norms that provide group members opportunities to express their values. Thus, norms can help a group to clarify what is distinctive about itself and central to its identity (Katz & Kahn, 1978).

The following are some norms regarding training and organization development that are enforced by both clients and consultants, along with reasons why they are enforced.

1. *Facilitating group survival.* Some clients develop whole sets of behaviors to try to block the consultant from discovering the real problems of the group. (Argyris, 1970). They may collaborate by answering questions about superiors with responses such as "A good superior is tough but fair." They may assign low-power personnel to assist the consultant or they may overwhelm the consultant with irrelevant information. Although the client system may want help at one level, at another level it may want to protect itself from outside efforts that will disrupt the status quo. Some departments even develop a norm against evaluating training programs or OD efforts because they fear (often realistically) that they will be punished for failure.

Consultants and trainers also develop norms to facilitate their own professional survival. They will rarely, if ever, denigrate other consultants, because that calls the utility and competence of the profession into question. They also are extremely hesitant to discuss previous clients with present clients or one group within the organization with another. If norms about confidentiality were not strictly enforced, present and future clients would be much less likely to use their services.

2. *Simplifying and predicting expected behaviors.* In almost all training programs, norms will develop among the trainees/clients about how to behave in class—how much to talk, how assertive to be, how to dress, and so forth. These norms simplify the

trainee's range of behaviors and make the behaviors of their colleagues more predictable.

Trainers and consultants also develop norms to simplify, and make predictable, their relationships with one another. Different roles might emerge among colleagues working on the same project. One member might be expected to break the tension in the group and keep the interaction even; another might be expected to arrange for conference rooms, equipment, and food; and a third might be expected to sustain relationships with the managers who arranged for the training program. None of these roles are formal but are expectations that develop over time (Bales & Slater, 1955). These role expectations enable consultants to anticipate one another's activities, to divide up the work tasks, and to avoid duplication of effort.

3. *Avoiding embarrassing interpersonal problems.* A common observation among HRD and OD practitioners is that clients are not very attentive to "process issues"; that is, clients avoid addressing interpersonal problems that interfere with their job performance. One reason for this is that groups develop norms to avoid interpersonal discomfort; they discourage certain topics of conversation and certain types of social interaction (Goffman, 1955). For instance, clients often avoid discussing the competence of subordinates or giving negative feedback—even though these activities might help the group function more effectively in the long run—because of the social awkwardness they generate in the short run.

Consultants and trainers, too, develop norms to avoid embarrassing interpersonal problems. A prevalent norm is to focus on "here-and-now" issues, to force the clients to deal with current issues with current members of the group. One reason for this norm, of course, is to keep the client from going off on tangents, trying to reconstruct history, or fleeing from dealing with the problems at hand. However, another reason for the norm is to prevent the awkwardness, and guilt, of discussing people who are not present, of talking behind people's backs. Consultants also have norms about not socializing with clients outside of work. There simply is too much opportunity at social events for clients and consultants to try to pump one another for inside information or special consideration.

4. *Expressing the central values of the group.* The norms of the client system often reflect its values about training and development efforts. Some units develop systematic training programs that reflect a real commitment to educational improvement. Other units provide training only when it is mandated, reflecting a lower priority, if not a lower commitment, to the activity. Some units develop procedures to help organization development or human resource development efforts; others try to sabotage such efforts by creating damaging rumors or stereotyping the consultants as "touchy feelies" (Argyris, 1970). Client systems develop norms for dealing with development efforts that project their feelings about change.

Likewise, consultants develop norms that reflect their own values. Some dress very formally when working with business executives; their dress conveys that they want to deal with their clients on the clients' terms. Other trainers dress very casually to

reinforce their positions as outsiders, to differentiate themselves from the “bosses.” Many consultants have norms about being very open and confrontive with clients; this behavior conveys to clients the distinctive and salient values of the consulting team and also provides clients with a role model of an alternative way of behaving in organizations.

DIAGNOSING GROUP NORMS

A set of group norms is as distinctive as an individual's fingerprints. A group of specific individuals will evolve a unique set of norms to deal with the specific challenges and problems they face. No two groups will develop the same set of norms. Unlike individual fingerprints, however, group norms can reveal a lot about the group's nature—what the group thinks is important, what its self-image is, where it thinks it is vulnerable.

A few guides can be used to help to discover the key issues in a group.

About what behaviors are there the most norms? Where there is a lot of smoke, there is at least some fire. If a group develops many norms about a limited set of behaviors, it is very likely that the group sees these behaviors as critical to the group's success or survival.

For example, in many organizations there are strong norms about working overtime. Some organizations strongly encourage people to arrive early and leave late; others encourage employees to work on weekends. Although most organizations cannot formally require overtime, strong informal norms develop if the perception exists that all the work cannot be done in a forty-hour week and that extra hours are required to ensure task completion. Important reward systems such as promotions and salary increases are used to reinforce these informal norms.

In many organizations, there also are strong norms about measuring the success or failure of a training or development effort. There will be norms about measuring surface indicators of success (such as participants' ratings of the trainers) rather than changes in the participants' knowledge or behavior. There will be norms linking two or three specific individuals to the fate of the project (and tagging them with its success or failure). In organizations such as these, “experimenting” with training or development projects presents a real threat to the units involved. To deal with this threat the organizations develop norms to bias evaluation results, to make the program succeed at all costs, and to attribute any failure to specific individuals rather than to the work group as a whole.

In what nontask areas do norms cluster? The norms about nontask behavior generally reveal the interpersonal soft spots of the group (Feldman & Arnold, 1983). For instance, in some organizations there are highly ritualized norms about lunch. There might be different dining rooms for different job levels, with varying levels of decor, required dress, and quality of food. There can be norms (rather than rules) about going

out to lunch or eating at one's desk or about eating lunch with others in one's work group as opposed to eating with people from other departments.

Such norms evolve to deal with interpersonal problems that the group is trying to resolve or avoid. Executive dining rooms can fulfill the status needs of managers if these are not adequately met in their day-to-day jobs. Norms about whether people go out for lunch or stay in may reflect fears about taking time off from the job or about being perceived as not dedicated enough. These interpersonal or work-related issues need to be resolved but often cannot be dealt with diplomatically by formal organizational rules.

Consultants and trainers also develop norms to deal with awkward interpersonal or work-related issues. One consulting firm instructs its employees to find out what the specific client wears and then dress one level above that. Many norms about clothing evolve to balance two conflicting aspects of the relationship between the consultant and the client. On the one hand, consultants want to develop rapport with their clients; on the other hand, consultants are selling their images and want to look as though they are successful and are worth their fees.

What are the inconsistencies between what the group says its norms are and how people actually behave? Inconsistencies between stated norms and actual behavior are common at some time in most groups. For instance, companies may tell new managers to be entrepreneurial and to run their own units autonomously while continuing to reward more conservative and dependent managers rather than aggressive, dynamic managers. The official explanation generally is: "He's a little too offbeat" or "She went a little too far."

First, the inconsistency can reveal a major *ambivalence* in the organization. It knows that it needs to encourage more entrepreneurial effort so that the organization can grow and be more successful. On the other hand, entrepreneurial efforts create competition, older employees may be threatened, and the status quo definitely is threatened. This ambivalence creates the dichotomy between rhetoric and behavior.

Second, the inconsistency can reveal major *subgroup differences*. It is conceivable that group members are split about what type of behavior they prefer. Some people may value and encourage entrepreneurial behavior while others do not, and this latter group may control rewards.

Third, the inconsistency can reveal the group's *self-consciousness*, a dichotomy between what the group really is like and how it would like to be perceived. The group may realize that it is too conservative, yet be unable or too frightened to address the problem. By saying that it is entrepreneurial, it hopes to allay its anxiety—a sort of "wishing will make it true" attitude.

Inconsistencies between saying and doing also exist in training and development programs. Clients frequently say that they are excited by training programs but then do not display real commitment to the training. Organizations frequently express a commitment to HRD or OD efforts, but training and development or consulting budgets are the first to be cut, or programs are ill attended on the excuse of the pressures of work.

Obviously, clients may feel ambivalent about training or about OD or HRD programs. Many organizations balk when confronted with the commitment of resources needed to train managers or work units effectively or to implement changes. The personnel department may be highly committed, but top management or departmental heads may not. Hiring a consultant may be more to project an image of concern with human resources than an actual commitment to develop them.

Thus, very little behavior in groups is random, and the behaviors that indicate group norms reveal important interpersonal issues (Feldman & Arnold, 1983).

CHANGING GROUP NORMS

The norms of a group can play a large role in determining whether it will work effectively. There are three guidelines that managers and consultants can use in attempting to affect the norms of a work group.

It is much easier, and more effective, to establish group norms at the beginning of a relationship than to change them later. In any relationship between manager and workers or between consultant and clients, what happens at the beginning (primacy) will have a significant impact on future dealings between the parties. These early exchanges indicate ground rules and informal expectations and obligations. Whether these are constructive or not, it is difficult to change them later.

For instance, when a manager inherits a work group from a previous supervisor, the manager probably will find some group norms that he or she finds unconstructive. Employees may be a little lax about arriving on time, group meetings may go off on tangents, or employees may treat customers disrespectfully. Although there will be some discomfort as the new manager clarifies new norms, employees will know what behaviors are expected of them. However, if the new manager allows the old norms to carry over, his or her attempts to change them later will be seen as betrayal of an implicit understanding between the manager and subordinates.

The same guideline applies to the consultant-client relationship. The consultant may need to confront the client about vague statements or plans, e.g., what specific criteria will be used for evaluation or how the consultant's report will be fed back into the organization. The consultant also may need to establish a norm about personal ownership of feelings with the client. If a client says, "A lot of people around here feel that . . ." or "There's a lot of talk about . . .," the consultant may respond with "How do *you* feel?" or "What have *you* said?" Again, although setting such norms will cause some interpersonal awkwardness at the beginning of the relationship, it will relieve much of the friction that inevitably would result later without such norms or from an attempt to change the norms that have been in effect.

A major task of a manager or a consultant is to determine which group norms are obsolete or dysfunctional. Group norms have a life of their own. Once they develop, they generally stay in place long after the circumstances that gave rise to them have passed. One of the major tasks of a manager or consultant is to improve group

effectiveness by determining which norms are obsolete or dysfunctional to the work group.

For example, many organizations have “tamed” new MBAs by giving them difficult assignments with little assistance in order to teach them to value the expertise of older managers. It is doubtful if this practice ever was functional and it certainly is not functional today. Another dysfunctional norm is the practice of sending employees to training programs at resorts that offer many distractions (and then complaining that participants do not take the training seriously). Training and taking a vacation are not complementary activities.

Trainers and consultants, too, need to explore existing norms. For example, many consultants rely on packaged training programs that they can use for most potential customers with minor modifications. Although efficient for the trainers, these programs may not be the most functional for the clients. Another norm among consultants is the overpursuit of the latest trend in management training, giving rise to the feeling that “A consultant is someone who lives off the fad of the land.” Although consultants certainly need to keep current—or even ahead of the trends—in management, many potentially worthwhile training ideas (e.g., androgyny, job enrichment) have been pushed too hard and too fast on too many clients.

In trying to change a group’s norms, the manager or consultant should draw the group’s attention explicitly to the problem areas and suggest specific, alternative ways of behaving. One of the biggest mistakes managers and consultants make in trying to change group norms is to rely on subtle cues such as indirect remarks, body language, and nonverbal expressions of disapproval or disappointment. One of the biggest obstacles to the changing of group norms is the lack of recognition that the norms even exist. It is important that the manager or consultant draw the group’s attention explicitly to the problem areas and suggest specific, alternative ways of behaving.

For example, if the manager notices that many people interrupt during group meetings, he or she may say, “I’d like to see us give each person an opportunity to speak; please wait until the person who is speaking is finished before jumping into the discussion.” To reinforce the new norm, the manager should comment to those who continue to interrupt: “Please remember to give people a chance to finish their statements.” After the new norm is stated, the manager also must show the group that he or she is serious about enforcing it.

A specific norm that consultants might want to change is the use of passive aggressiveness. When clients are asked for their ideas and suggestions, some respond with comments such as “Whatever you think” or “You are the expert; what do you think?” The client may be using passivity as a means to avoid responsibility. The consultant can respond, “It is your organization; what is *your* best judgment?”

It is ironic that one of the main reasons that norms develop is to avoid awkward interpersonal problems and that norms not to discuss norms develop for the same reason! In general, people do not like to discuss sensitive interpersonal issues and they do not like to be reminded of their reluctance to discuss them. However, only by

understanding why group norms develop and are enforced can we understand some of the important dynamics of work groups. Moreover, only by diagnosing and changing group norms can we decrease resistance to change and improve the effectiveness of those work groups.

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■ HUMOR AND THE EFFECTIVE WORK GROUP

Jean M. Westcott

In a 1980 survey of 480 chief executive officers (Shrift, 1981), the majority of those corporate leaders felt that a sense of humor was essential to their work. Many of them agreed that they are more inclined to hire qualified job candidates with a sense of humor than more serious candidates who are equally qualified. In addition, those surveyed believed that humor is an essential means of communication and influence.

There is a growing belief on the part of top managers that business can be more enjoyable and productive when humor is a part of daily functioning. The ways in which humor relates to workplace issues such as communication, group dynamics, problem solving, and conflict management are discussed in the remainder of this paper.

HUMOR AND COMMUNICATION

With regard to its role in communication, humor has been described as a “social lubricant.” We tend to be attracted to and to like people who make us laugh. Consequently, humor plays a valuable role in the support of group harmony and in the communication of information. For instance, using humor can be a relatively safe way of raising risky issues and of calling attention to areas in which people have become inflexible. In his study of joking at work, Ullian (1976) says:

Often the aim of the joker is simply to implant the consideration of a socially risky intention in the mind of the target without being attacked. While the uncertainty about the existence of an ulterior intent in joking protects the joker, the consideration of the intent even as a possibility by the target to the joke accomplishes the joker’s aim. (p. 130)

For the manager who wishes to establish a climate of trust and candor, humor can be an asset. Humor and a cheerful presentation of self are frequently perceived as indications that one enjoys relating to others and wishes to communicate good will and intentions (Tedeschi, 1974).

Humor also can be an aid to communication in a teaching or learning situation. When used effectively, humor can support the understanding and retention of information and can assist in establishing rapport. As Robinson (1977) states:

The use of humor is a mechanism which does not destroy one’s self-image, but provides a way to criticize, show mistakes, express values yet save face for the individual in doing so. (p. 95)

Humor, when used while giving feedback, should not be an alternative to honesty.

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HUMOR AND GROUP DYNAMICS

Humor can make a significant contribution to the effectiveness of a group. Among the many potential benefits of humor in group situations are more open, less defensive communication; greater group cohesiveness; and feelings of belonging.

Studies of the functions of humor in work groups suggest that humor helps to release tension and to reduce boredom. Regardless of whether the manager or a subordinate initiates the humor, a work group seems to create it (and not necessarily in support of organizational goals). The instinct for creativity and play becomes most evident in the most monotonous jobs; joking and playful behavior appear to be frequent solutions to the problem of “psychological survival” in routine jobs (Roy, 1960).

Humor and Creative Problem Solving

Humor can be an important resource in the managing of problem-solving meetings. It can be used as a means of reducing a problem to a more manageable size. When a group begins to work on a problem, certain norms and patterns of behavior are present; the most prevalent norm is the attitude that problem solving is serious business and is no time for fun. On the contrary, an occasion of problem solving may be a fine time for fun. Even though the group needs to address issues of importance, humor can support more creative and flexible approaches to solutions. When it is used well, humor is a support for directly encountering, rather than avoiding, difficult issues.

Problems are situations in need of changing. If solutions were readily available, those problems probably would not exist. Creativity is called for in generating solutions. Research on creativity supports the idea that humor and play are helpful. When asked how they generate creative ideas, many people credit humor-related activities. For example, some people report that these ideas arise when they are “just playing around” or not taking themselves too seriously (Von Oech, 1982).

Von Oech (1982) describes the work of a satellite-design group in which the members were in a playful mood and started joking about the satellite that they were working on at the time. That meeting proved to be the group’s most productive one in months. At a subsequent meeting, the group returned to its more usual seriousness; and the availability of new ideas was greatly reduced. Von Oech states:

I’ve noticed that a fun working environment is much more productive than a routine environment. People who enjoy their work will come up with more ideas. The fun is contagious and everybody works harder to get a piece of that fun. (p. 110)

What frequently happens in a problem-solving group is that the members feel defensive and wonder if they are at fault or if they will be blamed for the existence of the problem at hand. Given those fears, an understandable response is to withhold information and to behave in a guarded and cautious fashion when exploring the problem. The question for the manager thus becomes “How can I create a climate that will support open discussion and creative approaches to problem solving?”

The creation of such a climate certainly requires that the manager possess skills in group leadership, and an ability to use humor can enhance those skills. At its best the manager's use of humor in a problem-solving meeting indicates a willingness to laugh at himself or herself. When asking others not to take themselves too seriously, it is enormously helpful to demonstrate the desired behavior.

Humor and Conflict Management

Laughter can effectively relieve tension in conflict situations. A well-timed joke can refocus negotiations in a more positive direction. The relief of laughter can give people a chance to rethink their approaches and to see alternatives that may not have been obvious before.

There is an interesting and useful relationship between laughter and anger. It is impossible to laugh heartily and to be angry at the same time. No doubt many of us have experienced or observed the use of laughter and humor in alleviating a hostile attitude or in averting a potentially destructive incident.

As is the case with other uses of humor, sensitivity is essential. The use of humor in a conflict situation is a potentially "high-risk/high-payoff" intervention. It can be especially helpful to use oneself as the target of humor. Roberts (1980) suggests that in a hostile situation in which no resolution seems apparent, it may be helpful to say something absurd about one's inability to respond effectively (for example, "Hostility doesn't come easily to me; I think I'll need a little more practice before continuing" or "If things don't get better, I may have to stop helping" (p. 90).

SUMMARY: GUIDELINES FOR THE EFFECTIVE USE OF HUMOR

Humor can have a number of positive effects when used in a work group. It can support effective communication, contribute to positive group interaction, promote creative problem solving, and facilitate conflict management. Some guidelines for using humor are as follows:

1. Start with yourself. Ethel Barrymore suggests, "You grow up the day you have your first real laugh at yourself."
2. Be able to take your work seriously but yourself lightly so that you can perceive and appreciate the humor in everyday encounters. Probably the best source of humor is personal experience.
3. Be an observer. Be aware that you are surrounded by humor and notice that humor. For example, you can find it in signs that are displayed, in typographical errors, and in slips of the tongue.
4. Think of humor as being of two kinds, public and private. Public humor is shared the moment it occurs. Private humor is experienced when something funny occurs, but it is inappropriate or harmful to laugh at the moment. Both kinds are useful.

5. Use humor as a support for competence rather than as a means of masking a lack of competence. Humor at its best is one aspect of an individual's communication repertoire; its use should not be an alternative to giving direct feedback or to dealing with an issue.
6. Use humor with sensitivity and care so that it is likely to be appreciated. Otherwise, there are few useful generalizations about situations in which humor is clearly appropriate or inappropriate.

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■ DIVERSITY AND TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Claire B. Halverson and Guillermo Cuéllar

Abstract: The changing nature of work, coupled with the changing composition of the work force, has put a great deal of pressure on organizations to adapt. A major response is the formation of diverse, interdependent work teams. This article discusses the complexities of the development of a team through three stages: infancy, adolescence, and adulthood (Weber, 1992). The climate issues, interpersonal issues, task issues, and leadership issues that face a multicultural team at each stage of development are described and contrasted with those of monocultural teams. The focus is on diversity of race, gender, and nationality as it applies to team members at different stages of development of their social identity. Other issues, such as sexual orientation, physical/development ability, and socioeconomic class are equally as important, but, for the purpose of brevity, will not be the focus of this article. Issues that need to be addressed by consultants and team leaders who are helping teams to overcome the threats—and benefit from the challenges—of diversity are identified.

The changing nature of work has put a great deal of pressure on organizations to adapt. This change is a result of the following factors:

- specialization of human resources;
- limited physical resources, which requires increased synergy and coordination;
- increased complexity of problems, which demands high-quality creative solutions; and
- rapidly changing markets and technologies.

To respond to these factors, organizations are changing from depending on individuals to perform discrete tasks to utilizing high-performance teams that accomplish work interdependently.

The composition of the work force also is changing; it is increasingly diverse. This is the result of changes in immigration patterns, lifestyles, economic pressures, and legal demands.

Although there historically has been diversity of race,¹ gender, and/or ethnicity/nationality in many organizations, roles generally were segregated so that teams were homogeneous. An example of this is the Bell Telephone Company, which, in the 1960s, was the first corporation brought before the U.S. Supreme Court for a

¹ The authors wish to acknowledge that “race” is a sociological construct based on people’s perceptions, not a biological reality, inasmuch as no one characteristic can group people of the world according to distinct racial categories.

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violation of affirmative action. Its record was not worse than other corporations at the time, but it was the largest employer. At that time, EuroAmerican men who worked at Bell were technicians, African American men were janitors, and EuroAmerican females were operators. Later, EuroAmerican women moved to clerical positions, and African American women became operators. Today at Bell, as at many other organizations, jobs are integrated into teams that are diverse in terms of race, gender, nationality, sexual orientation, age, and physical ability.

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF SOCIAL IDENTITY

A multicultural team is likely to be confronted with issues related to the developmental stages of social identity of members and their consciousness of racism and sexism (Halverson, 1982; Jackson and Hardiman, 1983). These stages can be generalized to other types of social diversity. The stages are described as follows.

Dependent

The team members who have dominant status in society (whites, men) and those who have subordinate status (people of color, women) accept the standards and judgments of the dominant status group. Racism and sexism are ignored, and problems are perceived as resulting from actions of individual members of the subordinate-status group or the overt bigot/chauvinist. Relationships are “one up-one down,” reflecting the power dimensions of society.

Counterdependent

Dominant-status group members realize the institutional nature of oppression and their privileged status. This is often accompanied by guilt and inability to be authentic with members of subordinate-status groups. People of color, women, and foreign-born nationals redefine themselves according to the standards and values of the group. They usually experience anger at what they have given up and how they have been treated during their dependent stage. Their choices often are in reaction to the norms of the dominant group.

Independent

At this stage, both dominant- and subordinate-status group members actively work against the established values of oppression. Relationships are authentic and collaborative across groups. There is open dialogue about problems related to diversity.

Multicultural teams often are composed of individuals who are at different stages of development in their consciousness of their social identity. This affects the development of the team.

DEVELOPMENTAL STAGES OF TEAMS

Stage I: Infancy

Climate

During this forming stage, individuals seek to create a safe environment for their interactions and they establish basic criteria for membership. As they form, multicultural teams must manage a more complex range of issues than monocultural teams. The familiar patterns of compatibility are layered with an array of cultural differences and values. For example, simple things that individuals take for granted in a homogeneous group, such as common norms related to the pacing of speech, use of silence, and type of emotional expression may not be present in a diverse group.

If dominant- or subordinate-status team members are in the dependent stage, they may be unaware of the complexities of diversity and assume that all members should conform to the dominant-status norms. Subordinate-status members in the counterdependent stage may be angry at attempts to establish conformity. Others may be aware of the complexities but feel awkward and confused about how to work with the differences. In monocultural teams the climate is polite; in multicultural ones politeness can be exaggerated to awkwardness.

Interpersonal Issues

Individuals usually are tentative and polite in order to be included in a team. In multicultural teams, they progressively discover more complex and difficult issues that affect inclusion. They look for solutions to ease the uncertainty of their interactions.

Dominant-status members are easily included, and subordinate-status members may be consciously or unconsciously excluded. Members of subordinate status (e.g., people of color, women, recent immigrants) may need a longer period of time in which to develop trust. This is because they may have been excluded in the past, their abilities may have been questioned, and they may be struggling with the cost of relinquishing their cultural norms and values in order to be accepted. They may tend to take a low participatory role, either to observe the stage of consciousness of dominant-status members and ascertain their own safety or, if they are new to the country, to understand the cultural norms.

If members of the dominant culture attempt to include others in their participation, their actions may be perceived as insensitive and impolite because they do not understand the perceptions, values, and cultural behavioral patterns of the subordinate-status members. For example, they may not understand the preference of many Asians to hold back on participation, to speak only if something important needs to be said, and to allow intervals of silence.

Cultural differences related to individualism/collectivism and task/relationship are crucial here. For example, individualism and task orientation have been documented (Halverson, 1993; Hofstede, 1984) as being deep cultural values in the dominant-status group in the United States. Team members with these values find it difficult to join with

others and often prefer to work by themselves. They want to start on the task right away and consider time spent in developing relationships to be time wasted. Members from more collectivist and relationship-oriented cultures assume that the group has a higher value than individual needs and preferences. They consider it important to spend time connecting at the beginning of meetings. EuroAmericans who try this often find that the task can be accomplished in the same amount of time. Differences such as these represent cultural patterns.

Cultural patterns are different from stereotypes because groups are not rigidly categorized; preferences, not innate characteristics, are identified. Even if a person has a preference for one thing, he or she is capable of the alternative.

Task Issues

In the first stage, little work is done, and that which is accomplished often is not of good quality. If decisions are made, they are often rushed and represent the desires of the dominant culture.

In Stage I, it is important for the team to agree on its goals and purpose. For a multicultural team, a compelling goal that transcends individual differences is even more crucial than it is for a monocultural group.

Identifying the skills of individual members also is important. Assumptions and stereotypes may exist about roles members should take in accomplishing the work. For example, it may be assumed that Asian Americans may be good technicians but not good leaders.

Leadership Issues

In Stage I, team members are uncomfortable with ambiguity and need to establish leadership. Multicultural teams often follow a path of least resistance and form around the leadership of the dominant-culture members. Group members collude with the leadership to ignore differences and to suppress discomfort. A dynamic of social conformity or “groupthink” emerges, and members choose loyalty to the team even if the leadership is not providing a realistic appraisal or an effective course of action. The degree to which these dynamics occur varies according to the extent of diversity in the team and the developmental stages of consciousness of the leader and team members.

Leadership is critical to creating an environment that is either inclusive or exclusive. When leadership fails to address inclusion needs, the team will not achieve the level of safety necessary to move past the stage of infancy. A “revolving door syndrome” may occur as subordinate-status members join the team and then leave.

Stage II: Adolescence

Climate

During the second stage, politeness wears off and conflict emerges openly or is hidden under the surface. In multicultural teams, members of the dominant-status group (e.g.,

whites and men) are apt to be unaware of the conflicts felt by members of the subordinate-status groups (e.g., people of color and women).

Interpersonal Issues

In any team, issues of subgrouping, alliances, and infighting occur in Stage II. In multicultural teams, subordinate-status members frequently are excluded from forming effective relationships with dominant-status members. They may be excluded because they do not share the same jokes, language, style of communicating, social habits, or work style. Or they may be excluded because of feelings of hostility and unwillingness to accept them. Men, whites, and U.S. nationals may fear that they will have to change because of the subordinate-status group members, but they often do not believe they *should* have to change.

If members of subordinate-status groups form relationships among themselves, they are accused of subgrouping and of not becoming part of the team. Subordinate-status group members can experience anxiety and stress if there is pressure to conform in order to belong to the team.

Task Issues

In the adolescent stage, a team needs to focus on how realistic its goals are and what norms and procedures should be used in accomplishing them. Creating common norms is more complicated in multicultural teams because of culturally different patterns of behavior regarding decision making, conducting meetings, communication, and conflict management. For example, the dominant cultural style of problem solving in the United States is linear and emphasizes rational thought processes; however, many other cultures value circular and holistic processes that include intuition.

A team often will find it easier to continue with business as usual and use norms that reflect the culture of the dominant-status group. This happens particularly when there is only token representation of subordinate-status groups. However, differences need to be addressed in a way that allows all to contribute and the team to benefit from the richness of diversity.

Leadership Issues

In the adolescent stage, leadership is resisted by most teams. In multicultural teams, this struggle is apt to be less overt. Because white male leadership may be taken for granted, it may be harder to challenge it. In self-directed teams, it may seem easy and natural to have the leadership fall to, or be taken over by, white men. White women frequently assume traditional roles and support white male leadership. If the leader is a member of a subordinate-status group, for example, a Hispanic female, she may be bypassed or ignored, or there may be a rebellion against her leadership.

Stage III: Adulthood

Climate

The third stage is characterized by interpersonal support and high energy for accomplishing the task. The energy and creativity can be higher in a multicultural team than in a monocultural one (Adler, 1991).

Interpersonal Issues

Emotional conflict in this stage is reduced by patching up previously conflicting relationships. There is a strong sense of group identity and expression of interpersonal support. Differences continue to be expressed, but there are agreed-on methods for managing them. Relationships are functional.

Task Issues

The team may be harmonious but unproductive after it has faced the issues of conflict in the adolescent stage. If so, the team must be realigned with its goals. When this is accomplished, it can be highly productive, drawing on the diverse skills of all team members and no longer hindered by stereotypes and assumptions.

Multicultural teams at this stage can be more productive than monocultural teams because they can benefit from the following:

- increased creativity from different points of view,
- a decreased tendency to conform to ideas without questioning their validity,
- special insights and observations resulting from the previous exclusion of subordinate-status members,
- the opportunity to rethink norms and processes, and
- strengths stemming from cultural patterns of members of subordinate status as well as those of dominant-status members.

Increased creativity is particularly important when the team is working on tasks that require an expanded understanding of the problem and new solutions. For example, one team with a member who spoke English as a second language finally recognized its need to slow down and to paraphrase and summarize more frequently so the member could understand. When it adopted this norm for the non-English speaker, the team found that all benefited with increased understanding.

Leadership Issues

In the adult stage, there is less attention to status hierarchy, and the leadership skills of various team members are utilized. Lines of authority are followed, not circumvented. Different styles of leadership are recognized and valued. For example, women's

experience in listening and supporting is recognized and valued as important to team building and coaching.

CONCLUSION

Many multicultural teams do not move beyond the initial stage of infancy and, thus, are less effective than monocultural teams. Stereotypes abound, and differences are treated as problems rather than as potential benefits. Whites and men, at the dependent stage in their consciousness of racism and sexism, may not realize that people of color and women do not feel included and that their skills are not being used.

In working with multicultural teams, the team leader or consultant needs a high level of awareness relative to the issues of a diverse work force. A clear vision is needed of what diversity and equality mean in a team and how the dynamics related to dominant- and subordinate-status groups can negatively impact the team. Specific guidelines around safety and participation need to be developed so that members of subordinate groups can be included as full participants on their own terms. Members' differing needs for addressing task and interpersonal issues should be acknowledged.

The adolescent stage is more intense and complex in multicultural teams than in monocultural teams, because of the difficult issues of racism, sexism, and other forms of discrimination. The team leader or an outside consultant must help the team to resolve conflicting needs in order to develop synergistic norms.

The team needs to set aside time to discuss its processes relative to diversity. Addressing conflict is complicated by differences in individual and cultural styles of conflict management. For example, whites and men may be reluctant to accept direct feedback from people of color and women. Differences in emotional expression also may abound. Skills in giving and receiving feedback, process observation, active listening, and problem solving may need to be developed.

Multicultural teams in the adult stage often will perform better than monocultural teams. The danger for multicultural teams is that differences will be ignored and conflict will be unresolved; the opportunity is their high potential to be creative and productive.

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■ CREATING AND MOTIVATING EFFECTIVE TEAMS: THE CHALLENGE

William A. Snow

Abstract: Although the concept of teams is not new, the process of shaping effective organizational teams is still evolutionary. Team members and leaders need to understand the dynamics, issues, and challenges of this form of accomplishing work. This article briefly summarizes the stages of team developments and the team issues and behaviors that occur in each. It then discusses the elements of team effectiveness: goals, roles, procedures, and interpersonal functioning. Finally, it discusses the relationship between team effectiveness and training, decision making, the knowledge worker, job security, equitable rewards, and continuous improvement.

One organizational response to our era of rapid change and increased competition has been the creation of various types of work teams: high performance teams, self-managed teams, and cross-functional teams. Presumably this organizational form offers its members more autonomy, empowerment, self-direction, and job satisfaction.

Teams are groups of two or more people who must coordinate their efforts in order to accomplish a task. If a job can be done by one person, using a team is a waste of resources. However, when a task requires several resources, a well-functioning team is the most effective way to complete it.

As executives become more aware of the positive correlation between teamwork and organizational performance, their need increases for more knowledge about team development and about the factors that contribute to and detract from team effectiveness.

TEAM DEVELOPMENT

One key to building effective teams is understanding the stages of team development that occur over time. Some models by well-known researchers (Bennis & Shepard, 1956; Gibb, 1964; Moosebrucker, 1987) contain four stages of team development; others contain five (Drexler, Sibbet, & Forrester 1988; Tuckman & Jensen, 1977). These stages can be summarized as follows:

- Stage 1: Creation
- Stage 2: Conflict
- Stage 3: Cohesion
- Stage 4: Contribution
- Stage 5: Recreation

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Creation. During the first stage, team members move from an individual to a team orientation. Team tasks include identifying behaviors that are acceptable to the team and team members' skills and agendas. A leader typically is selected, and his or her role is to provide structure and reduce ambiguity in the team.

Conflict. In stage two, the central concern is developing trust and collaboration. Conflicts tend to arise as members express needs for power and achievement. Leadership may change. Individuals may believe that their needs can be better met through their own actions than through the team.

Cohesion. There are two primary foci of stage three: solidification of members' roles and the quality of the team's decision-making process. Team norms are developed mutually. By now a team personality has been established, and the benefits of team effort are apparent.

Contribution. Teams in stage four are mature; they possess confidence in their abilities, willingness to confront both interpersonal and task issues, involvement, motivation to contribute, acceptance of responsibility, active participation, and productivity.

Recreation. When the team's membership changes, the team needs to reform. When the team's task ends, the team needs to disband. If the team is to end, the members need to take time to acknowledge team achievements and participate in some termination ceremony.

The developmental nature of these stages requires that the activities of each be accomplished and the problems of each be resolved before the team can move to the next stage. Major issues in each stage are of two types: task (work activity) and interpersonal (member behaviors).

Figure 1 displays team-effectiveness issues that typically surface in each stage of team development.

TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

As teams form, they need to pay attention to their processes as well as to procedures that help them function effectively. Effective teamwork does not happen naturally; it takes practice.

Many issues create potential problems for teams. These issues need to be resolved in a hierarchical manner. Therefore, a team needs to address first its goals, then its roles, then its procedures, and then how its members function interpersonally.

Goals

The effective coordination of a team's resources rests, in part, on the ability to specify the objectives the team is attempting to achieve. Conflict can be expected around how much time and energy should be allocated to various tasks because of different

Stage of Development	Stage Indicators	Task Activities	Team-Members Behaviors	Issues
One: Creation	Newly formed team New department or supervisor Many new team members New project/ product/service Major reorganization	Developing mission Initial action planning Establishing accountability	Introductions Communication from leader Low risk taking	Empowerment Communication Work force diversity
Two: Conflict	In-fighting in team Team members taking sides in arguments Task assignments not completed on time Others taking control from formal leader Competition among group members Confusion on assignments and tasks Some members totally withdrawn	Clarifying roles Establishing measures Defining goals	Power struggles Polarized arguments Various conflicts	Communication Teamwork Trust Balance Role clarity
Three: Cohesion	“Family” attitude prevails Candid, two-way communication People involved in the workplace Work considered “fun”	Tackling assignments Generating data Reaching consensus on goals	Input of ideas by all Trust built Communication open	Balance Accountability Decision making Teamwork
Four: Contribution	Major milestones and deadlines reached Presentations made on outcomes Collaboration and participation when warranted High quality/high output	Reaching major milestones Solving problems Continuous improvement	High level of commitment Candid interplay High trust levels	Communication Teamwork Balance Accountability
Five: Recreation	Major projects accomplished, team in maintenance mode Initial plan worked to completion Major organizational change, focus, or realignment Team and individuals rewarded for accomplishments	Accomplishing initial plans Process maintenance Planning for next steps	Victory celebration Sense of accomplishment Rewards and recognition	Empowerment Work force diversity Accountability Teamwork

Figure 1. Team Task Activities and Member Behaviors

perceptions of the team's mission or goals. Much energy is wasted if objectives are not understood and agreed to and if priorities are not established. The latter is particularly important, because it directly affects how choices and decisions are made.

Roles

The next set of problems is related to roles. Ambiguities in "who should be doing what" can only be partially handled by formal job descriptions. Job descriptions should not be relied on to cover the day-to-day contingencies that arise when an interdisciplinary team attempts to accomplish a task.

Many problems arise simply because team members are not clear about what they expect of one another. A person may be silent in a team meeting because he or she thinks the purpose of the meeting is educational (someone is teaching something) rather than problem solving (everyone is here to contribute).

Often, much energy is wasted because team members do not know the procedures to develop clear role definitions. Three types of role conflicts frequently arise. The expectations that others have of a team member can be in conflict with the person's personal expectations. The expectations that two or more team members have of another person can be incompatible. Finally, the total expectations held of one team member may require more time and energy than the person has in a workday.

Procedures

The focus of goals is "what"; the focus of roles is "who"; and the focus of procedures is "how." Procedures are mechanisms for sharing information or making decisions and protocols to facilitate coordinated activity. Effective teamwork requires clear, agreed-on procedures in the following areas:

- How decisions will be made,
- How conflicts/problems will be resolved,
- How often team meetings will be held,
- Who will attend, and
- How team meetings will be conducted.

In some team settings, the answers to such questions are specified in advance. In other settings, the answers are developed by the team members.

Interpersonal Functioning

Whenever team members work closely together to achieve a task, they develop feelings about one another. The extent to which team members respect, trust, support, and feel comfortable with one another influences how they work together.

The consequences of negative feelings are clear in the team members' behaviors. They avoid one another, snipe at one another (directly or indirectly), and find working together to be difficult.

The interpersonal issues of a team also affect the goals, roles, and procedures. Therefore, team members need to decide how they are going to function interpersonally and commit to operating within those agreed-on boundaries. Because of the developmental nature of teams, periodic reassessment of this element is essential.

Goals, roles, procedures, and interpersonal functioning are basic elements of team effectiveness. Effective resolution of issues related to these elements is essential in improving teamwork. Solutions to team problems are based, in part, on understanding which elements (goals, roles, procedures, or interpersonal functioning) the problems are related to.

THE CHALLENGE OF TEAMS

As organizations have attempted to become more efficient, many have turned to the creation of teams—self-managed teams, high-performance teams, cross-functional teams, and so on. Many such efforts have not been successful, despite the well-intentioned efforts of organizational leaders and followers. Much of this dilemma can be explained in terms of some basic realities regarding team motivation and performance.

Reality 1: Teams Need Proper Training

In order for teams to function effectively, they must be trained to do so. Such training includes making decisions about goals, roles, procedures, and interpersonal functioning. Periodically asking the question “What keeps us from being as effective as we might be?” strengthens the team and keeps it on target. Team members may need training in communication skills, problem identification, decision making, and other skills. An integral part of team training is an understanding of how teams develop and the issues they face in each stage of development.

Reality 2: Teamwork Takes Time

Kanter (1983) discusses the dilemmas of participation. Teams generally take time to plan, implement, and follow-up on their work because input from team members is vital to the output that is desired. There is a tradeoff. If an organization wants quick turnaround, it may decide to forego the participation, commitment to the work, quality, and increased morale that well-trained teams (particularly self-managed teams) can produce.

Reality 3: The Knowledge Employee Is Different from the Production Employee

The move from an industrial to a post-industrial society has occurred in a relatively short period of time. The world is now in the information age. Workers involved in the actual production of goods constitute fewer than 9 percent of all workers (Naisbitt & Auburdene, 1985); the great majority of the work force is doing something else. That

something else involves inputting, processing, interpreting, and using information. The knowledge worker is an integral component of the information age. Such workers want challenging and interesting work; a satisfactory work environment; positive working relationships; more control over planning and decision making related to their jobs; and more participative leadership styles.

Reality 4: Employees Are Concerned About Job Security

Until recently, loyal and hard-working employees had high job security in most organizations. A major change in organizational life includes the need to be more competitive in the global economy. Many organizations have attempted to achieve this by “downsizing” (or “rightsizing”) and restructuring. Often such attempts create a lack of job security that impairs employee motivation and productivity on a continuing basis.

Reality 5: A Revolution in Employee Rewards Is in Progress

When teams are formed as a result of downsizing or restructuring, the members—as survivors—are typically delegated additional work responsibilities. All too often, commensurate adjustments in compensation do not follow. Sometimes, the message seems to be that the survivors should be grateful that they still have jobs. Over time, however, people expect to be rewarded equitably for their contributions.

The revolution in employee rewards centers around the concept of rewarding employees based on their output. The reasoning is that rewards should be based on the value added by the employee. Thus, it is entirely possible that an employee might not receive any adjustment in her or his compensation until there has been value added (productivity) by that person. A variety of variable-output reward schemes operationalize this idea.

Reality 6: Continuous Improvement Is Central to Customer Satisfaction

The harsh reality is that in order for organizations to be competitive and cost effective, they must deliver consistently high-quality services and products to their customers. Global competition is forcing the issue of quality. Thus, the question is not whether to integrate quality-improvement principles into an organization but how to begin the process.

One aspect of quality improvement that tends to be neglected is improving services to internal customers. Internal quality control and improvement is fundamental to providing a quality product or service to external customers. This necessitates that departments and work teams view their fellow employees as customers. Work teams need to discuss quality issues that are a result of one group’s output being transferred to another work group (their input). If quality is to improve, interactions within the organization must improve.

Team functioning is effective when leaders and team members understand the stages of team development; have the proper training to engage in teamwork; have clear,

agreed-on team goals, roles, and procedures; have interpersonal skills; and face the organizational realities that accompany the use of work teams.

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■ TORI THEORY AND PRACTICE

Jack R. Gibb

TORI theory is a general, unitary theory that applies to all formal and informal social systems (Gibb, 1965). It is structured in such a fashion as to be particularly adapted to the engineering of system change: learning communities (Gibb & Gibb, 1967), therapeutic communities (Gibb, 1968a; Gibb & Gibb, 1968a), management systems (Gibb, 1961, 1965, 1971), change-inductive small groups (Gibb, 1964, 1968b; Gibb & Gibb, 1967, 1968b, 1969), and organizations (Gibb, 1965; Gibb & Gibb, 1971).

Several assumptions of the theory are directly relevant to the work of leaders, trainers, and consultants in small groups.

1. Any social system—a group, person, community, nation, or organization—is best understood and improved most effectively by focusing on system characteristics of a living, growing organism.
2. The primary and leverage variables in organic growth are the antithetical processes of fear and trust and their correlates.
3. Growth occurs as a movement from fear toward increasing trust. The primary correlates of this central process are the following four: movement from depersonalization and role toward greater personalization, from a closed system toward a more open system, from impositional motivation toward greater self determination, and from dependency toward greater interdependence (Gibb, 1964; Gibb & Gibb, 1967, 1971). TORI is a convenient acronym for these four factors in the organic growth of living systems: trust, openness, realization, and interdependence.
4. Fear-defense levels are thus manifested in systems in four ways: depersonalization and role living, facade building and covert strategies, impositions and persuasions, and high control and dependency (Gibb, 1964, 1965).
5. Trust and low defense levels are manifested in systems in four ways: personal, intimate, and nonrole behavior; open and transparent behavior; self-determining, assertive, and actualizing behavior; and reciprocally fulfilling, interdependent, and “with” behavior.
6. An efficient and powerful way of optimizing growth and the trust factors in growth is to focus on the environmental forces that impinge on participants in the

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system. This environment may then nurture and sustain growth behaviors that are associated with classic and desired group outcomes: creativity, high learning, group productivity, personal growth, and group vitality (Gibb, 1971; Gibb & Gibb, 1971). This is true of training and therapy groups as well as “natural” teams in industry, volunteer organizations, and educational systems.

TORI theory implies a theory of learning that is inextricable from the main body of the theory. Growth occurs when a person, on his or her own steam and impetus, does things that reinforce desired physical responses and behavior patterns. Changed behavior results from showing feelings rather than from talking about them, from doing things rather than thinking about or observing them, from letting oneself happen rather than examining one’s motives, and from physically carrying out an impulse or making a choice. After growth people look different. Growth is its own reward. The kind of sustained learning and growth that makes possible living in trust comes from self-sustained and self-directed changes in life style and behavior patterns.

The primary condition of learning is not diagnostic sensitivity but the process of trying out things that a person deeply wants to do and then experiencing the effects of the behavior on the self and on others. Permanent and genuine growth comes from a person’s finding out what he or she is and deeply wants to do, getting in touch with what his or her body says, and then doing things that integrate self-body at all levels of experience and awareness. Deep learning is not a remedial or corrective process but an inner emergence, a building upon organic strengths, and an increasing trust in self.

PERVASIVE ASSUMPTIONS

There are several assumptions in the TORI system that are immediately pertinent to the leadership style of the trainer, leader, or consultant:

1. A group leader is most effective when as personal, open, allowing, and interdependent as it is possible to be within the limits of his or her own defense level.
2. A system such as a small group “learns” actualizing styles of coping when the environment is low-defense. The group itself develops a norm system that implements its actualizing style. The most effective leader is one who “flows” with the organic growth of the group-norm system, becomes an active, assertive member of the group, but does not attempt to place himself or herself out of the group system as a “role” or as a “leader” in the classic sense.
3. Functional behaviors or styles (personal, open, self-determining, and interdependent behavior) are intrinsically rewarding and self-perpetuating if the immediate system environment is a high-trust and low-defense environment. The group leader “trusts the process” to develop and does not feel the need to teach, train, persuade, or model behavior for others.

4. Groups tend toward entropy when the group styles are predominantly impersonal and in-role, strategic and closed, persuasive and coercive, and dependent-controlling. Groups tend toward self-sustaining growth when system styles are predominantly personal, open, allowing, and interdependent.
5. The flow of perceptual and feeling data in high-defense groups is so low that raising these data to visibility in the group is a powerful force in creating more functional styles of coping and relating. Functional feedback is apparently a powerful variable, as is indicated in a number of recent studies.

USES OF TORI THEORY IN THE LEADERSHIP OF GROUPS

Figure 1 gives a checklist for people who would try to apply this theory to a practical setting, either in therapy or training groups, or in team training in an organizational setting.

The primary leverage principle is that the TORI leader makes a series of trust assumptions about the world. He or she is predisposed to trust his or her impulses, his or her inner self, the motivations of others, the health-directed processes of group interaction, the general nonmalevolence of nature and people, his or her own abilities and capacities, the capacities of people to assume responsibility for their own lives, and the world in general. When the leader is fearful, he or she tends to be impersonal, closed, nonallowing, and controlling. He or she recognizes these tendencies and their genesis in his or her nontrust. Predisposed to recognize his or her fears, this leader is able to reduce his or her tendency to “act them out.” Experience with groups and group phenomena enables the TORI leader to trust himself or herself to show his or her fears when he or she recognizes them, to trust enough to show his or her distrusts, to share with others in a joint quest for a more trusting relationship in and out of the group.

Fears become less frightening as they become more familiar, as their effects become better known, and as one learns that the fears will dissipate with openness and interaction. In order to become truly personal in a group, a leader must become very familiar with his fears and the fears of others and be able to deal with these verbally and nonverbally in the continuing feedback of the group interaction.

The inexperienced leader has many fears: fear of letting things get out of control, fear of being seen as incompetent or unprofessional, fear that people in the group will be hurt or damaged, fear that he or she will not be perceptive enough to see what is going on under the surface of things, fear that he or she will not live up to the expectations of group members, fear that he or she will lose objectivity as a professional observer, fear that members might see others in the group as more competent or helpful than the appointed leader, and fear that he or she will not be able to invent or provide a method for resolving a conflict or crisis in the group. Only when the leader sees himself or herself as a role, tries to live up to role expectations, and protects himself or herself from personal relations does he or she have these kinds of fears. As the leader comes to see

Leader Moves away from:	Leader moves toward:
1. Being impersonal, "in role"	1. Being personal, nonrole
2. Selecting my behaviors because they are helpful or therapeutic (a role prescription)	2. Responding to my current feelings and perceptions (showing my self)
3. Focus on relations between role and role (leader and member, member and member)	3. Focus on relations between people and people
4. Responding to what patients or members seem to need (programming)	4. Responding to how I see and feel about my relationships now (being spontaneous)
5. Screening my responses and modeling appropriate, relevant, helpful, role, or professional aspects of self	5. Minimal screening but sharing all areas of self, however relevant or professional they may seem to me to be
6. Responding to the other as a client, patient, member, or person needing help	6. Responding to the other as a unique person, <i>qua</i> person
7. Concern for changing, curing, or remedying the deficient individual	7. Concern for growth and development of each of us in all of our relationships
8. Being consistent with my theory of action, training, therapy, or group growth	8. Focus on intuition, "gut feel" of what to do: following impulse
9. Focus on motives, interpretations, and other derivative, inferential, or role concepts	9. Focus on more available, direct, experienced and visible behavior
10. Focus on separate, autonomous individuals or entities, as entities	10. Focus on relationships (on how it is now between or among us)
11. Focus on abstraction, generality, or principle	11. Focus on concrete, primitive, and elemental feelings and perceptions
12. Focus on evaluative or moral judgments	12. Focus on descriptive statements about feelings and perceptions
13. Focus on and concern for <i>then</i> (other relationships in the past or future and on the past history of members)	13. Focus on and concern for now (how each of us feels and sees things at this moment)
14. Focus on and concern for <i>there</i> (data from other relationships and contexts)	14. Focus on and concern for here (feelings and perceptions visible and available to all)
15. Focus on description of the passive self as a static being	15. Focus on description of the dynamic, in-process, becoming organism/person
16. Focus on limitations of the person	16. Focus on strengths and growing edges of the person
17. Focus on punishment and rewards	17. Focus on flowing behaviors and feelings
18. Focus on legality, "contracts," norms, controls	18. Focus on flow, fluidity of temporary, self-sustaining systems
19. Focus on the terminology of fear, risk, caution, and conservation	19. Focus on trust, venture, impulse, and liberation
20. Focus on words, semantics, and speech	20. Focus on nonverbal and body flow and organic integration

Figure 1. Checklist for Group Leaders Using TORI Theory

himself or herself as a person and accept personal relationships with others, he or she finds that these fears come to dissipate.

The leader who comes through theory-motivated and theory-guided experiences in “leaderless” (personfull) groups to gain trust of group processes is increasingly able to enter the group as a person. He or she is able to ignore the initial role demands of inexperienced group members and to enter into personal relationships. He or she gains satisfactions from his or her own growth, from genuine interdependence, from depth relationships with other people, from the exchange of human emotions with others, and from his or her growing congruence and growing freedom from the crippling feelings of responsibility for the lives and learnings of others. These are health-giving satisfactions, intrinsic rewards, and freedom-giving behaviors (Gibb & Gibb, 1969).

The central concepts in the leader style described are freedom from role (Gibb & Gibb, 1969), taking responsibility for self and giving others responsibility for themselves, giving self the freedom to follow impulses to find one’s own spontaneity (Gibb & Gibb, 1971), giving primacy to interdependent and with-relations, the focus on emergent strengths rather than on remedial processes (Gibb, 1968b), the focus on organic flow rather than on “contracts” or role obligations (Gibb & Gibb, 1967), the focus on ecological engineering rather than on leader behavior for group improvement (Gibb, 1968b), and the focus on bodily and nonverbal processes rather than on verbal relationships. The TORI theory relies on a set of general assumptions and experiences and a general world or person viewpoint or set, rather than on a methodology or a technique. TORI is a life style, a way of living, an organic integration and not a tool or a method. The orientation comes both from a person-oriented theory of life and from a set of experiences that create a trusting stance toward persons and groups. One can learn to be more trusting. The general trust theory outlined above emerges in individuals who have trust-inductive experiences. Trust is a master variable. As a person becomes more trusting he or she becomes more personal, open, allowing, and with others. He or she inevitably becomes less role-locked, closed, manipulative, and dependent controlling. One can choose to be less controlling or more open. This choice-directed behavior, if theory-directed and if satisfying to the learner, is self-fulfilling. That is, such experiments with self can reduce fears and increase trusts. The experimenter finds, for instance, that allowing and nonmanipulative behavior is more satisfying, and the allowing behavior can become ascendent as an emerging life style.

Proficiency in the use of TORI theory and practice as a life style and as a way of working with training groups and natural groups can come in one of several ways. Reading the theory as outlined in the sampling of references listed at the end of this essay may be helpful. Performing miniature experiments on oneself in trying out a role-free style in a series of group experiences is helpful in getting oneself in tune with his or her capacities to be personal, communicate in depth, join in shared search, and live interdependently. In my experience I have seldom seen a person who makes a genuine and sustained effort to be role-free revert to role behavior. Role-free behavior is more organically rewarding to all relatively nondefensive people than is role behavior. Role

behavior is rewarding only in defensive climates, in formal structures, and in controlled or dependent relationships. Nonrole behavior is organically suited to the actualization of people. Another route to learning a TORI personal style is to work closely with a person who is using TORI theory in practice. There is obviously no single path to personness.

The TORI group leader, after developing a congruent life style, acts in the same way in the group when announced as the leader or trainer as he or she does when a member of the group. He or she uses the same “theory” in all situations. His or her behavior as a therapist, an administrator, a trainer, a parent, a teacher, a counselor, a manager, or a friend is essentially the same. He or she does not have a special theory to fit a special situation. He or she does not “choose a leader style.” He or she is as much as possible a “person” in all situations and does not “take the role” of parent or therapist. Being present as a full person in the here and now and responding with minimal screening to both self and others has growth-giving effects. In being a full person in all situations he or she gives and receives life, warmth, love, witness and humanness. This person, thus—as serendipity—meets any role obligations as a parent, a therapist, a teacher, or a minister. That is, people around this person grow, learn, get healthier, and become more creative and enriched. People may model after him or her if they wish, as all people in some ways model after many others. This person does not set himself or herself up as a model or consciously intend his or her behavior to be a model. His or her life is a continuing quest for richer interdependence, and interdependence is the direction of the growth. Openness, congruence, self-actualization, and role-freedom are means, steps along the way, and paths toward more full interdependence.

TORI-STYLED LEADERSHIP IN ORGANIZATIONS

The TORI style of leading a group is appropriate to the most functional leadership within the organization. When people take or are given “managing” positions in groups or organizations (parents, teachers, administrators, managers) they often attempt to manage the warmth, the communications, the motivations, and the structure of the system (Gibb, 1965). They inherit from conventional theory and prevalent practice a series of distrust assumptions about the nature of people and organizations. Based on these assumptions they institute a series of counter-growth and self-defeating programs: praise and punishment, performance appraisal, merit badges and merit pay, competition, quality control, and arbitrary rules. The critical dynamics of the system are so masked that leaders continue to get falsely confirming data. The systems seem, on the surface, to be effective, but they exacerbate latent and cumulative counter-growth forces: depersonalization, role behavior and fear; strategic distortion and circumvention; persuasion-passivity; and dependence-hostility (Gibb, 1961, 1965, 1971).

More functional behavior for the parent, teacher, group leader, or manager is to “go with the flow” and contribute directly to the emergence and growth of the system. When this happens people and organizations grow, emerge, and become. There is movement toward primary and stated aims: productivity in the company, spirituality in the church,

socialization in the home, learning in the school, and psychological health in the clinic. Movement and growth are toward the health and fulfillment of members: the essence of effectiveness of any social system. Growing—personal, open, realizing, and interdependent behaviors—is highly correlated with each of the organizational outcomes stated above.

It is my observation, both in research and consulting, that the most direct, economical, and powerful way for the manager, group leader, or therapist to enhance these organizational outcomes is to direct attention to increasing the trust level. He or she optimizes growth and reduces defense levels by being personal, open, self-determining and interdependent, and fostering these behaviors in other people.

This is not to say that the manager or group leader becomes passive, nondirective, “permissive,” impotent, encaptured by forces he or she cannot understand or control, an observer, or even a servant. Rather, the high-trust TORI leader becomes a full person. He or she is assertive, warm, open, active, demanding to be heard, expressive of his or her own feelings and needs, and very much involved in decisions and processes in the group and in its creativity and productivity: just as are all the other growing members of the group or the organization.

The leader does not assume responsibility for the group or the organization. Taking responsibility for someone else feeds the counter-growth forces of role taking, filtering, passivity, and dependency that we see in low-trust groups, teams, and organizations.

Any change in a person or group or organization, however significantly it may relieve symptoms of distress, is dysfunctional if it does not move in the direction of increasing the trust level and optimization of the four variables of personalization, openness, self-determination, and interdependence.

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■ A MODEL OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

John E. Jones

It is important to be able to monitor and influence the development of small groups, and a model is needed whereby both the group facilitator and other group members can determine the stages of development that the group is experiencing and what options for growth are available at any given stage of development. This need exists for both “task” groups and “growth” groups. In both situations there is a human component; that is, there is some growth toward establishing interpersonal relationships and there is also a task component—a job to be done. The importance of looking at group development systematically is underscored by the need to look at group facilitator interventions as being most appropriate when they are timed to coincide with a particular developmental sequence. It is also important that group members learn how to look at the mass of data that are generated in group interaction so that processing of meetings—how the work gets done, how decisions get made, how people get included—can be done most effectively. Diagnosing interaction problems, diagnosing the resources that are available to the group within the group itself, and increasing the options for the group to manage its own development all require that some developmental model be available to the members of the group. It is helpful in anticipating the kinds of group-interaction problems that are predictable to use the outcomes of research and practice in therapy groups, human relations training groups, natural work groups, laboratory leadership groups and so on. There are parallels in the growth sequences from all of these activities, and the model that is presented here is applicable to all small-group activity regardless of its particular task.

A plethora of group-development models is available in the literature of small-group communication, and some common themes run through the variety of paradigms that have been developed. See, for example, the summary by Tuckman (1965). Many writers in the field of human relations, group counseling, group psychotherapy, and small-group work in business and industry have pointed out these predictable stages, sequences, and phases that groups develop, beginning as collections of individual people and becoming a cohesive group working together more or less effectively. Just as these stages that they go through are predictable, so are they, to a degree, controllable; this is evident in a variety of group situations. The classic leadership dilemma, whether the individual concerned is a business manager, a teacher, a group counselor, or the “president” of an organization, is getting the work done while at the same time maintaining humanistic norms. There is always some kind of balance that has to be

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achieved. Sometimes that is done in a trade-off way, sometimes it is done in a harmonizing way, sometimes it is done in a compromise way, but there is always the dilemma of needing to accomplish the task without great human expense. These two concerns of the leader form the basis for a number of two-dimensional schema for studying group interaction. Perhaps the most famous theory of leadership (actually a meta-theory) was developed by Blake and Mouton, who explained their model of leader behavior in a classic book, *The Managerial Grid*. They believe that leader behavior can be explained and predicted on the basis of the two dimensions: concern for task, or production, and concern for people. They see these two dimensions as linear, and they explain their construction of the various theories of leadership in a two-dimensional grid framework. Another two-dimensional schema for dealing with the data of group interaction was developed into the Hill Interaction Matrix (Hill, 1973). The two dimensions that they see as incorporating and explaining the meaning of the data of group interaction are content and work. The Hill Interaction Matrix is a categorizing system for describing what is said and how work actually takes place in the group. It should be obvious that no two-dimensional model can completely subsume all of the data of group interaction without a loss of some precision. The purpose of looking at group development from this relatively simplistic way is to underline the importance, not only of the two-dimensions—human and task—but also to provide a common language whereby group members can explore the emerging characteristics and parameters of the group.

The two dimensions of the model presented here are personal relations and task functions. In other models these dimensions go by other names, but a number of people involved in group development have identified these two dimensions as being central to the process. Personal relations refers to the development of the human side of the activity that occurs in the group. Whether it is a task group or growth group, a group of strangers or a group of acquaintances, the people progress in development from individuals to group members to people who feel some attachment to one another and finally to people who are able to link up in creative kinds of ways. The personal relations involves how people feel about one another, how people expect one another to behave, the commitments that people develop to one another, the kinds of assumptions that people make about one another, and the kinds of problems that people have in joining forces with one another in order to get work done. The assumption is that the kinds of groups that are referred to here are all organized for the purpose of achieving goals, tasks, production, and so on, and that personal relations refers to the human component in the accomplishing of this purpose. The other dimension is task functions. Characteristic behaviors can also be identified in the different stages of group development regarding task. A group comes together, learns what the task is, mobilizes to accomplish the task, and does the work. So the two dimensions, personal relations and task functions, form a matrix in which there is an interaction between characteristic human relations and characteristic task-oriented behaviors at the various stages of development of the group.

Four stages of group development are commonly experienced in groups that are organized for a specific activity. In the initial stage, personal relations are characterized by dependency, and the major task functions concern orientation. In the beginning of the group's life, the individual members must resolve a number of dependency problems and characteristic behaviors on the personal-relations dimension. They tend to depend on the leader to provide all the structure: the group members lean on the facilitator, chairman, or manager to set the ground rules, establish the agenda, and to do all the "leading." The parallel stage in the task function to be accomplished is the orientation of group members to the work that they are being asked to do. The issues have to be specified. The nature of the work itself has to be explored so there is a common understanding of what the group has been organized to do. Common behavior at this point is questioning why are we here, what we are supposed to do, how we are going to get it done, and what our goals are.

Stage two is characterized by conflict in the personal relations dimension and organization in the task-functions dimension. Interpersonal conflict inevitably ensues as a part of small-group interaction. It may be that the conflict remains hidden, but it is there. We bring to small-group activity a lot of our own unresolved conflicts with regard to authority, dependency, rules, and agenda, and we experience interpersonal conflict as we organize to get work done. Who is going to be responsible for what; what are going to be the work rules; what are going to be the limits; what is going to be the reward system; what are going to be the criteria. The variety of organizational concerns that emerge reflect interpersonal conflict over leadership and leadership structure, power, and authority.

In phase three, the personal relations area is marked by cohesion, and the major task function is data-flow. It is during the third stage of development, assuming the group gets this far, that the people begin to experience a sense of groupness, a feeling of catharsis at having resolved interpersonal conflict and of having "gotten together." They begin sharing ideas, feelings, giving feedback to each other, soliciting feedback, exploring actions related to the task, and sharing information related to the task. This becomes a period during which people feel good about what is going on; they feel good about being a part of a group, and there is an emerging openness with regard to the task. Sometimes during stage three there is a brief abandonment of the task and a period of play that is an enjoyment of the cohesion that is being experienced.

Stage four, which is usually not achieved by many groups, is marked by interdependence on the personal relations dimensions and problem solving on the task-functions dimension. Interdependence means that members can work singly, in any subgrouping, or as a total unit. They are both highly task oriented and highly person oriented. The activities are marked by both collaboration and functional competition. The group's tasks are well defined, there is high commitment to common activity, and there is support for experimentation with solving problems. The chart below summarizes the four stages along the two dimensions of personal relations and task functions:

STAGE	PERSONAL RELATIONS	TASK FUNCTIONS
1	Dependency	Orientation
2	Conflict	Organization
3	Cohesion	Data flow
4	Interdependence	Problem solving

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■ COG'S LADDER: A MODEL OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

George O. Charrier

The Cog's Ladder model consists of five steps of group development.

The first step is called the *Polite* stage. In this phase, group members are getting acquainted, sharing values, and establishing the basis for a group structure. The group members need to be liked.

The second step is *Why We're Here*. During this phase the group members define the objectives and goals of the group.

The third step consists of a *Bid for Power*. On this step of the ladder to maturity, group members attempt to influence one another's ideas, values, or opinions. This stage is characterized by competition for attention, recognition, and influence.

The fourth step is cooperative—the *Constructive* stage. In this phase, group members are open-minded, listen actively, and accept the fact that others have a right to different value systems. This stage might also be referred to as the “team-action” stage.

The fifth and final step is one of unity, high spirits, mutual acceptance, and high cohesiveness. It is the *Esprit* stage.

1. POLITE

The initial item on every group's agenda is to get acquainted, whether or not the leader of the group allows time for it. Generally, a T-group will begin with members introducing themselves. Name tags are provided to members of other groups to aid in the process of “getting to know you.” Polite conversation includes information sharing, which helps group members anticipate one another's future responses to group activities.

During this phase, some group members rely on stereotyping to help categorize other members. A group establishes an emotional basis for future group structure. Cliques are formed that will become important in later phases. The items on the hidden agendas of group members stay hidden and do not usually affect behavior at this time. The need for group approval is strong. The need for group identity is low or completely absent. Group members participate actively, though unevenly, and usually agree that getting acquainted is important to the group. Conflict is usually absent in this phase.

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Behavioral Rules

The rules of behavior seem to be to keep ideas simple; say acceptable things; avoid controversy; avoid serious topics; if sharing feelings, keep feedback to a minimum; and avoid disclosure.

Nonverbal activities are best to accelerate the Polite stage. By eliminating words, group members respond only to nonverbal behavior. Instead, when conversation and bodily gestures transmit conflicting signals, the Polite stage slows down because group members must spend time to sort out the signals from the noise.

2. WHY WE'RE HERE

When a group is ready to grow beyond the Polite stage, it usually enters the Why We're Here stage. Group members want to know the group's goals and objectives.

Some members demand a written agenda. A branch of managerial science (Management by Objectives) focuses on this step of group maturity. A task-oriented group needs to spend more time in this phase than a personal-growth group. For example, while T-groups will usually discuss establishing a purpose but will not agree on one, a team finds that agreement on goals is essential to group success.

Cliques

In the second phase, cliques start to wield influence. Cliques grow and merge as clique members find a common purpose. Hidden agenda items begin to be sensed as group members try to verbalize group objectives most satisfying to themselves.

Identity as a group is still low. The need for group approval declines from what it was in the Polite stage as group members begin taking risks and displaying commitment. There is usually active participation from all members.

In a T-group, it is not uncommon for participants to look to the trainer to supply a group goal. Structure appears to evolve in this phase.

The time spent in this phase varies widely. Some groups omit it completely, while a few groups will give it most of their allotted time. Much seems to depend on the task to be done. The easier it is to define objectives, the faster a group appears to agree on them. When purpose comes from outside the group, the members will still discuss it in order to gain understanding and to build commitment. The group also needs to know that the purpose agreed on is important.

3. BID FOR POWER

The third stage of the model, Bid for Power, is characterized by competition.

In this phase a group member tries to rationalize his or her own position and to convince the group to take the action he or she feels is appropriate. Other members are closed minded and are accused of not listening. Conflict in the group rises to a higher level than in any other stage of group growth. A struggle for leadership involves active

participation by all cliques, or subgroups. Typical attempts to resolve this struggle include voting, compromise, and seeking arbitration from an outside group.

The group does not feel a strong team spirit during this phase. Rather, some members may feel very uncomfortable as latent hostility is expressed. Some group members, who contribute willingly in earlier phases, remain completely silent in the Bid for Power phase. Other members relish the opportunity to compete and attempt to dominate the group. In T-groups these members may be accused of “bulldozing.”

Cliques take on the greatest importance in this phase. Through cliques, the group members find they can wield more power.

Hidden agenda items cause a behavior change. Members who easily concealed their hidden agendas in earlier stages now find that other group members are becoming aware of these hidden items.

In T-groups, feedback in this phase can be stinging. Disclosure is cautiously attempted. The need for group approval declines below the level in step 2. Group members are willing to go out on a limb and risk the censure of the group. In all groups, creative suggestions fall flat because the group feels that the author wants credit (power) for the suggestion.

The group still does not build an identity in this phase. The range of participation by group members is the widest of any phase. That is, there is a greater difference between the speaking time of the least and the most talkative member in this phase than in any other phase.

The need for structure is strong. In T-groups the content during this phase may well be whether to elect a rotating chairman, a recording secretary, or a group leader. This process is, in reality, a bid for power.

Roles are important in third-phase activity. The group-building and maintenance roles are most important. The harmonizer, the compromiser, the gatekeeper, and the follower try to maintain an acceptable balance between the needs of individual group members and the needs of the group. The harmonizer seeks to reduce the level of conflict to offset the tendency that the aggressor will raise the conflict levels.

Some groups never mature past this stage. Nevertheless, they can fulfill their task, even though the data indicate that solutions arising out of third-phase activity are not optimum solutions; they never satisfy all group members and, at best, are products of compromise.

4. CONSTRUCTIVE

The transition from the third stage (Bid for Power) to the fourth stage (Constructive) is characterized by an attitude change. Group members give up their attempts to control and substitute an attitude of active listening.

In the Constructive stage, group members are willing to change their preconceived ideas or opinions on the basis of facts presented by other members. Individuals actively ask questions of one another. A team spirit starts to build. Cliques begin to dissolve.

Real progress toward the group's goals becomes evident. Leadership is shared. Group identity begins to be important to the group members. The range of participation by members narrows. When conflict arises it is dealt with as a mutual problem rather than a win-lose battle. At this point in a group's growth, it may be difficult to bring in a new member.

Because of members' willingness to listen and to change, a group in this phase will often use the talents of any individual who can contribute effectively. Practical creativity can be high because the group is willing to accept creative suggestions. Furthermore, creative suggestions are solicited by the group, listened to, questioned, responded to, and, if appropriate, acted on.

Depending on the talents of the group members and the problem to be solved, an optimum solution or decision—almost always better than any offered by a single group member—can result from fourth-phase interaction. For this reason some businesses are attempting to organize for “team” group activity.

Any group activities that enhance the basic values of group cooperativeness are appropriate for groups in this phase, such as those based on sharing, helping, listening, anticipating group needs, questioning, and building. Competitive activities at this point tend to disrupt group growth, as they apply gentle pressure to regress to phase 3 (Bid for Power).

Group leaders can be most effective in this phase by asking constructive questions, summarizing and clarifying the group's thinking, trusting the group to achieve its maximum potential, trying to blend in with the group as much as possible, and refraining from making any comments that tend to reward or to punish other group members. An effective group leader will also be tolerant of group members' widely varying abilities to contribute to the group's goals.

5. ESPRIT

The fifth and final phase of group growth is the *Esprit* phase. Here the group feels a high group morale and an intense group loyalty. Relationships between individuals are empathetic. The need for group approval is absent because each group member approves of all others and accepts them as individuals. Both individuality and creativity are high. The overall feeling is that “we don't always agree on everything but we do respect one another's views and agree to disagree.” A nonpossessive warmth and a feeling of freedom result. Cliques are absent.

The group may create an identity symbol. The members participate as evenly as they ever will. The need for structure depends on whether the group is an action group or a learning group; learning groups have no need for structure if they have evolved to this phase.

At this stage, the group is strongly “closed.” If a new member is introduced, the feelings of camaraderie and *esprit* are destroyed, because the group must regress to an

earlier stage and then grow again to the *esprit* stage, carrying the new member along in the process.

A group in this phase continues to be constructive and productive. In fact, such a group usually achieves more than is expected or than can be explained by the apparent talents of the group members.

Hidden Agendas

Although hidden agenda items are present in this phase, they do not seem to detract from the *esprit* and group loyalty. Perhaps group members have granted to themselves and to one another the right to have hidden agendas provided it is productive to do so—for the individual and for the group. Or the trust level may have risen so high that the group trusts each member not to misuse the group loyalty. By this time, the group may be well aware of each member's hidden agenda and may recognize that it holds no threat.

INTERRELATIONSHIPS

Reasons prompting a group to move, or not to move, from one phase to another vary. For example, the transition from phase 1 (Polite) to phase 2 (Why We're Here) seems to occur when any single group member desires it. He or she can simply say, "Well, what's on the agenda today?" and the group will usually move to phase 2.

The ability to listen has been found to be the most important human trait in helping groups move from phase 3 (Bid for Power) to phase 4 (Constructive). In some cases, where the group as a whole desired to relate in the fourth phase while several members stayed rooted in the third phase, groups have been observed to reject these members.

On the other hand, the transition from phase 3 to phase 4 can be permanently blocked by a strong, competitive group member or by that member's clique.

The transition from phase 4 (Constructive) to phase 5 (Esprit), however, seems to require unanimous agreement among group members.

Group cohesiveness seems to depend on how well the group members can relate in the same phase at the same time. A group will proceed through these five stages only as far as its members are willing to grow. Each member must be prepared to give up something at each step in order to make the move to the next stage.

To grow from stage 1 (Polite) to stage 2 (Why We're Here), for example, each member must relinquish the comfort of nonthreatening topics and risk the possibility of conflict.

In the move from stage 2 to stage 3 (Bid for Power), members must put aside a continued discussion of the group's purpose and commit to a purpose with which individual members may not completely agree. Furthermore, members must risk personal attacks, which they know occur in phase 3.

Growing from phase 3 to phase 4 (Constructive) requires individuals to stop defending their own views and to risk the possibility of being wrong. Phase 4 demands some humility.

The step from phase 4 to phase 5 (*Esprit*) demands that a member trust himself or herself and other group members. And to trust is to risk a breach of trust.

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■ YIN/YANG: A PERSPECTIVE ON THEORIES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Anthony G. Banet, Jr.

All human groups are living and ever changing. Issues that were critical in the first session evaporate by the fourth session; the excitement of session three is followed by the ennui of session seven. Moods fluctuate, central concerns wax and wane. The group has a life of its own; its primary characteristic is movement. Groups, like individuals, are unique, but all groups share some similar attributes. These observations, made repeatedly by students of groups, are the bases for theories of group development—statements about the flow of group process over time.

The literature in the fields of group psychotherapy, group dynamics, organization development, and human relations training yields an abundance of theories of group development. Tuckman (1965) reviews sixty-two theories; Hill (1973), once a connoisseur of group theories, states that he ended his hobby when his collection numbered over one hundred specimens. Although theories abound and spring from various observational data, underlying similarities can be discerned.

Three different models of group development emerge: the *linear* model, which regards change as a progressive, straight-line function over time; the *helical* (spiral) model, which sees change as a regressive, whirlpool movement from surface to core issues; and the *cyclical* model, which views change as an interplay of yin and yang energy forces. Approaches to a potential integration of these models are here suggested.

FUNCTIONS OF GROUP-DEVELOPMENT THEORIES

Theories of group development serve descriptive and predictive functions. For the group practitioner, the theory also provides a framework for interventions.

On a descriptive level, developmental theory permits the observer to organize his or her perceptions. During a given slice of group life, verbal behavior, the interaction pattern, emotional climate, or type of content can be characterized and measured. Whatever the observational base, descriptions of group phenomena in a given session can be compared and contrasted with those from a past or future session.

Used predictively, developmental theory enables the observer to forecast the group's future process. The theory describes what should be happening, at least under ideal conditions, so that objectives can be set. The predictive aspect offers comfort to the

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group practitioner: events will not always be as conflicted or sluggish as they appear to be in a given session.

A particular theory also provides the group leader with cues for specific interventions. The leader may want to accelerate the process, slow it down, or freeze or focus it to ensure that a group does not avoid or ignore opportunities for learning. Equipped with theory, the leader may plan or design interventions intended to surface and clarify process issues that he or she regards as important. Developmental theory is a particularly helpful guide to amplifying issues that groups frequently find troublesome: dependency, authority, conflict, power, and intimacy.

Content, Process, and Structure

In a group-development theory, the content, process, and structure of a group are closely interrelated. Content, *what* is being said, verbally and nonverbally, is determined by the group's task, whether it is to make decisions, overcome resistances to growth, or experiment with new behavior. Process refers to *how* a group behaves; process elements include events happening inside individual members, group-level phenomena such as norm development, and contextual (past history, back-home) variables. In the life of a group, content and process are always happening, but the visibility of the process is a function of group structure.

Structure serves as a valve to control the flow of energy between process and content. The structure of the group, which includes such elements as the leader's attitude toward the group and the theory he or she espouses, determines the extent to which content and process are allowed to interrelate and to influence each other. Structure also includes the group's objectives, the contract between the leader and the group, and the ground rules to which the group subscribes. To a lesser extent, structure also refers to the physical environment in which the group lives.

Group structure can be tight and rigid, permitting no process elements to become part of the group's agenda, or it can be so loose that the process becomes the content, as in a T-group. To some extent, the profusion of group-development theories is a result of the variety of group structures. A loose structure may allow fifteen phases of process to surface; a tight structure, only one or two.

The group's structure enables the practitioner to place a selective value on specific process elements and to make decisions regarding the focus of the group. Each intervention becomes a creative decision to enrich the ongoing content with relevant process phenomena. Too much or too little attention to process endangers the group's task function—its reason for being.

At present, no single theory of group development adequately accounts for all group phenomena reported by observers. Events that are commonplace in a Tavistock conference, for instance, may never surface in a team-building session. Individual “implosions” occur in a Gestalt workshop, but rarely in a communication-skills laboratory. Some groups spend half their life working authority issues; others focus on the issue for only minutes before moving on to long periods of affection and intimacy.

These discrepancies seem attributable to the power of a theory of group development to “make it happen”; that is, the theory, as an observational tool, impacts what is being observed. As Butkovich et al. (1975) state in a recent study, there is a strong “possibility that the group leader’s theoretical orientation, as it is reflected in his [or her] interpretations and behavior, is causally related to the very group behavior being interpreted” (p. 9).

This contamination by the observer of what is being observed is prevalent in all applied behavioral science. Contamination does not discredit a theory but serves to remind us that “truth” is always filtered through a human observer with built-in biases and distortions. However, contamination does raise the difficult methodological issue that some process elements (transference, for example) may in truth be artifacts of the observational tool employed. What is reported as a group-process event may exist, instead, only in the minds of the intervener. As Lundgren (1971) has demonstrated, the pace and pattern of group process, as well as specific group phenomena, are directly related to the intervention stance prescribed by the leader’s theory of group development. Therefore, a primary problem in the study of group development theories is distinguishing between the observer and the data.

Another factor accounting for a less-than-comprehensive theory is that different developmental theories focus on different elements of group process. Theories described here as employing a *linear* model focus on group elements of process: the interaction system, group emotion, then normative system, group culture, and the executive system. The linear model views process as progressive. The *helical* model focuses on contextual elements: transference, past history aspects of process, including physical and social contacts, emotional and contractual relations, and the individual’s attitudes toward authority and control. The helical model views process as regressive. The *cyclical* model focuses and amplifies those process elements contributed by the individual member: behavior style; personal feeling state; internalized norms, beliefs, and values; and the ego of the individual. The cyclical model views process as a transcendence of polarities. These elements of process are discussed more fully by Banet (1974).

THE LINEAR MODEL

The group process is viewed by the linear model as an orderly, sequential, progressive movement over time, a straight-line function that passes through predictable phases or stages of growth, paralleling individual growth from conception to maturity. In the linear model, the group is a temporary, intentional community of workers or learners who have banded together to reach some goal. The community life of the group has a definite beginning, middle, and end.

The actual number of phases seen by linear theorists varies considerably, from two (Bennis & Shepherd, 1956) or three phases (Schutz, 1973; Kaplan & Roman, 1963) to ten (Cohen & Smith, 1976) to fifteen (Rogers, 1970). Despite this range of stages, theories embracing the linear model share many similarities. Two representative theories

are discussed here: Schutz's theory of interpersonal needs (Schutz, 1967, 1973) and Tuckman's developmental sequence (Tuckman, 1965).

Schutz's Theory

For Schutz, the initial stage of development for the group is the *inclusion* phase. Major inclusion issues revolve around boundaries, building trust and commitment, determining who is a member and who is not, and maintaining individuality while simultaneously being a group member. Group members are motivated by fear, curiosity, excitement, and the need to include or to be included.

As inclusion issues become resolved, the group moves into a *control* phase, in which concerns of power, dominance, authority, and responsibility are prominent. Feelings of anger, helplessness, and incompetency motivate members to deal with personal power, the authority of the leader, and the influence of other group members. This middle phase is critical for all linear models—it is a period in which the group either disintegrates or becomes cohesive. It is a turning point in the life of the group; if the control phase is avoided, denied, or ignored, group development is retarded.

Following the middle phase is a concluding period of *affection*, cohesion, and intimacy. Major issues are (1) how close or how distant group members want to be with one another, (2) giving and receiving warmth, and (3) how much sharing and disclosure is productive and appropriate. When this phase moves toward conclusion, the life of the group begins to terminate. For Schutz, termination involves a reversal of the stages: affectional relations are ended first, then control relations, and finally inclusion.

Tuckman's Sequence

Having reviewed many theories, Tuckman (1965) postulates that the first stage of group life is one of *testing and dependence*. The group orients itself to group living, testing which behaviors are acceptable and which are taboo. Much attention is focused on the group leader, as group members grope to define their task and their boundaries.

Stage two is a period of *intragroup conflict*. Issues of power and competition dominate group life; the mood of the group is highly emotional and rebellious.

When conflict issues are settled, stage three—*group cohesion*—emerges. In the third stage of group life, openness, positive feedback, and expressions of affection are characteristic.

Stage four is described as a period of *functional role-relatedness*. It is a work stage, characterized by a minimum of emotional interaction. The atmosphere of the group encourages and supports task completion; obstacles have been removed in previous stages. When the group completes its task, it terminates.

Tuckman succinctly describes his four phases of group life as “forming, storming, norming, and performing.”

Characteristics of the Linear Model

The group elements of process—the interpersonal communications network of the community of learners—are the focus of the linear model. While linear theories recognize that all group members may not be in the same psychological place at the same time, the theories assert that certain critical “barometric events” (Bennis & Shepherd, 1956) bring individual members to a similar awareness; thus, *in general*, the members of a group can be regarded as being in a given phase at a given time. The model implies that all groups, regardless of size or task, deal with the same issues in the same sequence.

The intervention style derived from the linear model emphasizes building awareness of the phases of development, amplifying issues specific to a given phase, and preventing premature movement. In fact, a major concern of interventionists using the linear model is that members will tend to deny the existence of the difficult middle phase (power, control, conflict) in their eagerness to get to a cohesive, affectionate state.

The linear model enjoys broad usage. Many theories describing task groups, social systems, and work teams incorporate the linear view; for Schutz, the phases are most visible in the encounter group (Schutz, 1973). In part, the popularity of the linear model is due to its compatibility with the usual way of regarding personality development; in many such theories, the individual passes through phases until maturity is reached. See, for example, Erikson (1963) and Kohlberg (1964).

Several shortcomings of the linear model should be noted. As Hare (1973) comments, the assumption that a group moves from phase to phase needs further documentation, since linear theorists typically do not discuss the process of development in any detail; rather, they simply observe that one phase follows another. The model does not clarify how this sequencing happens, nor does it explain why one group may remain in a given phase for six months, while another passes that stage in three weeks.

The linear model reflects a world view that is peculiar to Western culture. Referring to the linear model as a “staircase” model, Kahn et al. (1974) list some important consequences of viewing development as a progressive, ever-upward moving line. Such an attitude suggests that permanence is the only good, and that the top of the line is the only spot worth attaining. As Kahn and his associates see it, the linear model encourages judgment and categorization, rather than acceptance and experiencing, and focuses a group on future events, rather than on the present. In short, the linear model suggests that the destination is more valuable and important than the journey to it.

Theories using the linear model receive a fuller discussion in Bennis and Shepherd (1956), Charrier (1974), Cohen and Smith (1976), Gibbard, Hartman, and Mann (1974), Hare (1973), Jones (1973), Kaplan and Roman (1963), Rogers (1970), Schutz (1973), and Tuckman (1965).

THE HELICAL MODEL

The helical model of group development views the group process as a regressive, spiraling, ever-deepening focus on a few prominent issues peculiar to a given group. The themes and issues worked in the group follow no particular order; once a theme is surfaced, however, it will develop in a fairly predictable pattern, from its surface aspect to its deepest level of significance. Group process moves in a whirlpool fashion; it gains momentum and suctional power as it burrows deeper and deeper.

The group is perceived as a metaphoric tribe that comes together to achieve security, physical safety, and support in times of stress. The group also provides members an opportunity to gain selfhood and significance (Klein, 1968).

At its inception, the group begins a regression away from its obvious, manifest level, down to its latent or hidden meaning. The group acquires allegorical and mythological meaning for its members (Dunphy, 1968); it may begin to recapitulate the dynamics of a primal horde (Ezriel, 1950), a primitive family, or a religious group. In other views, the group is seen as a microcosm (Slater, 1966), a reenactment of the Oedipal conflict (Gibbard & Hartman, 1973), or the “good breast” of a nurturing mother (Scheidlinger, 1974). This regression to allegorical levels is encouraged by the structure of the group, especially the posture of the leader, in the belief that by reliving past events, a “corrective emotional experience” (Alexander, 1956) will occur, enabling the group and its members to gain a fresh perspective of self and to achieve perceptual and behavioral reorganization.

The group dwells in this regressive space for some period of time. Only after core issues such as dependency, autonomy, aggression, and sexuality are resolved does the group emerge from the depths of the whirlpool to work on present problems and solutions. During the regressive period, the group’s process is erratic and disconnected, marked by conflict and motivated by strong, primitive emotionality. The group process reenacts the turmoil and stress of childhood and adolescence; the flow is choppy and is frequently interrupted by new issues. In its regression, the group develops a cohesion (usually motivated by antagonism toward the leader) and takes on the characteristics of an organism that is in some ways greater than the sum of its parts.

Bion’s Theory

Bion (1959) is the principal theorist of the helical model. His central notion is that in every group, two “groups” are actually present: the *work* group and the *basic-assumption* group. The work group is that aspect of group functioning that has to do with the real task of the group. For example, designing a program, passing a resolution, completing a report, or changing behavior are real tasks. But groups do not always function sensibly or productively—they do not always focus on the task. To explain why groups do not always work well, Bion introduced the notion of the basic-assumption group.

Basic assumption is an “as if” term. The group behaves *as if* a certain assumption is basic to its maintenance, growth, and survival. These basic assumptions are covert; they constitute the group’s hidden agenda. The basic assumptions derive from the collective repressed feelings of all the group members.

From his experiences in groups, Bion identifies three distinct types of basic assumptions:

1. *Basic-assumption dependency.* The essential aim of this emotional state is to attain security and protection from one individual, usually the leader. The group behaves as if it is stupid, incompetent, or psychotic; only a powerful, omniscient, Godlike leader can perform the task functions. When the leader fails to meet the (impossible) demands of the group, it expresses its disappointment and hostility in a variety of ways.
2. *Basic-assumption fight-flight.* Here, the group assumes it can survive only if it flees from the task (by withdrawal, regression, or focusing on past history) or if it fights (by aggression, scapegoating, etc.). A leader who is accepted is one who is willing to afford the group an opportunity for flight or aggression.
3. *Basic-assumption pairing.* In this state the basic assumption is that the group has come together for reproductive purposes. Any bond between two or more group members is seen as a sexual bond that will give birth to a Messiah who will save the group by providing it with new life, new thoughts, and a creative way to work on the task. Magic is the solution that is hoped for.

Turquet (1974) has added a fourth type of basic assumption—*basic-assumption oneness*, in which the group seeks to join in a powerful union with an omnipotent force, unobtainably exalted, to surrender itself to passive participation, and thereby to feel “existence,” well-being, and wholeness.

The basic-assumption life of the group is oriented inward toward fantasy, not outward toward reality. The basic assumptions are anonymous; they cannot be attributed to any one member. Individuals vary in their readiness (which Bion calls “valency”) to combine with a given basic assumption of the group. Some members, as well as the leader, may find it easier to collude with dependency themes, others with flight reactions, etc.

The work group requires concentration, skill, and organization of all resources in the group, as well as cooperation from its members. The basic-assumption group, on the other hand, exists without effort. A group will stay locked into its basic assumptions until some resolution is reached that permits the group to move on to a work level. The basic-assumption life of the group is never exhausted, but it can be deliberately bracketed or suppressed.

An excellent introduction to Bion’s theory is provided by Rioch (1970); Colman and Bexton (1975) present extensions and applications of the basic-assumption approach.

Characteristics of the Helical Model

Providing the theoretical basis for many kinds of psychotherapy groups, the helical model has as a major strength its thoroughness in dealing with difficult issues and its unwavering belief that “the child is father to the man.” The model attempts to provide group members with an opportunity to reorganize their current personality patterns by correcting the errors of the past. Like the linear model, which avoids the present moment by focusing on the future, the helical model avoids the now, but by focusing on the past. It stresses the belief that the past has much to teach us; we cannot confidently move on until we have digested its lessons. As Santayana said, “Those who do not remember the mistakes of history are condemned to repeat them.”

Additionally, the model provides the group with an opportunity to confront the uncomfortable realities of life: pain, suffering, tragedy, and death. Through its focus on history, the model counterbalances the optimism and the idea of progress implicit in the linear model.

The helical model prescribes a central role for the group leader, who functions in the group not as a person but as a role—a role that encourages projection and regression. The coolness and distance of the leader quickly elicit basic-assumption behavior. As the group intensifies, the leader interprets, confronts, and weaves connections between present behavior and past experience, in an effort to make the unconscious conscious.

The intervention stance of helical-model theories focuses on contextual aspects of group process. Past history, emotional relations outside the group, and the individual member’s position in relation to authority, responsibility, and control provide the primary process data for the group’s considerations.

The leader’s central role is a critical shortcoming of helical-model theories. The leader seems constantly to be saying to the group, “I see something you don’t see.” This posture creates dependency on the perceptual accuracy of the leader and his or her skill in surfacing and working with unconscious material. This dependency carries the implication that group work is a long-term investment for the group member.

Personality theories that stress the importance of early childhood experience—psychoanalysis, ego psychology, general psychodynamic theory, and transactional analysis—are compatible with the helical model of change.

Group theories using the helical model can be found in Bion (1959), Burrow (1928), Ezriel (1950), Foulkes and Anthony (1957), Gibbard and Hartman (1973), Saravay (1975), Scheidlinger (1974), Slater (1966), Slavson (1950), and Whitaker and Lieberman (1967). For the most part, the psychotherapy group has provided the observational base for these theories.

THE CYCLICAL MODEL

The group process is in constant motion, never at rest, in the cyclical model. The process is continuous and persistent; like the phases of the moon and tides, the seasons, and

other natural phenomena, the group life moves through a cycle until it returns, with subtle alterations, to its starting point.

In the cyclical model, the group is a collection of individuals who have gathered together to divine the principle of change that governs their lives and to discover a way to order their behavior in accordance with that principle. The group is less a community than it is a theater—an energy field where individual growth and change unfolds.

No current theory of group development directly defines the cyclical model of change. However, the cyclical model is implied in the practice of those groups that focus on personal, individual change within the group context. The model provides a basis for understanding the Gestalt group and other groups that stress intrapersonal learning.

Philosophical Aspects

Because the cyclical model is not as well known as the linear and helical models, a discussion of its philosophical aspects is provided here. We live in a world of permanent change, where all phenomena are dynamic and in flux. This observation dates back at least to 500 B.C., when Heraclitus in Greece and Confucius in China compared the constant movement of experience to the ever-changing flow of a river.

The dynamism of experience has met different responses in Eastern and Western thought. Western thinkers have tended to abstract from experience, “freezing” phenomena so that they can be subjected to scientific investigation. Hence, change tends to be seen in a linear mode, a static progression from phase to phase.

In contrast, the Eastern mode has been to acknowledge the flow of experience and to search for the law of change, itself unchanging, which governs this flow. The name given to this governing principle is *Tao*. *Tao* is one; out of *Tao* comes the energy of yin, the receptive principle, and yang, the active principle. Change is viewed as natural movement and development, in accord with *Tao*. The opposite of change is regression; as H. Wilhelm (1960) puts it, “the opposite of change in Chinese thought is growth of what ought to decrease, the downfall of what ought to rule” (p. 18).

Tao defies definition, as Chungyuan (1963) states: “The understanding of *Tao* is an inner experience in which distinction between subject and object vanishes. It is an intuitive, immediate awareness rather than a mediated, inferential or intellectual process” (p. 19). The *Tao* is the way, the ultimate principle, the great interfusion of being and nonbeing. Despite this ineffability, the yin/yang energy flowing from *Tao* has acquired highly practical embodiments in Chinese culture: acupuncture, T’ai Chi and other martial arts, centering, calligraphy—all are manifestations of and approaches to *Tao*.

The I Ching

Perhaps the most eloquent description of the interplay of yin/yang energy is in the ancient oracle and scripture, the *I Ching*. The *I Ching*, or Book of Changes, applies this concept of change to human phenomena—individual lives, groups, and organizations. It proposes a cyclical theory of change, change as a movement that returns to its starting

point. Change is orderly, as is the movement of the tides or the seasons, but its orderliness is not always perceptible. In human situations, the forces of yin and yang produce complex configurations. As a book of wisdom, the *I Ching* invites its user to pursue *Tao*, a state of resonance with the Oneness of actuality (Dhiegh, 1974), by discovering the proper time for correct action.

The *I Ching* has as its basis the two fundamental principles of *yin*, characterized as the receptive and the docile and symbolized by the broken line (— —), and *yang*, characterized as the creative and active and symbolized by an unbroken line (——). In sets of three, the broken and unbroken lines compose the eight *pa kua* (trigrams), signs associated with natural phenomena and basic aspects of human experience.

Combined in all possible ways, the eight *pa kua* produce sixty-four six-line *kua* (hexagrams), which symbolize various elementary aspects of the human condition: primary needs, such as nourishment; personality-development milestones, such as breakthrough, pushing upward, or retreat; social situations, such as marriage, following, or conflict; and individual character traits, such as modesty, grace, and enthusiasm. The sixty-four hexagrams comprise a psychological “periodic table of elements” from which immediate, here-and-now situations are composed.

The eight *pa kua* provide descriptions of the basic polarities of life:

1. Ch’ien (☰), the creative, heaven. The sign is associated with energy, strength, and excitement. It represents the pole of creative power.
2. K’un (☷), the receptive, earth, is associated with the womb, nourishment, the great wagon of the earth that carries all life. It represents the pole of yielding, docile receptivity.
3. Chen (☳), the arousing, thunder. It is associated with movement, speed, expansion, and anger. In terms of human polarities, the sign represents confrontation.
4. Sun (☴), the gentle, penetrating wind. It is associated with gentle persuasion, quiet decision making, and problem solving. The sign represents the pole of support.
5. K’an (☵), the abysmal, water. It is associated with toil, hard work, danger, perseverance, and melancholy. It represents the pole of body and feeling.
6. Li (☲), the clinging, fire. It is associated with dependency, but also with clarity and perception. It represents the pole of intellect and thought.
7. Ken (☶), keeping still, the mountain. It is associated with fidelity, meditation, watchfulness. It represents the pole of reflective silence.
8. T’ui (☱), the joyous, lake. The sign is associated with the pleasures of the mouth—eating, talking, singing. It represents the pole of joyful interaction.

The eight *pa kua* are arranged in a circle of polar opposites known as the “primal arrangement,” or the “mandala of earlier heaven.” (See Figure 1.)

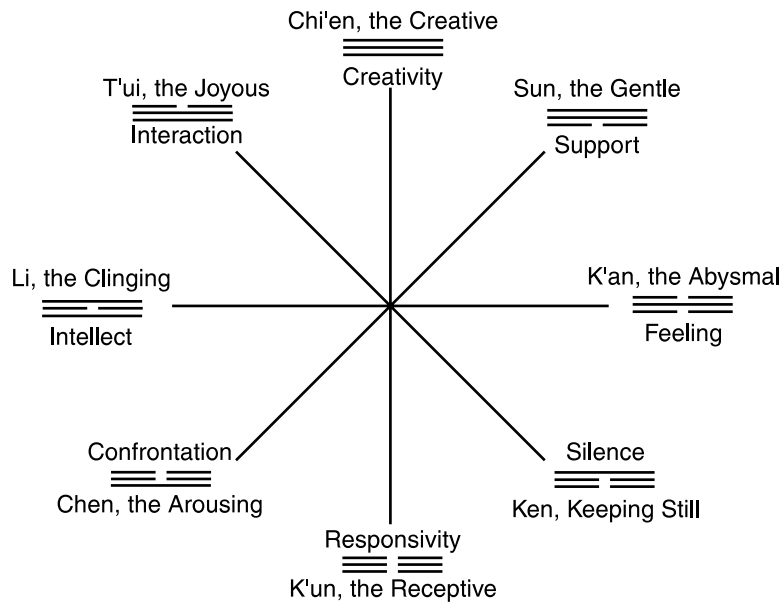


Figure 1. The *Pa Kua* Arranged as Basic Polarities, the “Primal Arrangement,” or the “Mandala of Earlier Heaven”

Implications for a Theory of Group Process

The philosophy of *Tao* and the forces of yin and yang as presented in the *I Ching* have implications for a theory of group process.

1. The group can be viewed as an energy field demarcated by the basic polarities, as in Figure 1. In each member, and in the group as a whole, there is tension between the apparent choices of creative-receptive, confrontation-support, intellect-feeling, and interaction-silence.
2. Initially, group members attempt to deal with their process by adhering to polar positions. This is an attempt to “freeze” movement, deny change, or place values on the respective polar opposites.
3. Group process proceeds as the group develops awareness of its polarized situation. This awareness leads to a struggle to find creative ways to resolve the interplay of yin and yang forces. Paradoxically, this creative struggle develops two new aspects of group life: the appreciation of the now, and the potential to transcend the polarized field of apparent opposites.
4. The group process is analogous to a roller-coaster ride (Kahn et al., 1974). Energy waxes and wanes; it never stops. The process goes up and down; moments of group life are different from one another, but not better or worse, immature or more mature. As Kahn et al. (1974) suggest, “at any given moment things are as good and important and worth attending to as they are ever going to be. [The model] urges us to attend to the here-and-now because no future here-and-now is going to be any better, just different” (pp. 4344). Focus on the now

(now-consciousness) is the dynamic unification of past and future in the present moment (Dhiegh, 1974).

5. The group members, by focusing on the now, begin to test synergistic strategies to deal with the apparent polar opposites. Synergy, as defined by Hampden-Turner (1970), refers to “a state of mutual enhancement” between two opposites, an affective and intellectual synthesis that is greater than the sum of its parts.

Synergy allows the group and its members to free themselves from either/or thinking. Synergy is neither compromise nor striving for a “golden mean”; it is a creative combination (conception of a human being from egg and sperm is the highest form of synergy) of opposites to produce something new. Synergy, in the words of Harris (1972), involves grasping a paradox and holding it in creative tension.

6. Groups are unique and idiosyncratic. Each group presents opportunities for growth. Polarities, which are critical issues for some groups or some group members, are nonissues for others. Resolutions or synergistic combinations of polarities will vary from person to person, from group to group.

The cycle of group process follows this course: (1) a struggle to deny change by clinging to polarities, resolved by (2) appreciation of the now and the discovery of the governing principle of change, allowing (3) attempts at synergy to transcend or mutually enhance the polar opposites, followed by (4) the product of the synergy becoming a new pole, awaiting a new struggle to “freeze” change, thereby completing the cycle. The cycle is a dialectic process, subtly changing while remaining much the same.

Characteristics of the Cyclical Model

The intervention stance of the cyclical model focuses on individual-member elements. The major strategy is to amplify minute physical or verbal events so that an appreciation of now and an awareness of polarity can occur. It focuses on the individual’s cycle of “becoming, begetting, begoning” (Dhiegh, 1974); as in a theater, only one member or a small cluster of members “perform” at a given time.

The model links human events with other natural phenomena and teaches the ancient philosophy of *Tao*, which aims for personal centeredness and integrity in a world of turmoil and conflict. Central to the cyclical model derived from *I Ching* is the idea that man is in the center of events: it is the individual’s responsibility to know the direction of cosmic change and to move in the direction of change, not against it (H. Wilhelm, 1960). The intervention stance reflects this; the group leader provides a constant focus on the individual’s responsibility to “own” his or her change process.

Discussion of the cyclical model of change can be found in Dhiegh (1973, 1974), Fuller (1975), Kahn et al. (1974), and H. Wilhelm (1960). Personality-development theories that imply a cyclical model of change are presented by Allport (1955), Hampden-Turner (1971), and Polster and Polster (1973).

TOWARD INTEGRATION

Cardinal aspects of the three models of change are summarized in Table 1. The models and theories that contain them are attempts to understand what happens in human groups. The observational bases of the models differ. (The table provides an illustration of the old Sufi story of the blind men and the elephant. Each man touched a different part of the beast and concluded that the elephant was like a rug, or a hose, or a pillar.) Questions arise: Can there be one theory of group process? Is integration possible? How can the group practitioner use this abundance of theoretical formulation?

Table 1. A Summary of the Characteristics of the Linear, Helical, and Cyclical Models of Change

GROUP MODEL			
Characteristic	Linear	Helical	Cyclical
Group Movement	Progressive	Regressive	Cyclical
Group Metaphor	Community	Tribe	Theater
Time focus	Future	Past	Now
Goal	Completion	Corrective Emotional Experience	Synergy
Tension Source	Desire to Improve	Desire to Understand	Desire to Transcend
Intervention Focus	Group Elements	Contextual Elements	Individual Elements
Observation Base	Interpersonal	Historical	Interpersonal
Representative Theory	Schutz	Bion	<i>I Ching</i>
Personality Theory Correlated with Model	Erickson	Freud	Hampden-Turner
Strength	Easy to Understand	Comprehensive	Nature-Based
Drawback	Static	Dependency on Group Leader	Paradoxical
Usual Application	Encounter Groups, Task Groups, Social Systems	Many Psychotherapy Groups	Gestalt Groups, Personal Growth Groups

As one option, an integrated theory would offer several benefits. Reducing the profusion of terms would heighten conceptual clarity; a comprehensive view would enable a group to capitalize on all or most of the data it produces. Sharing of techniques derived from different theories would broaden and enrich the practitioner's intervention repertoire.

Some solid attempts at integration have been made. Schutz, although espousing a linear model, has incorporated some cyclical aspects in his interpersonal-needs approach; as a group concludes its movement through stages of inclusion, control, and affection, it recycles and begins working the same issues, but on a different level of intensity and meaning (Schutz, 1973). Kaplan and Roman (1963) postulate that a helical

regression occurs before a group enters its linear phases of dependency, power, and intimacy. Bennis and Shepherd (1956) employ a synergistic union of polarities in their initial authority-relations phase, in which dependence and counterdependence themes collide, to be resolved by the emergence of an independence theme. Butkovich and his associates (1975) report a combination of approaches derived from the linear and helical models to understand T-groups and Tavistock groups.

These partial integrations have proved useful in group work, providing insights for the understanding of group phenomena. They do not account sufficiently for the influence of the individual on the group process. Linear and helical models deal primarily with the group; the cyclical model, with the individual. That hybrid creature, the individual-in-the-group, provides the central dilemma for an integrated model.

Eclecticism, a time-honored system in the practical arts, provides another option. Most of us live with a pastiche of conflicting viewpoints and choose, as the situation demands, the one that seems most useful at the moment. We may believe, on an intellectual level, that a chair is a moving collection of molecules, but we expect it to be solid when we sit down. Alas, the theory that simultaneously meets the needs of our head and our behind is a rarity indeed.

Eclecticism permits the practitioner to respond to a critical incident in the group by reviewing the objectives of the group and the needs of the members and then selecting the intervention from a theory base that seems most productive for learning. The eclectic stance permits the practitioner to shape his or her own theory and allows the leader to be present both as a person and a role.

A possible, unfortunate side effect of an eclectic approach is a choppy, uneven flow in the group process. Groups seen through a Tavistock viewpoint in one session, a Gestalt in a second, and an interpersonal-needs theory in the third session can become confused and unproductive.

Scaffold for an Integrated Theory

The following propositions sketch the elements of an integrated model and constitute a first attempt to collate the salient features of several theories. The propositions have as a data base the author's observations of phenomena in psychotherapy, growth, and task groups, as well as the observations and findings of other investigators of group behavior.

The integrated model posits a series of dialectic confrontations, which occur within group members and within the group as a whole. The dialectic consists of interplay between the constructs of yin and yang, viewed as energies in polar opposition to the potential for synergistic fusion.¹ The series of polar confrontations occurs within phases, similar to those described by Tuckman (1965) as "forming, storming, norming, performing." These phases repeat themselves, in a spiraling fashion, until some degree

¹ The term "contrapletion," which expresses both the polar opposition and the capacity of the poles to complement or fulfill each other, can be used to describe the yin/yang relationship.

of wholeness or integration is reached, or until the group artificially terminates or abandons its task.

The ancient Chinese scripture *The Secret of the Golden Flower* (R. Wilhelm, 1962) describes a similar intrapersonal dialectic as an individual moves toward enlightenment. This text and Jung's commentary detail a circular movement in which the union of opposites occurs repeatedly until a higher state of consciousness is reached. The cyclical movement continues until all disparate body and human events are integrated (by transcendence or death) into the oneness of *Tao*.²

In this integrated model, the confrontation of polarities occurring within individuals is seen as impacting the group constellation as well. The group is not only a theater in which individuals struggle to deal with change; it is also an event in itself that develops and attempts to integrate its energy sources.

The group, as its etymology indicates, is a knot composed of many threads, stronger and more complex than its components.

Appended to the group-process propositions are references to *I Ching kua* that illuminate the dynamics of a particular phase. The *I Ching* serves remarkably well as a guidebook for both the group leader and the group members as they collectively pursue their task. The richness of the *I Ching's* wisdom applied to group work can only be suggested here, but the text of the eighth *kua*, "Holding Together," may serve to illustrate the advice it offers for beginning groups.

8. Pi: Holding Together (Union)

The Judgment

Holding together brings good fortune
Inquire of the oracle once again
Whether you possess sublimity
 constancy and perseverance;
Then there is no blame.
Those who are uncertain gradually join.
Whoever comes too late
Meets with misfortune.

What is required is that we unite with others, in order that all may complement and aid one another through holding together. But such holding together calls for a central figure around whom other persons may unite. To become a center of influence holding people together is a grave matter and fraught with grave responsibility. It requires greatness of spirit, consistency and strength. Therefore, let him who wishes to gather others about him ask himself whether he is equal to the undertaking, for anyone attempting the task without a real calling for it only makes confusion worse than if no union at all had taken place.

But when there is a real rallying point, those who at first are hesitant or uncertain gradually come in of their own accord. Late-comers must suffer the consequences, for in holding together the question of the right time is also important. Relationships are formed and firmly established

² Western description of polar opposites that define certain personality types can be found in the poet Yeats's *A Vision* (1956). For a brilliant discussion of polar forces operating in society and history, see Thompson's *At the Edge of History* (1972).

according to definite inner laws. Common experiences strengthen these ties, and he who comes too late to share in these basic experiences must suffer for it. (R. Wilhelm, 1950, p. 36)

Basic Premises of an Integrated Theory

Following are the premises on which this integrated theory is based.

1. Change happens naturally. Change is the interplay of yin and yang energy and not the result of frustration, conflict, disequilibrium, or a search for homeostasis; change simply is.
2. The group provides a setting for focused and accelerated change. Groups exist to facilitate, intensify, and enrich the change process.
3. The primary task of any group is to respond creatively to change.
4. The energy of individual members and of the group is distributed as yin and yang forces.
 - a. *Yin* forces take the form of passivity, docility, receptivity, and simplicity. The yin posture of individuals and of groups is one of waiting to be acted on, yielding, and accepting.
 - b. *Yang* forces take the form of activity, creativity, excitement, and firmness. The yang posture of individuals and groups is one of acting, confronting, and inviting.
5. Every group presents a unique constellation of yin and yang forces, a composite contributed by all group members, including the leader.

Propositions Regarding Group Process

The kaleidoscope provides an image of group process. As yin/yang forces begin to interface, they move subtly and delicately, providing a constant movement through phases. The phases, or movements, are named for appropriate hexagrams from the *I Ching*; each is demarcated by the basic polarities of the mandala of earlier heaven. (See Figure 1.) The sets of polar opposites “govern” a given movement; that is, a given set epitomizes the polar opposition of a given movement.

Initial Movement: Gathering Together

The movement is governed by the creative/receptive polarity. The group perceives yang forces residing in the group leader, yin forces residing within itself. The group acclimates itself to its setting; feelings involved are excitement, apprehension, and confusion. The immediate task for the group is developing an awareness and appreciation of the collective situation.

This initial period finds representation in most theories of group development. It involves a basic orientation toward the group situation, a settling in. Major issues revolve around defining self, defining the task, and defining the function of the group

and the leader. The movement concludes when there is general agreement that change is in fact possible in the group, whether it is changing behavior, making a decision, or solving a problem.

Kua that illuminate this phase include the following: 1. The Creative; 2. The Receptive; 3. Difficulty at the Beginning; 8. Holding Together; 10. Conduct; 17. Following; 31. Influence; 42. Increase; 45. Gathering Together; and 48. The Well.

Second Movement: Standstill

The movement is governed by the thinking/feeling polarity. The awareness of the possibility of change, begun in the initial phase, is now met by a denial of the possibility of and need for change. Group members adhere to one or another polar opposite, dichotomize their options, and develop an either/or mentality. Splits between thinking and feeling, between body and mind are fixated. The feeling level is marked by a clinging dependency on old ways and a resistance to accept the dangers that work and change involve.

This polarizing effect of early group interaction is documented in the work of Myers and Lamm (1975). After some initial effort to alter previously held positions, group members revert to their previous, pregroup stance and fight to maintain it. This phenomenon, variously described as regression or resistance, seems to occur when the group is perceived as an arena wherein bedrock values, beliefs, and world views can be challenged.

In the standstill phase occur many of the regressive phenomena described by Bion as the “basic-assumption” group. The movement is marked by tension and working; it begins to change into the following movement when an issue that is of magnitude and moment for most group members emerges.

Kua associated with this phase are the following: 6. Conflict; 12. Standstill; 13. Fellowship with Men; 19. Approach; 29. The Abysmal; 30. The Clinging, Fire; 35. Progress; 44. Coming to Meet; 46. Pushing Upward; and 49. Revolution.

Third Movement: Biting Through

The kaleidoscope continues. The third movement is governed by the confrontation/support polarity. Group members develop a greater awareness of possibilities for change. There is a heightened arousal of feeling and a greater need for nourishment. Letting go of polar positions releases power and energy, motivating the group to attempt to grasp the paradox that mutual enhancement of apparent opposites can occur. The group struggles to redistribute yin/yang forces; members impact the leader; the leader impacts the group.

This movement is marked by the emergence of a “both/and” attitude, which replaces “either/or” thinking. Power and authority are seen as residing both in the group and in its members. It is the central period in many theories of group development. When the smoke clears and new learnings (insights, solutions) are apparent, the movement concludes and enters the fourth period.

Kua that illuminate this phase are the following: 6. Conflict; 16. Enthusiasm; 21. Biting Through; 23. Splitting Apart; 33. Retreat; 38. Opposition; 34. Obstruction; 41. Decrease; 51. The Arousing; 57. The Gentle; and 28. Preponderance of the Great.

Fourth Movement: The Taming Power of the Great

The movement is governed by the interaction/silence polarity. The group creatively achieves a degree of synergistic fusion. The feelings are focused on enjoyment of the new and the now. Reflective, meditative, incorporative silence coexists with playful and pleasurable interaction with others. The task seems completed; needs are for closure, repose, quiet.

This movement is marked by integration and celebration. Much work is accomplished; previously difficult issues are simply and easily resolved. There are attempts to “freeze” change; a group may end its work here. As it develops awareness that its apparent terminal point also offers the possibility for a new beginning, the group fades into its fifth movement.

Kua associated with this phase are the following: 11. Peace; 20. Contemplation; 26. The Taming of the Great; 27. Nourishment; 32. Duration; 37. The Family; 40. Deliverance; 50. The Caldron; 52. Keeping Still; 58. The Joyous; 61. Inner Truth; and 63. After Completion.

Fifth Movement: Return

The circulation is finished, temporarily; the group is at a new starting point. The kaleidoscope is rearranged; new polarities, the recently gained synergistic fusions, provide a field for new beginnings and greater closeness to *Tao*. The cycle spirals onward.

Kua associated with this phase are the following: 24. Return; 34. The Power of the Great; 43. Breakthrough; 49. Dispersion; and 64. Before Completion.

CONCLUSION

This theory is presented to be studied, tested, and then thrown away. As Kahn and his colleagues (1974) observe, theory itself is part of the flow of change: “Even as we grasp it and write it down, it becomes inadequate, melting away” (p. 51).

Another Sufi story (Shah, 1972) provides a conclusion. Four people were given a piece of money. The first was a Persian, who said, “I will use the money to buy *Angur*.” The second was an Arab, who said, “No, because I want *Inab*.” The third was a Turk, who said, “I do not want *Inab*, I want *Uzum*.” The fourth, a Greek, said, “I want *Stafil*.” Because these four had information but no knowledge, they started to fight.

One person of wisdom present could have reconciled them all by saying, “I can fulfill the needs of all of you, with one and the same piece of money. If you honestly give me your trust, your one coin will become as four, and four at odds will become as one united.”

Such a person would know that each in his own language wanted the same thing: grapes.

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■ ACCELERATING THE STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

John J. Scherer

The ten-day group-development laboratory experience is now hard to find. Only a few training organizations can still get people for a long-term event. It is clear that such events have certain benefits over short-term groups:

1. There are more chances for participants to focus again and again on their dysfunctional and functional behaviors and to receive feedback.
2. More opportunity exists for a participant to “digest” the experience.
3. Members can watch the trainer at work for a longer period of time, making it more possible for them to discern key factors in group leadership skills.
4. There is an increased likelihood that the group will make more progress through its stages of development and that more time can be spent making these shifts clearer to participants.
5. More opportunities for lecturettes and other plenary sessions exist without reducing group time significantly, thus keeping the theory and experience balanced.
6. With more time to devote to it, transfer of learning to backhome arenas and closure are much easier.

Most of us, however, have to settle for a weekend-length experience with client groups. This shortening of the critical group time available can seriously jeopardize these optimum learning goals, thus offering trainers a significant challenge: how to have a high-quality, high-impact group learning experience in three to four days.

Discussed here are eight design features that have come together over the past six years of seeking ways to retain the vivid learning impact of longer events while compacting the time to a long weekend (Thursday evening through Sunday noon).

There are certain factors, however, that might limit the applicability of these concepts to other client groups. The participants implied in this discussion are, for the most part, mid-career professionals from a wide variety of fields, male and female, about thirty-five years old, with all participants enrolled in either an eighteen-to-twenty-month or a two-summer, six-week residency master of arts program in applied

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behavioral science. These participants have had limited experience in the laboratory method of learning, including exposure to staff members who will conduct the event, and have had prior contact with their fellow participants. In other words, the concepts discussed here have not been applied to a typical residential laboratory group of strangers.

Some or all of these design factors, however, taken singly or in combination, can have application in different settings and may prompt similar kinds of positive results in accelerating group development while retaining impact and quality. Hoylman (1979) reports successfully using several of these design features with an NTL laboratory group of strangers.

THE GOALS OF THE LABORATORY GROUP EXPERIENCE

Historically there have been several different goals and names for group learning experiences. The prototype, the classic Bethel “sensitivity training group” of the late forties,¹ had as a major focus sensitizing participants *not* to their feelings (a later development more accurately called an “encounter group”) but to social processes, primarily racial prejudice, being acted out in the group (Bradford, 1974, pp. 4f). Later trainers realized the powerful individual impact of the group experience and began using the sensitivity training groups (by then shortened to “T-groups”) as settings to promote personal growth, with a de-emphasis on group dynamics learning goals (Schutz, 1967, p. 22). (Also see Burton, 1969.) Organization development consultants saw in the T-group a vehicle for softening rigid work-team norms that were inhibiting trust, for working through interpersonal tangles, and for learning communication skills (Fordyce & Weil, 1971; Jacobs & Spradlin, 1974; Schein & Bennis, 1965). Innovative educators began to capitalize on the remarkable capacity of the T-group to open learners to receive new concepts; they believed that the group’s subtle democratization process would also reduce the authority dilemmas so often faced by teachers in dependent/counterdependent students (Schmuck & Schmuck, 1974). Church workers, pastors, youth leaders, and educators have adapted the T-group to utilize the group’s powerful, life-changing, and “peak experience” capability, as well as employing it as an arena for caring and learning to share more deeply (see Casteel, 1968, for one example).

These various uses and goals for the T-group tend to overlap in actual practice. All the group phenomena—personal growth, awareness of group processes, learning, norm changing, trust formation, communication-skills development, feedback growing out of hereandnow experiences—will likely happen in almost any T-group because of the anxious ambiguity of the situation and the basic needs of the participants to move toward competence (HampdenTurner, 1972). Trainers can, however, deflect or support certain aspects of the group’s life, setting norms that ultimately help shape the outcomes of the group. This paradox—that these phenomena can happen on their own but that

¹ See “Sensitivity Training (T-Groups)” in M. Sashkin, “A Brief Glossary of Frequently Used Terms in Organization Development and Planned Change,” in the Resources section of Pfeiffer & Jones (1980).

they can also be influenced by both the participants and the trainer—makes the goal orientation of the leader and the participants a significant factor in influencing the outcomes of the group experience.

The design factors described here are aimed at accelerating the development of the group experience as a laboratory in which the primary goal is learning to “see” group phenomena in action and the way individual behaviors affect the group’s development. As a colleague, Bob Crosby (1971), says it, “A T-group has a *curriculum*: group dynamics.” The goal is transferring the learning so that participants will be able to discern the same dynamics at work in back-home groups and attempt more effective interventions there. If the participant has a powerful life-changing experience (as many do) of an existential or therapeutic nature, it is a serendipitous happenstance, but not a primary goal. Training practitioners in the applied behavioral sciences is the major aim, and the group experience is designed primarily for learning about group processes.

DESIGN FEATURES FOR ACCELERATING GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Preparation Before the Event

Two important factors enable participants to enter the group in an increased state of readiness for learning:

1. *Knowledge about and basic skill practice in communication.* The concepts of behavior description, paraphrasing, description of feelings, perception checking, the interpersonal gap (Wallen, 1968), and distinctions between personalness and openness (Crosby, 1971) are taught, and participants practice these skills. One way to view the group experience is as an arena to integrate these skills.
2. *Developing a context in which to place the group experience.* Learnings about group processes and basic communications are a core for understanding many other practitioner skills, such as how task groups function, the consulting process, and organizational dynamics. A larger context is the history of the T-group and the contrasts between the T-group, encounter group, and therapy group (Cohen & Smith, 1976).

Starting with a Group-on-Group Activity

The group-on-group activity has been a stock item in many a trainer’s repertoire. One consultant (Porter, 1978) recently reported that in a week-long group he co-facilitated some years ago, groups were kept in a group-on-group process for the whole seven days, with what he believed were very positive results. Many others have used shorter versions of the group-on-group activity to teach observation and feedback skills. (See examples in Pfeiffer & Jones, 1972/1980.)

A suggested design is to *begin* the weekend experience by pairing groups for a group-on-group arrangement at the first session. A brief introduction of how this process

can help participants and groups get started usually leads into some variation of the following basic design:

Group A inside	15 minutes
Reflect with partner/observer from the other group	5 minutes
Group A back inside	15 minutes
Rotate	
Group B inside	15 minutes
Reflect with partner/observer	5 minutes
Group B back inside	15 minutes
Rotate	
Group A in	10 to 15 minutes
Rotate	
Group B in	10 to 15 minutes
Partners meet to discuss the groups and clarify their personal plans for the next group session	10 minutes

Groups meet separately after that except for primary theory sessions and another group-on-group session in the middle of the weekend.

During the reflection time, participants are paired with a person from the other group. During the group-on-group experience the observing partner watches both the group's interaction and his or her partner, looking for specific things each time to share with the partner later, such as:

- Moments when it seemed that the partner had a strong feeling about what was happening but did not say anything;
- Whether or not and to what degree the partner seemed to feel included in the group's activities and why it seemed so; and
- What the observer or the partner wishes were happening in the group and what could be done the next time the group meets to help that happen.

Being "in" and then "out" *spatially* introduces the participant/observer role split in such a way that participants begin to feel it. Based on the Gestalt principle of contact withdrawal (Perls, 1973), this in-out sequence also gives the participants an opportunity for closer, cleaner contact while in the group by legitimizing their *withdrawal* during their observing period.

The group-on-group beginning also raises the agenda item of group cohesion, with members usually leaving for their own group session with a judgment of some kind

about the two groups. “I wish I were in that group” or “Boy, *they* sure can’t handle inclusion, can they?” or “I liked the way their trainer helped them...” These judgments are extremely important data for the group, and, when surfaced, they set early norms about the acceptability of having judgments about the trainer, group members, and the group itself. These are the kinds of feelings and evaluations that are present under the surface in any group experience right from the start, but the group-on-group experience seems to legitimize them and make it more likely that they will be shared earlier in the group’s life. Norms supporting criticism of one’s own or another group are usually later in developing. This beginning, instead, tends to bring things to the surface sooner, where they can be confronted.

In short, the group-on-group design gets things rolling very quickly, without reducing the predictable anxiety people bring with them as they face the ambiguity of the group’s beginning. In fact, they may get a stronger sense of their anxiety level when they are able to contrast how they felt observing others and how they felt while participating.

Repeating the Group-on-Group Design

A repetition of the group-on-group activity in the middle of the event, sometimes with the same groups paired, has several important functions:

1. It can help trainers when they talk to their trainer partners about what they saw, e.g., participants’ recurring or unresolved issues.
2. It can give group members a clearer sense of their progression through the stages of group development. (They will have had a lecturette beforehand.)
3. It increases awareness of group cohesion or lack of it.
4. It can provide participants (if they are paired with the same observers) with useful feedback about how their predictions or intentions are unfolding. “I still see you doing...” or “You seem to have that problem with Mary worked out.”
5. Getting exposure to different trainer styles heightens the awareness of trainer functions and alternatives.

While participants frequently complain beforehand about “losing valuable time with our own group,” there is a predictable shift in the group after the group-on-group experience toward more confrontation of perceived shortcomings about “the way we’re doing things here,” thus sparking intragroup criticism.

Staff members are also able to monitor one another, which is especially important with trainers of varying experience. The second group-on-group activity is a valuable time for trainers to give one another feedback about their behavior and the interventions they made. In a short group experience, working through difficult issues with participants fairly soon after they develop helps keep the group moving toward developing mature norms, and it can protect participants and/or trainers from being

scapegoated without being aware of it. The mid-event group-on-group experience is made more critical by the next concept, using participants as trainers-in-training.

Rotating Participants as Trainers-in-Training

Starting with the first session, participants are chosen, one for each session, to be trainers-in-training and to work with the staff trainer or trainers and “function as best they can as a facilitator.” (Although the participants here are trainee practitioners, this approach has been used with relatively naive participants with positive results.)

Trainers-in-training are briefed and debriefed publicly before and after each session and, when not designated as trainers-in-training, they simply revert to being group members. This design feature tends to have these kinds of consequences:

1. Group members begin to see how they relate to people in authority when they become aware of how their attitude toward someone changes when that person becomes a “trainer.”
2. Trainers-in-training get a sense of what it is like to feel responsible for the facilitation of a group’s learning (their own authority issues) and what that does to their way of participating in the group.
3. The interventions of the trainer-in-training provide material for the debriefing process (as do the staff trainer’s), giving participants more clarity about the intentions behind trainer interventions.
4. In a smaller group (eight to twelve members) or in longer events (three to four days), people have a chance to be a trainer twice, giving them a practice-feedback-repractice sequence, which is reported frequently to be a successful experience.

Staff Trainer Behaviors: A Note

It would seem that the staff trainer’s style would have a powerful impact on the effectiveness of trainers-in-training, but this is apparently not true, if the debriefing addresses the impact of the staff trainer’s behavior on the trainers-in-training and the group. In any case, the staff trainer, the trainer-in-training, and the group can learn something from what happens.

The shifts in communication patterns and decision making that occur as people take on and then leave the role of “leader” is striking and frequently clear to both the group and those involved. It tends to raise very sharply the issues of group leadership, power, authority, and role-bound behavior. The person acting as trainer-in-training gets an experience of moving into and out of the authority role and a chance to see what that did to his or her participation, raising personal issues around “feeling responsible.”

Another interesting thing occurs for the person who is the next designated trainer-in-training: the rehearsal phenomenon. Anxiety rises, stress affects usual communication patterns, he or she begins to get ready a long time before actually being “on.” Again,

these things will surface in a group given time and circumstances, but the design features suggested here set up conditions that accelerate their development.

Placing participants in the challenging situation of trainer-in-training might actually increase member anxiety dysfunctionally rather than accelerate group development, if it were not for the following design feature.

Switching Staff Trainers

Once during the weekend event each staff trainer moves to another group for an hour or so, usually at the beginning of a block of time (e.g., from 9:00 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. on Saturday). The switch is announced beforehand, even noted on the schedule, so that participants know it is going to happen. The trainers just “drop in,” as it were, for an hour and then leave. Their interventions frequently have an “unfreezing” effect on the group and can also produce some benefits to the group’s process.

- If the “new” trainer picks up on the same kinds of things the other trainer did, it can “confirm the diagnosis” more profoundly to the group. “I guess we were avoiding the competitiveness issue—both trainers picked up on it.”
- The drop-in trainer can be more active, press on issues, and in other ways be more precipitative. This can loosen up issues, model new norms, challenge old ones, and provide a new authority person to deal with.
- This design feature models the existential validity of training. One does not have to know a great deal about the *history* of a group to intervene effectively in a T-group.
- Trainers can act as checks and balances on one another. If one trainer is being unduly influenced by a member of the group, a new trainer can sometimes work on that concern more clearly.
- Trainers usually meet in a *public* debriefing of the switching experience, discussing one another’s groups. A fruitful way to do this is to complete the following statement: “One thing I experienced in your group that does not surprise me about a group *you* would lead is . . .”
- Switching also helps trainers get free from any content seductions they may have fallen prey to. The familiar plaint, “Oh, I don’t want to switch right now—I’m really needed to help with this issue!” is probably a good indication that it is a good time to switch.

The switching of trainers for a one-hour session frequently breaks groups into new, deeper levels of work and allows trainer and participant relationships to move into more mature encounters.

Public Debriefing of Group Sessions

At the end of each group meeting, the trainer spends twenty to thirty minutes publicly debriefing the experience with the outgoing and incoming co-trainer. The three people sit in the center of the group with an open chair and openly discuss what happened in the last session. The conversation frequently addresses these kinds of issues:

1. (With the outgoing trainer-in-training): “What did you see going on?” “What were your intentions when you did X and what effect did it seem to have?” “How did you feel when X happened and what effect did that have on your participation?” The staff trainer responds to these questions also.
2. (With the incoming trainer-in-training): “What are you nervous about in the next session?” “What are we going to do about that?” “Who are some people here you’re anxious about?” “Plans?” “What would you like me to do or not do as staff trainer when one of these things happens?”
3. (With the group): “What is happening now in this group?” “What seem to be the major issues we are facing and how are we dealing with them?” “What does this group need now from its trainer(s)?”

This debriefing is often the most powerful part of the experience for many participants. They report that the debriefing helps them to:

- Obtain some emotional distance;
- Begin to see what trainers are doing and why;
- Understand the unfolding process of group development as they see it explained and illustrated during the debriefing;
- Raise and address their own authority issues;
- Learn to be present in the group as both a participant and an observer; and
- Stimulate transfer of learning applications to their back-home arenas.

Because of the openness and vulnerability this design models, it is powerful and accelerates the group’s process. The “authorities” are sharing their fears and observations in a safe environment and in such a way that more timid participants are encouraged to enter the life of the group.

Since the comments about group phenomena occur very close to the actual events being talked about, learning becomes extremely easy. The debriefing can help develop an understanding of what happened. Important data can be shared with clarity and gentleness, sensitizing members to their own and others’ behaviors and their impact on the group.

Integration (I) Groups

Early in the weekend event participants are put into integration (I) groups, composed of people from different groups. This session is introduced as an “integrative opportunity in

which people basically can talk about their group, their trainer, and their experience in order to help digest the experience.” This notion runs counter to the traditional group norm of not talking about anything that happens in the group outside the group. The rationale for the older norm makes sense: if people’s feelings and affective energy are allowed to be turned elsewhere, that emotional energy will not be available to the group.

However, when lightly structured I-groups are used to help people discuss their experience, they come away from the conversation clearer, more confident, and more ready to confront issue(s) or person(s) in their own group. As they share experiences with each other they also discover samenesses and differences between groups, getting a perspective on their own group life and their involvement in it. When they help someone else clarify an issue, they may even work through their own version of the same issue.

I-groups also do not seem to diminish the affective agendas generated in the group. Instead, they seem to spring loose a lot of that stored-up energy in the group. The experience of sharing still evokes anxiety and defensiveness, but the hurdle has frequently been cleared about whether or not to deal with a particular issue in the group. The I-group helps people make that decision and strategize how to begin.

By legitimizing such personal discussion, the I-group also builds accountability: “I have to go back to those people after our next group session and report what happened.” Participants will frequently preface an intervention in the T-group with, “My I-group members helped me see what was happening and now I want to deal with it.” In a short group experience, without the discussion in the I-group, that might not have happened.

Transfer Role Plays or “Coming-Home Skits”

Throughout the event, several of the other suggested features give people a chance to reflect on back-home applications:

- The *pre-event* work begins with that focus;
- The *public debriefings* can be guided to talk about back-home phenomena; and
- The *I-groups* are structured so as to begin discussion of transfer issues toward the end of the event.

But as for many group events, a block of time, usually three hours or more, is set aside toward the end of the experience for working on twin concerns—closure and transfer—at the same time. One particular design feature, transfer role plays, consistently demonstrates a high potential for helping people with both these needs.

Participants are asked to form into groups of three to eight people and then to create a humorous skit that shows some kind of cominghome encounter with people from either their primary (close family or friends) or secondary (work) arena. In the process of producing the skit they are forced to step back and take a look at the broad range of group experiences they have had. Poking fun at their experience helps them avoid the tendency to become either “true believers” or “irrational critics” of the group

experience. The skit helps participants laugh at the “other-world” qualities of the group and start the process of re-entry on a more balanced note.

At first glance these skits may seem to be a trivial design feature that lacks the heavy impact of the group-on-group experience or the usefulness of a powerful lecturette, but it serves several crucial functions for participants and has a subtle but profound effect on their re-entry:

1. It lets them begin to say “good-bye” to the other group members and to the experience.
2. It encourages them to think about their back-home environment and the major differences in norms and behaviors between it and the group environment.
3. It begins the process of sifting through the heavy affective and cognitive data generated in the group for usable and acceptable applications.
4. Laughing at a profound experience helps to integrate it.
5. Humor transcends the pressure to convert or warn others and transforms that urge into acceptance.

SUMMARY

The eight design features described in this article have proven themselves as expeditors of the process of a group’s development and of participants’ ability to learn from that development. Participants can continue to have their usual peak experiences resulting from successful encounters with themselves and others and to learn about who they are, based on who they have been during this unique event. With these design features, many of the benefits of the longer group experience can be retained at the same time that the pace of group development is stepped up, thereby condensing the same process into a shorter time period.

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■ GROUP ENERGY, GROUP STAGE, AND LEADER INTERVENTIONS

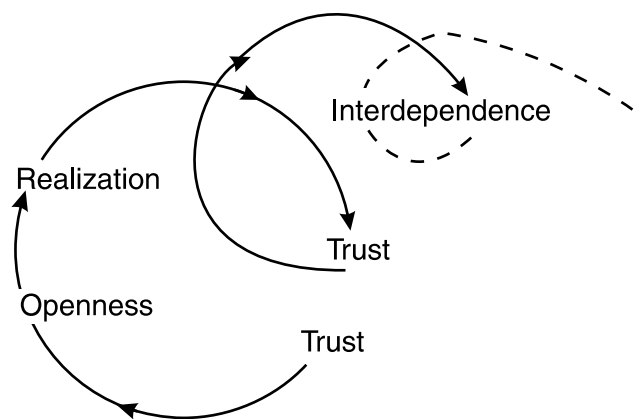
C. Jesse Carlock and Beverly Byrum-Gaw

Group facilitators have long been encouraged to “follow the energy of the group,” but they have seldom been advised how to do so. The purpose of this paper is to narrow the gap between this objective of professional facilitation and the means by which it can be achieved. The first step in this process is to define the term “group energy.”

The energy of a group is its life force, that which propels it toward either constructive or destructive action. Just as every living thing either grows or deteriorates, so does a group. Positive energy in a group generates constructive exploration, understanding, and action, whereas negative energy generates avoidance, confusion, and stagnation.

Obviously, we as facilitators wish to concentrate on positive energy. A helpful way of viewing this type of energy is provided by Gibb (1972) in his presentation of TORI theory. According to Gibb, productive energy is that which moves a group toward greater *trust, openness, realization, and interdependence* and away from mistrust, closure, role-bound behavior, and dependence or counterdependence.

A group’s growth is predicated on that of its individual members. Individual growth, in turn, requires increased awareness and acting on that awareness in a congruent manner. Group growth is impossible unless the individual members exhibit movement toward self-trust, openness to self and others, and experiencing and actualizing role-free behavior and cooperative action.



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It is imperative that a facilitator understand the concept of group energy, ascertain whether the energy manifested by a group is constructive, and then either enhance positive energy or attempt to correct the degenerative effect of negative energy. The dictum “follow the energy of the group” must be translated as “determine the type of energy that presently governs the group’s activity so that the appropriate intervention can be made.” A simple policy of allowing and accepting may not always be the most effective facilitator action. Frequently, in order to help a group in its pursuit of TORI, a facilitator must intervene to stop, guide, question, or redirect the present life force of the group.

Group movement can seldom be represented by a straight line from mistrust to trust, closure to openness, role-bound behavior to realization, and dependence or counterdependence to interdependence. In order to create, build, and sustain trust, both awareness and open, congruent expression of that awareness are necessary. Yet awareness and openness do not readily occur until trust has been established. Thus, group movement is cyclical; when all is going well, it forms an upward spiral. One major facilitator function is to intervene, helping this process to begin and to continue.

One potential problem is that a group may become comfortable at a level of TORI that is below the maximum level obtainable. In this case the facilitator should intervene at critical points to encourage the group to assess its progress and to move upward to a higher level of TORI. This intervention is appropriate when the facilitator perceives that the group is in a stable period after surviving certain risks, changes, and growth, but that it will become stagnant and die if it remains in its present state. Consequently, the intervention capitalizes on the optimum tension level in the group’s energy and keeps the group moving through cycles of awareness to ownership and, ultimately, to action (Banet, 1974).

As illustrated in Figure 1, Gibb’s (1972) model for openness with individuals, groups, and organizations indicates that without facilitator intervention a group fails to move toward maturity and instead may regress to dependence, safety, comfort, and ultimate stagnation.

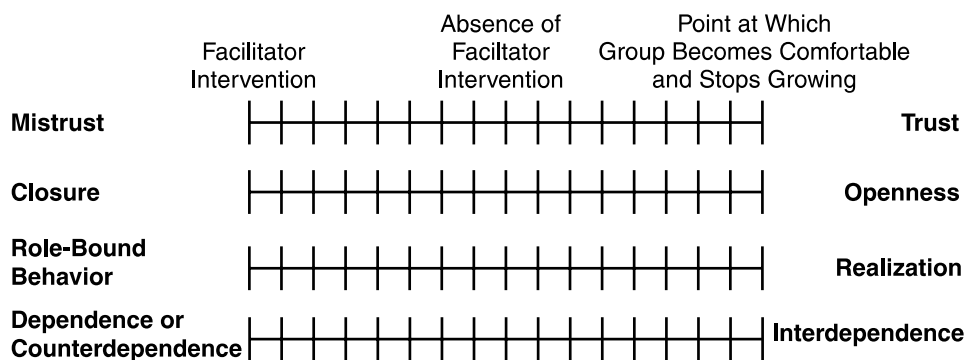


Figure 1. Impact of Facilitator Intervention on Group Development¹

¹ Adapted from J.R. Gibb, “TORI Theory and Practice,” in J.W. Pfeiffer and J.E. Jones (Eds.), *The 1972 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators*. San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company, 1972.

Another model that expands Gibb's work is illustrated in Figure 2. This model, developed by Gestalt theorists, is called the "cycle of experience" (Zinker, 1977) and is useful in identifying disturbances in group development. Individuals as well as systems move through this cycle as they develop. Disturbances at any point in the cycle can retard growth or result in dysfunctional behavior. Two common types of disturbances experienced by groups are as follows:

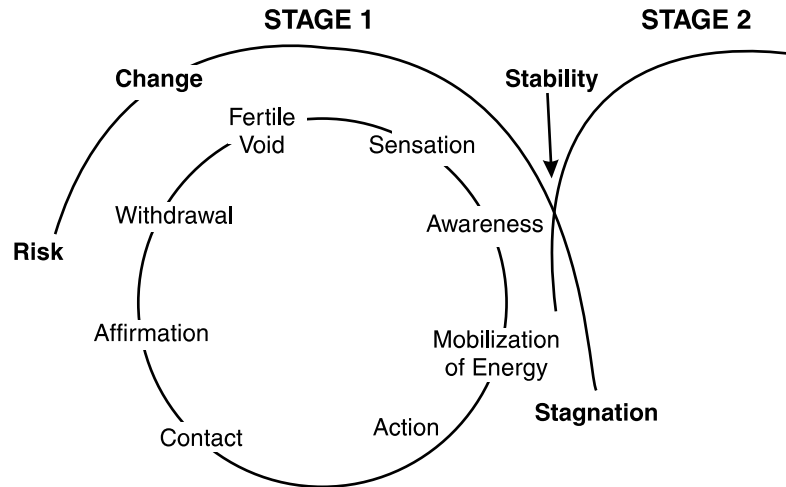


Figure 2. The Cycle of Experience²

1. *Interruptions*, between phases of the cycle, such as an interruption between awareness and mobilization of energy, for example, in the case of interpersonal problems between members. A group may be aware of present hostility but unable to mobilize its energy to discuss and alleviate that hostility.
2. *Omissions of phases*, such as those that occur when group members move prematurely into *action*, for example, excessive talking without first developing *awareness* of what they are feeling and undertaking *proper mobilization of energy* to express that feeling.

Before moving from one stage to the next, the group members must complete a sufficient number of cycles at the present stage to establish trust and satisfaction.

A rise in group energy typically occurs when a figure emerges into awareness. Energy is mobilized around that figure as the system moves into action, crescendos at the point at which contact is made and affirmed, gradually dissipates as integration occurs, and rises again when still another lively figure emerges.

GUIDELINES FOR ASSESSING ENERGY

Once the facilitator understands positive energy and its importance, he or she should develop and refine the skills necessary to assess a group's energy pattern. After

² From J. Zinker, *Creative Process in Gestalt Therapy*. Vintage Paperback (Random House, New York), 1977. Used with permission.

acquiring these skills and using them to analyze the pattern manifested by a particular group, the facilitator must then determine the specific issues or feelings that are responsible for that pattern and, subsequently, select an intervention appropriate to those issues or feelings (Bandler & Grinder, 1975; James & Jongeward, 1976; Lieberman, Yalom, & Miles, 1973; Pfeiffer & Jones, 1972-93; Yalom, 1975; Zinker, 1977).

The ability to assess an energy pattern accurately requires that the facilitator be able to identify the following:

1. The predominant *issues* or *feelings* that are being expressed (either directly or indirectly) by individual members or by the entire group;
2. The current *pace* of group activity and how long that pace has existed;
3. The degree of *tension* being experienced by individual members or by the entire group;
4. The *time orientation* of the group (involvement with the present versus involvement with the past) and how long that time orientation has lasted;
5. The current *focus* (intrapersonal, interpersonal, group, or topic centered) and how long that focus has continued; and
6. The *patterns* evident in the issues or feelings, pace, tension, time orientation, and focus, also the contexts in which these patterns emerge or fade.

Assessment skills are developed by heightened recognition of and attention to the verbal and nonverbal messages transmitted by group members as well as the way in which these messages fit together to form a picture of the group at a particular point in time. In addition, to be able to intervene appropriately the facilitator must assess current behavior within the context of the overall pattern of the group's life.

For instance, a facilitator may hear verbal themes and images of intimacy such as "I feel close to the group," "We are like a close-knit family," or "Our souls seem united." These are "here-and-now," group-centered statements of feelings. However, the facilitator may notice that these statements are delivered rapidly, in a monotone, and in sequence without pause. Additionally, he or she may observe that the members are avoiding eye contact with each other and protecting personal space by creating distance between themselves. The facilitator is aware that the members have just experienced their first self-disclosure and are uttering a collective sigh of relief at the successful outcome of the first risk they have taken. They may be wanting to rest in their accomplishment awhile; they also may be fearful that something will happen to alter the present mood. Because trust has not yet been solidified in the group, the most appropriate facilitator response at this point might be to allow these premature expressions of affection until some change in the situation is sensed. For example, comments may begin to come more slowly, members may begin to shift their positions, or the focus of talk may switch to task-oriented topics. Any of these changes might signal the integration of the group's first intense experience, indicating that the

facilitator should intervene to ensure that stability does not turn into stagnation. In this case, the facilitator can consider several options, such as the following:

- Ask the members what their present feelings are and what they would like to happen next;
- Point out what appears to be occurring; or
- Introduce a relevant activity.

Any of these interventions is useful in reestablishing focus on the here and now, in encouraging sensations and awareness (Kepner, 1980), and in laying the groundwork for the next cycle.

The type of intervention selected depends on a number of different factors: the developmental stage of the group, the facilitator's theoretical orientation, the type of group, and the composition of the group. For the purpose of this paper, examples have been derived from growth groups with an inexperienced population and an active facilitator orientation.

THE FACILITATOR'S ROLE IN GROUP DEVELOPMENT

According to Schutz (1967), the following stages and associated characteristics are representative of group development:

<i>Stage</i>	<i>Question</i>	<i>Dimension</i>
Inclusion	“Do I belong?”	In/out
Control	“Do I count?”	Up/down
Openness ³	“Do I care, and am I cared about?”	Close/far

The facilitator's main function in this developmental process is to assist the group in producing positive energy. In this capacity the facilitator helps a group move through its stages, and through the cycles of experience within each stage, toward openness and TORI. This task is accomplished as a result of the following interventions:

1. *Preparing*. The facilitator's decisions regarding structural concerns such as the time, locale, and duration of meetings are made before the group initially convenes. In addition, the facilitator makes preliminary decisions regarding the content of group goals based on the awareness level of the members and the facilitator's own intent. Structural and content decisions are closely related, and both are ultimately open for negotiation in the group.
2. *Fostering Trust*. When the group members assemble for the first time—and prior to the inclusion stage, the process of orientation, or the discussion of goals—the facilitator must begin to encourage and stimulate trust and trustworthy behavior.

³ To be current with Schutz's recent research and to be more descriptive of behavior that occurs in group development, we have substituted “openness” for “affection.”

3. *Establishing a Method for Group Self-Evaluation.* At the beginning of the inclusion stage, a basic level of trust has been established; however, the group is not yet ready to express and deal with strong personal feelings. The members are concerned with developing norms to govern their behavior and are, therefore, cautious in their interactions. In effect, they are testing to see how “safe” the group is, and in the course of their testing a premature openness might appear. It is at this critical point that the facilitator should help the group determine a method by which to examine itself honestly.
4. *Exposing Tension.* After the members have developed greater trust and a commitment to the survival of the group, they become increasingly aware that concealed negative feelings must be exposed in order for the group to progress. At this time control is an issue, but it has not been brought into the open. Thus, it becomes the facilitator’s task to help the members expose such tensions and to support them as they do so.
5. *Managing Conflict.* Once the issues of power and control have risen to the surface, the group members may become frightened by the intensity of interaction and may even want to withdraw to a preinclusion phase or to premature openness. The facilitator can provide valuable assistance at this point by helping the members to manage their feelings productively and creatively.
6. *Concluding.* When the group members have successfully confronted conflict and are in the performing and openness stage, positive feelings and cohesiveness are operating at an intense level. The group is as close to the TORI ideal as it will ever be. The facilitator’s function becomes one of assisting the group in concluding, preserving as many of the benefits from the group experience as possible.

In order to fulfill the responsibility of enabling a group to complete each cycle of experience, to survive critical points, and to progress to the next stage of development, the facilitator must keep these four principles in mind:

1. A group’s underlying, problematic energy pattern must be recognized and dealt with before the group can move to the next stage of development and toward maturity.
2. The basic questions applicable to each stage must be answered to each member’s satisfaction.
3. The verbal and nonverbal manifestations of behavior (indicators of issues or feelings, pace, tension, time orientation, focus, and patterns) are signals to which the facilitator must attend in order to determine a group’s needs.
4. After a group’s needs have been determined, interventions are the facilitator’s tools for meeting those needs and moving the group forward.

SPECIFICS OF INTERVENING AT CRITICAL POINTS

Preparing

Basic Issues. Forming the group, screening, clarifying expectations, and developing goals.

Basic Questions. “Is this group for me? What do I expect? What do I want? How will I present myself? How will others feel about me?”

Behavioral Manifestations. (Because this intervention takes place before the group convenes, there are no manifestations.)

Intervention Alternatives. The facilitator must eliminate the possibility of misconceptions and increase readiness for the group experience. Options are as follows:

1. Advertise the group objectives accurately; do not promise what cannot be delivered. Explicitly outline the style of the group as well as its goals.
2. Screen the members and provide orientation and demonstration sessions to clarify the group’s style, goals, and guidelines, as well as the specific contract for the group and the rights and responsibilities of the members.
3. Discuss at the group’s inception such business matters as the duration of its existence, beginning and ending times of individual sessions, breaks, fees, absences, standards of behavior, and confidentiality.

Fostering Trust

Basic Issues. Superficial relating, feelings of isolation, and lack of involvement.

Basic Question. “Why am I here?”

Behavioral Manifestations. Nonverbal behaviors include shallow breathing, keeping distance between self and others, self-protective postures, lack of eye contact, staring at the floor or ceiling, and slouching. Verbal behaviors include the following:

- Identification of role: “I work at Winter’s Bank.”
- Indication of distraction: “I wish I had a cigarette.”
- Signal of dependence: “What are we supposed to do now?”
- Implication of need for structure: “Give us something to do.”

Intervention Alternatives. The facilitator must be active and must establish a secure structure in which members feel safe in participating. Options are as follows:

1. Stress confidentiality.
2. Discuss in detail the rights and responsibilities of the members. For example, express all members’ rights to govern their own self-disclosure or each member’s responsibility not to distract others from deepening their experiences.

3. Direct the members to formulate personal goals and to share them with the group.
4. Invite the members to discuss the personal or group issues that they feel are significant.
5. Divide the group into subgroups of two or four each and have the subgroups discuss issues pertaining to personal matters or relationships as opposed to topic-centered issues.
6. Ask the members to explain what commands their attention in terms of internal feelings, sensations, images, thoughts, and memories or external awareness.
7. Translate individual issues into group issues or unifying themes.
8. Have the members make statements directly to one another regarding important observations, feedback, or disclosures.
9. Transform questions into statements.
10. Encourage the members to complete each interaction.

Establishing a Method for Group Self-Evaluation

Basic Issues. Avoidance of taking the risk to achieve self-disclosure, to choose growth as opposed to safety, to be negative, to be wrong, to be vulnerable, or to be rejected.

Basic Questions. “What will happen if I am simply myself? How much of myself can I disclose?”

Behavioral Manifestations. *Nonverbal* behaviors include lack of eye contact, yawning, sighing, lack of physical closeness to others, self-protective postures, and lack of nonverbal rapport (failure to mirror the movements of others). *Verbal* behaviors include the following:

- Signal of dependence/indirect request for direction: “I don’t understand what we’re supposed to do.”
- Request for permission to avoid an activity: “Do we have to?”
- Implication of desire to shift responsibility: “Will someone [else] be the recorder?”
- Indication of failure to assume ownership or responsibility: “Nobody understands what you mean.”
- Storytelling or sociological dissertation: “At work I’m having trouble with my male employees. They seem to be overly sensitive to the fact that I’m a woman. I’ve been reading a lot of books that describe this difficulty as one of the worst problems . . .”

Intervention Alternatives. The facilitator must continue to provide structure and direction. Options are as follows:

1. Ask the members to discuss their impressions of each other; similarities and differences between various members; or which animals, flowers, or colors they would be if given the choice.
2. Encourage the members to engage in “here-and-now” self-disclosure of feelings, thoughts, personal goals, expectations, and hopes regarding the behavior of others, impressions of or attitudes toward the group, or risks that they are considering taking.
3. Relate an exaggerated example of “there-and-then” group behavior.
4. Change the spatial structure of the group.
5. Model self-disclosure and feedback skills.
6. Either question the members about what is happening in the group or report observations.
7. Employ nonverbal techniques, such as sculpting.

Exposing Tension

Basic Issues. The avoidance issues enumerated previously plus fears of being attacked for various actions, such as violating implicit norms, tarnishing personal images, or attempting new ways of dealing with negative emotions.

Basic Questions. “What will happen if I express what I really feel? Who will restore order if conflict erupts?”

Behavioral Manifestations. *Nonverbal* behaviors include those listed under the heading “Establishing a Method for Group Self-Evaluation” plus avoiding eye contact or engaging in menacing eye contact with the person in conflict, physically withdrawing from the group, exaggerated relaxation and nonchalance, clenching of fists, sitting on hands, and irregular or shallow breathing. In addition, signs of passive aggression may be evident, such as arriving late, leaving early, smoking, or eating. *Verbal behaviors* include the following:

- Implication of irresponsibility: “I don’t care what we do.”
- Indirect statement: “We’re not being honest here.”
- Indication of projection: “Jack is hiding his feelings.”
- Attack on the facilitator (or leader): “This activity is stupid.”

Intervention Alternatives. The facilitator must keep emotion concentrated in the group and prevent its being diffused, dissipated, or redirected. Options are as follows:

1. Lead the members through a conflict fantasy.
2. Lead a discussion about conflict norms, concentrating on the best and worst possible results.

3. Direct the members to act out conflict by engaging in a power line-up, physically approaching other group members, or sculpting.
4. Play act a person who is suppressing conflict.
5. Physically portray any conflict evident between subgroups or have the subgroups choose representatives to talk to each other.
6. Instruct the members to ask themselves what they want to do about their feelings or what they are leaving unsaid.
7. Report observations using powerful imagery.
8. Relate personal feelings of conflict.
9. Insult the group.
10. Instruct the members to speak directly to one another rather than express ideas or feelings about “some people.”
11. Encourage the members to specify the behaviors about which they have negative feelings.
12. Ask the question, “From whom do you feel distant?”
13. Ask the question, “Who or what do you resent?”
14. Heighten awareness of norms and support those members who violate norms demanding constricted behavior. (For example, make a comment such as “Try moving closer to Jim and then say that again.”)

Managing Conflict

Basic Issues. Fear of closeness, of sexual feelings, or of reverting to conflict.

Basic Question. “How close will we become?”

Behavioral Manifestations. *Nonverbal* behaviors include leaning forward, opening mouth slightly as if to speak, gazing eye to eye; establishing momentary eye contact, sighing; careful, tentative touching; flushed faces, wide smiles. *Verbal* behaviors include the following:

- Indication of setting limits: “That’s enough.”
- Affirmation: “That’s terrific!”
- Humorous statement in the midst of an embrace: “Try explaining this to your wife/husband.”

Intervention Alternatives. The facilitator must help the group members work toward closure of the exposed emotions. Options are as follows:

1. Make a comment based on an observation, such as “Frank, you look as if you want to say something to Jane.”

2. Ask direct questions, such as “Frank, are you as physically close as you want to be to Jane right now?”
3. Voice a reflection, such as “I wonder what we’re avoiding.”
4. In a direct manner, tell the group members what is or is not wanted from them.
5. Encourage the members to speak by asking a question, such as “Is there something else you’d like to say, George?” or “Alice, is there something you’re wanting from Linda?”
6. Test the group’s readiness to progress by asking a question, such as “Do you feel finished with this issue?”

Concluding

Basic Issues. Grief, integration of the experience, and transfer of learning.

Basic Questions. “Do we have to say good-bye? What have I learned? What will I do with this learning? How can I add to what I’ve learned?”

Behavioral Manifestations. *Nonverbal* behaviors include leaving early, clinging, turning inward, and reverting to habitual behaviors. *Verbal* behaviors include the following:

- Joking, excessive talking, and laughing.
- Indication of self-affirmation: “I learned.”
- Avoiding good-byes or experiencing regrets: “This isn’t really the end. We’ll see each other.”
- Indication of disowning responsibility: “If only it were like this elsewhere.”
- Offering feedback: “You really changed.”

Intervention Alternatives. The facilitator must model and encourage ways to integrate the group experience and to apply learning to everyday activities. Options are as follows:

1. Ask the members to select partners and to establish contracts with their partners regarding what they will do outside the group.
2. Distribute didactic material to the members and lead a discussion on learnings and applications.
3. Lead the members through a good-bye fantasy; then have them say good-bye nonverbally and leave.
4. Lead a farewell toast or express wishes for members.
5. Facilitate group and individual good-byes by leading the members in a nonverbal, total-group activity or by having each member make personal contact with every other member.

6. Have members give direct feedback to others by stating how the group experience has changed them, by presenting make-believe gifts or awards, or by giving nicknames.

SUMMARY

When a group successfully completes the cycles of experience within all stages, its members experience maximum trust, openness, self-realization, and interdependence. It is possible for a group to find its way through developmental stages without a facilitator's help; however, a skilled facilitator can serve as an important catalyst in the group process.

In order for a facilitator to lead rather than follow the energy of a group, he or she must understand the concept of energy, the stages of group development as well as the cycles of experience within each stage, and the end goal of group maturity. In addition, a facilitator must be skilled in observation and interpretation and must possess the technical expertise to intervene appropriately. By knowing a group's basic issues and questions, the manifestations of its energy pattern, and the specifics of appropriate intervention, a facilitator can both manage and enhance productive energy. Ultimately, the skilled facilitator models the TORI ideal of trust, openness, realization, and interdependence in order to harness, direct, and render more potent the positive energy of a group.

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■ ISSUES PRESENT WHEN ENTERING A SYSTEM

Richard Hensley

When children enter a new neighborhood, they may be excited and somewhat nervous, but a tentative invitation to play or a hesitant question usually breaks the ice and they are accepted fairly easily. These childhood rituals are usually fleeting and not difficult or complicated. Usually pleasant memories linger. But as children become adults, the phenomenon of becoming the new member of a group takes on the added dimension of the need to address interpersonal issues. When people join a group or a system they are inevitably concerned about what is going to happen to them and how their new relationships will develop. Certain major issues always arise that have an impact on the life of the group. These issues occur in every social system and have the potential to support or obstruct the purpose and life of the group. These issues must be confronted and worked through for the good of the people involved (existing group members as well as new members) and the good of the group. According to Schutz (1966), the following entry issues are present and occur sequentially: *membership identity*, *power*, *goals*, *acceptance*, and *intimacy*. Issues also can occur randomly, depending on what is happening to individuals in the group (Bion, 1961), or issues can be confronted as they emerge or reemerge later in random fashion.

MEMBERSHIP IDENTITY

The first issue is *membership identity*. People wonder, “Who am I in the group?” “Do I want to be here?” They are not sure how to present themselves to the group; they are not sure what role they will have to play to enter the group; they are not sure whether they will be able to be “themselves” or whether they will be forced to conform or change to be someone the group wants them to be. The membership identity issue can be heightened if the group is highly unstructured, as in a training group, because characteristic ways of presenting oneself are not appropriate and what is appropriate is not clear. Feedback from others seems ambiguous because people have different concepts of what *is* appropriate to any given situation. As a result, people feel anxious in anticipation of what may take place when they join a group. They may not be clear about what they expect, and their anxiety shows. In a sense, the situation produces an identity crisis or a problem of social survival.

The leader of an unstructured group must be aware of the feelings of the new member, but also must be cautious about rescuing that person because any intervention

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can totally change the dynamics of the situation. In an intact work group, the leader's range of options is much wider. Group members can be made aware of the dynamics of the situation and can plan their roles. If an intact work group does not face and work through the issue of membership identity, the consequences can be severe.

POWER

After members have dealt with their identity in the group, usually the issue of power arises. People wonder, "Who has the power in this group?" "How much influence can I have?" If a formal structure exists, power has been legitimized by the membership and must be validated by the new member. In intact work groups, for example, structure is set by an outside authority and who has power is mostly clear-cut. If the group is unstructured, there is usually no rule about who has power or how much power. In this case, the distribution of power must be worked out by the group members through testing and checking out how much control they want to give and how much they want to give up. Those who cannot exercise the power they desire may need to withdraw from the group.

Leaders of structured groups can facilitate the acceptance of the existing power distribution and secure the commitment of new members to the structure. Unstructured groups must settle the issue somehow internally to the satisfaction of all. New members of unstructured groups have a more difficult transition.

GOALS

After the power issue has been settled, the dominant issue is goals. People want to know "What are the goals of this group?" "Can my own goals be met through group membership?" A group with clear goals naturally makes more progress and, because most people are goal oriented, group members are happiest with specific goals in mind. Because each member of a group has different needs and goals and a different concept of what the group goals should be, goal clarification is essential. If the goal has been externally imposed, as is the case in most intact work groups, a process of redefining, clarifying, and testing must take place each time someone joins the group so that the new member becomes committed to the goal and does not withdraw or sabotage the effort. In either a structured or an unstructured group, the leader (officially or unofficially) can be sure that all members participate in setting goals and in redefining them when a new member joins the group.

ACCEPTANCE AND INTIMACY

After goals have been clarified, acceptance and intimacy issues become dominant for the new member of a group. The new person wants to be accepted by other members and may also feel uncomfortable about accepting the group as a whole and individual members separately. New members wonder, "Do they like me?" "How close do I want

to become to other group members?” New members face the problem of instantaneous likes and dislikes. They want to present themselves in a way so they will be totally accepted and liked. They need to communicate somehow to others their expectations for intimacy. New members are not sure who likes whom or how close members are to each other. Fear of not being accepted, fear of being swept away by the group, and fear of being left out all intermingle.

VALIDITY AND WORTH OF THE ACTIVITY

Besides the issues just discussed (membership identity, power, goals, acceptance, and intimacy) new group members must confront the issue of whether the group activity has validity and worth for them personally. People must validate their own existence in whatever environments they find themselves and with whomever they are interacting. People need to feel the worth of what they are doing. Many behavior patterns in a group when a new member enters can be seen as attempts to validate the group's existence and confirm the worth of the new member having joined. New members jockey for position in the group as they struggle to establish their identities within the group. All groups are similar in that they must face these same issues and work through them to keep them from becoming problems.

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■ A SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP® APPROACH TO GROUPS USING THE TUCKMAN MODEL OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Chuck Kormanski

An organization development setting typically is composed of many small groups. Understanding the nature of small-group behavior and developing skills in group dynamics can increase positive outcomes by reducing production problems caused by the setting and the interactions of group members. In addition, such knowledge and skills can contribute to developing effective leadership behavior. This article therefore is designed to help consultants, trainers, and managers to understand the relationship between the small group (and the stages that all small groups go through) and the group's leader, in the hope of increasing the effectiveness of both leaders and groups in organizations.

THE TUCKMAN MODEL

Tuckman (1965) provided a comprehensive summarization of small-group research (fifty studies) and suggested a developmental sequence—within both the task realm and the interpersonal realm—of group development. The four stages in this linear, progressive model initially were labeled “forming,” “storming,” “norming,” and “performing.” This effort consolidated earlier studies and provided a basis for further research and investigation.

Almost every model that followed Tuckman's included a fifth stage, focusing on termination of the group (Braaten, 1975; Lacoursiere, 1974; Mann, 1967; Mills, 1964; Runkel, Lawrence, Oldfield, Rider, & Clark, 1971; Spitz & Sadock, 1973; Stanford, 1977). In 1977, Tuckman and Jensen examined twenty-two more recent studies and updated the original model to include the fifth stage, termination, which they called “adjourning.” Thus, the Tuckman model now includes forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning.

The Tuckman model is sequential, developmental, and thematic. It is sequential in that the stages occur in a specifically stated order. Each stage will occur naturally, with the timing dependent on the nature of the group, group membership, and group leadership. The model is developmental in that the issues and concerns in each stage must be resolved in order for the group to move to the next stage. If the group is not able

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to resolve such issues and concerns, members experience either conflict or apathy, which becomes the dominant group behavior. If continued attempts to resolve the impasse fail, group disintegration occurs. Successful groups meet and resolve the challenges presented, so growth and actualization occur.

The model is thematic in that each stage is characterized by two dominant themes, one reflecting the task dimension and one reflecting the relationship dimension, as noted in Table 1. These themes provide realistic expectations of group behavior. This is particularly helpful to those in leadership positions, because they can base their behavior and interventions on these expectations. Appropriate leader interventions then can facilitate the group development process.

Table 1. Tuckman's Summary of Sequential Development in Small Groups

Stages of Group Development	Task Behavior	Relationship Behavior
1. Forming	Orientation	Testing and dependence
2. Storming	Emotional response to task demands	Intragroup hostility
3. Norming	Expression of opinions	Development of group cohesion
4. Performing	Emergence of solutions	Functional role-relatedness
5. Adjourning	Termination	Disengagement

Stages of Group Development

The initial stage of small-group development is characterized by a movement toward awareness. In the process of *forming*, the group's task behavior is an attempt to become oriented to the goals and procedures of the group. The amount of information available and the manner in which it is presented is critical to group development. Resolving dependency issues and testing are the major relationship behaviors. Understanding leadership roles and getting acquainted with other group members facilitate group development in this stage.

When orientation and dependency issues are resolved, conflict begins to emerge, signaling the second stage of group development. The *storming* process involves resistance or emotional responses to task demands and intrapersonal hostility in relationships. Group members engage in behaviors that challenge the group's leadership or they isolate themselves from group interaction. If conflict is permitted to exceed controllable limits, anxiety and tension permeate the group. If conflict is suppressed and not permitted to occur, resentment and bitterness result. This can encourage apathy or abandonment of the group. Although conflict resolution often is the goal of groups during the storming stage, conflict management generally is what is achieved. In fact, conflict management is a more appropriate goal, because it is desirable to maintain

conflict at a manageable level to encourage the continued growth and development of the group.

The third stage of small-group development, *norming*, is characterized by cooperation. The dominant task themes are communication and expression of opinions. Sharing of information and influence promotes cooperation and synergistic outcomes. Cohesion is the relationship theme. A blend of harmony and openness is created by the work effort, which increases morale and team-building efforts. Group unity develops, and shared responsibilities increase, typically leading to decision making by consensus and democratic leadership styles.

The fourth stage of small-group development is evidenced by productivity. *Performing* encourages functional role relatedness. The task theme is problem solving. Group effort is mobilized to achieve group goals. Group members provide valuable contributions by assuming appropriate roles that enhance problem solving. The relationship theme is interdependence; it is the basis for any successful team effort and it requires group members simultaneously to be highly independent and highly dependent.

The final stage of small-group development brings the group to an end. The *adjourning* process involves termination of task behaviors and disengagement from relationships. Conclusion of the group is not always planned. A planned group conclusion usually involves recognition for participation and achievement as well as an opportunity for members to say personal good-bys. Adjourning of the group should be accomplished within a set time frame and have a recognizable ending point.

An understanding of the theory of small-group development provides managers, consultants, and trainers with realistic expectations regarding group behavior. Recognition of behavioral themes enables them to design leadership interventions to promote continued group growth. Interventions also can be designed to speed up or slow down the developmental process or to deal with a crisis from a remedial perspective.

The key to applying the model is the manner in which the intervention is made. Leadership style is critical.

SITUATIONAL LEADERSHIP®

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) have developed a theory of Situational Leadership® that parallels accepted small-group-development theory. Situational Leadership® is based on the interrelationships between task behavior, relationship behavior, and the maturity level that the followers exhibit for a specific task. The Situational Leadership® model, like Tuckman's model of smallgroup development, is a behavioral model and is sequential, developmental, and thematic.

Applying Situational Leadership® to a group setting involves defining a specific task on which the group is working, identifying the task-relevant maturity level (or readiness) of the group, and intervening with the appropriate leadership style based on the needed amount of task structure and direction (task behavior) and the appropriate amount of socioemotional support (relationship behavior). The group's maturity, or

level of readiness, includes two components that are related to the task and relationship themes in the group process. Task maturity involves the group's *ability* to do the task. Past experience, education, and skills are critical factors. Psychological maturity assesses the group's *willingness* to do the task. Achievement motivation and willingness to accept responsibility are critical factors. The group's maturity *in relation to a specific task* can be rated on a scale from one (low) to four (high). Thus, as the tasks of the group change, so will the group's maturity level in regard to each task.

Because groups exhibit different levels of ability and willingness to perform specific tasks, to be most effective a leader should be able to offer different amounts of task and relationship behavior, as needed by the group. As shown in Figure 1, the Situational Leadership® model identifies four leadership styles involving varying degrees of task and relationship behavior in relation to the four levels of group or follower maturity.

Style One and Stage One

Style one of the Situational Leadership® model is a highly directive approach involving high task, low relationship behavior, which is most effective with groups that have low task maturity, i.e., are unable and unwilling to carry out the task in question. This style involves making expectations clear, instructing the group members in what is to be done and how and when it is to be done, and supervising closely. Relationship behavior is low because, according to behavior-modification principles, one does not reward people for being unable or unwilling to perform a task; one does not support such behavior because the desire for reward (positive leader relationship behavior) should serve to spur the group on to progress beyond this point. However, some relationship behavior on the part of the leader is necessary to maintain channels of communication. Because style one is leader directed, it is called "Telling" (see Figure 1).

The forming stage (stage one) of small-group development is characterized by low task-relevant maturity. An analysis of group interaction reveals a major concern with resolving inclusion issues (Schutz, 1958); behavior that is individually centered (Thelen & Dickerman, 1949); individual members who are rated low on task ability (Bales, 1958); highly dependent and, thus, unreliable membership patterns (Bennis & Shepard, 1956); and member requests and statements concerning orientation (Bales, 1953). A strong need for security is a key motivator. Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs is exemplified as members of the group evidence needs for safety, security, and nurturance.

A leader who uses a directive and highly structured telling style provides a most effective and efficient means of resolving dependency relationships and orienting group members to the task at hand during this stage.

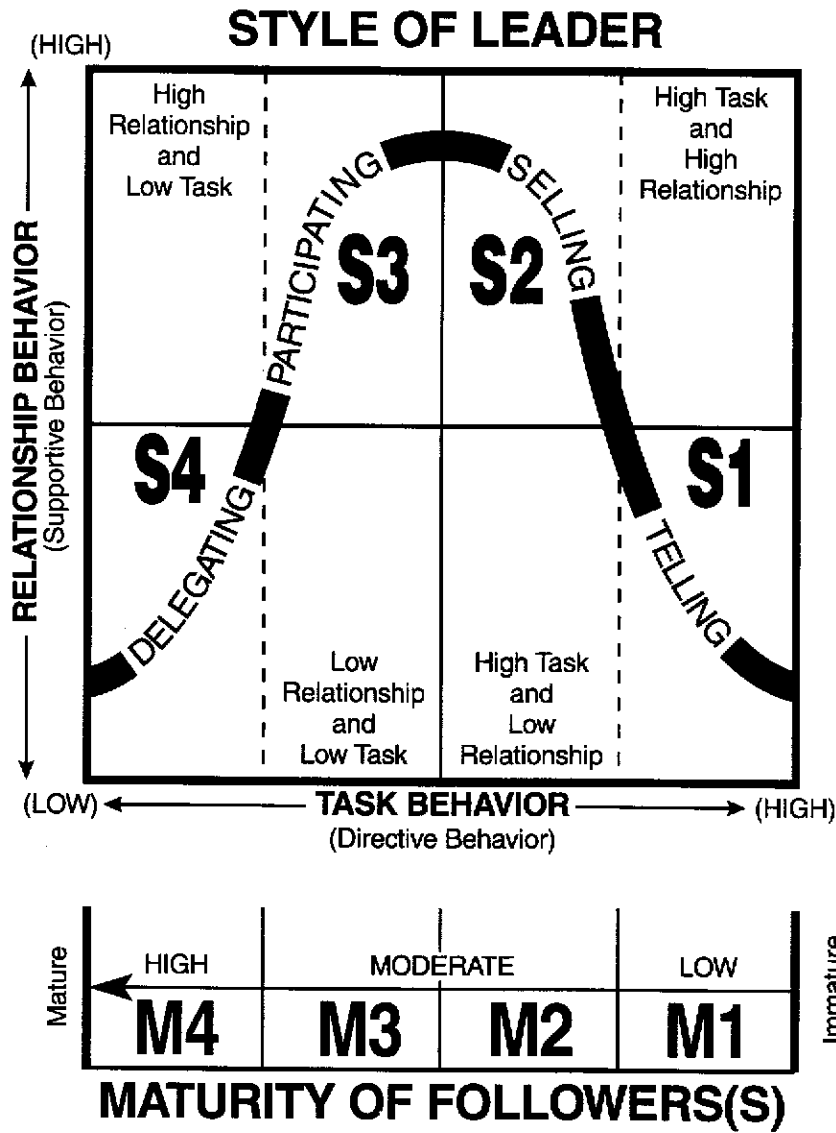


Figure 1. The Situational Leadership® Model¹

Style Two and Stage Two

Style two includes both high task and high relationship behaviors and is most effective with followers or groups that are inexperienced but willing. Although the leader still provides task directions, this style adds opportunities for clarifying, explaining the rationale behind the task, and questioning from the follower or group. The willingness and emerging abilities of the group members to carry out the task are reinforced by relationship behaviors that include support, praise, encouragement, and attention. Because this second style involves leader behaviors that encourage the group members

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to accept more responsibility for the task, i.e., to “buy into” or “own” the task, it is called “Selling.”

The storming stage (stage two) of small-group development is characterized by various degrees of conflict and emotions. Behavioral patterns are counterdependent (Bennis & Shepard, 1956); they involve frustration (Thelen & Dickerman, 1949), testing (Mills, 1964), and control issues (Schutz, 1958). Underlying this volatile stage is the need to belong and a desire for increased social interaction (Maslow, 1954). Although still somewhat lacking in experience, group members begin to indicate willingness to perform tasks.

The conflict that occurs during stage two makes this stage the most critical one. It is essential to manage the conflict effectively in order to provide opportunity for subsequent growth (Kormanski, 1982). Conflict that is out of control creates chaos, while suppression of all natural conflict creates apathy. Bion’s (1961) description of the fight/flight response is an excellent example of these behaviors. Interventions during this stage require both high task and high relationship behaviors (see Figure 1). The leader must assume an active and directive posture but also should include group members by explaining decisions and providing opportunities for clarification (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982).

Both Telling and Selling are *developmental* leadership styles. The relationship behavior of the Telling style is low but is increased as the group assumes more responsibility for a task. If it is *not* increased as the group matures, resentment may occur. Because the Selling style involves high levels of both task and relationship behavior, it requires a lot of time and effort on the part of the leader. The developmental aspect of the style encourages the group members, the followers, to assume even more responsibility for the task as their ability and willingness to perform the task increase.

Style Three and Stage Three

Style three consists of low task and high relationship behaviors. This style matches the needs of the group that is above average in maturity level, but still somewhat unwilling to assume total responsibility for the task. Such unwillingness often results from a *lack of confidence* rather than from any negative feelings regarding the task itself. Thus, high supportive relationship behaviors must be maintained to combat the unwillingness or lack of confidence. By reducing the amount of directive task behavior, the leader allows the group to assume increased, shared, task responsibility. Because there is two-way communication about the task and shared decision making, this leader style is called “Participating.”

The norming stage (stage three) of small-group development begins a move toward group unity, with emphasis on openness (Schutz, 1982), morale (Slater, 1966), and harmony (Miles, 1981). Increased member participation is evidenced by the encouragement of confrontation (Mann, 1967), integration (Hare, 1976), and involvement (Miles, 1981). Individuals at this stage frequently rate activity and task

ability high (Bales, 1958). Underlying this behavior is the need for esteem and recognition (Maslow, 1954).

The norming stage of small-group development is enhanced when the Participating style of leadership is used. The high relationship behavior of the leader contributes to the development of cohesion, while the low task behavior encourages the expression of opinions and increases open communication. The goal of cooperation is perceived as realistic and reachable. The leader's role now includes sharing ideas, facilitating decision making and problem solving (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982), and providing feedback and socioemotional support. There is a developmental aspect to this stage, too; as the group becomes more confident and more willing to assume responsibility for directing its own operations, the leader can begin to reduce supportive behaviors.

Style Four and Stage Four

Leadership style four involves both low task and low relationship behaviors from the leader because groups with high task maturity are both experienced and willing as a result of their ongoing development; they do not need or expect the task-directive behaviors or the socioemotional support and consultative behaviors that the leader has provided heretofore. They are competent, confident, and highly motivated. Because the task is, in effect, now turned over to the group, the leader's style is termed "Delegating." Delegating provides the opportunity for group self-motivation and self-direction regarding task accomplishment. The members of the group are able to set challenging but realistic goals and to utilize pride as a motivating factor. They need minimum supervision and, in fact, may regard more task or relationship behavior from the leader as "interference" or evidence of a lack of trust in their abilities. However, although leader task and relationship behaviors are reduced significantly, they are not eliminated completely. The leader still will maintain open channels of communication to provide for pertinent interchanges of taskrelevant information. In addition, periodic reinforcement for outstanding achievement may be appropriate.

The performing stage (stage four) of small-group development evidences a high level of group maturity. Group behavior includes a focus on goal attainment (Hare, 1976) and internalization (Mann, 1967). The traditional leadership characteristics of task ability, activity, and likability are all high for group members in this stage (Bales, 1958). Self-actualization is the predominant individual need, with emphasis on competence and achievement (Maslow, 1954). This fourth stage of small-group development involves the emergence of solutions and the establishment of functional roles. The Delegating style allows group problem solving and promotes the interdependent role needed for group members to function as a team. The leader engages in limited, but periodic, interaction with the group. The overall goal is productivity through problem solving and work (Bion, 1961; Miles, 1981; Mills, 1964; Stanford, 1977; Thelen & Dickerman, 1949; Ward, 1982). The leader turns over responsibility for decisions and implementation to the group (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982).

Stage Five and the Adjourment Crisis

The Situational Leadership® model, although developmental in nature, also can be used regressively. A crisis often will result in a decrease in task ability or willingness (maturity). In such a situation, the leader would move backward along the curvilinear Situational Leadership® scale (see Figure 1), reassess the current maturity level of the group, and use the appropriate leadership style.

Concluding a group creates some apprehension—in effect, it is a minor crisis. Therefore, the task-maturity level of the group generally will regress. If the group has been responsible for its own functioning, but now seems to be unable or unwilling to continue to do so, the appropriate leadership behavior would be to change to the Participating style. Because the adjourning stage of small-group development centers around separation, grieving and leaving behaviors are typical (Ward, 1982). The termination of the group is a regressive movement from giving up control to giving up inclusion in the group (Schutz, 1958).

The Participating style facilitates the task termination and disengagement process. A low task orientation allows group members to become actively involved in the group's conclusion while the leader provides high relationship support to combat reluctance to leave and the desire to remain within the safe, predictable structure of the group. If the crisis were to persist, the leader would match the decreasing task-maturity level by regressing to the Selling style and increasing the amount of task-directive behavior.

Table 2 summarizes the five stages of group development, their corresponding leadership styles, descriptions of the maturity level of the group, and the related level in Maslow's (1954) hierarchy of needs.

THE ROLE OF THE CONSULTANT OR TRAINER

Understanding the theory of small-group development and its implications for leadership behavior can be a valuable tool for the consultant or trainer. The behavioral themes of each stage of group development offer insight into what happens naturally in a group; patterns that deviate from these themes suggest problems and a need for intervention. Such patterns might include moving too fast, skipping stages, focusing only on task dimensions, and blockages or fixations in particular stages.

For example, a foreman who is eager to accomplish as much as possible to impress his superiors may spend little or no time on the forming process (stage one) in order to get directly to work on the task. This undoubtedly will result in confusion and misunderstandings among his group of employees, thus hindering both group development and task accomplishment. A manager who dislikes dealing with conflict may make quick, authoritative interventions or delegate decisions to the group, thus abdicating her role in helping to manage the group's conflict. The group is likely to view such behavior as unreasonable as well as unhelpful. Similarly, a manager who is very task oriented may be unaware of relationship issues and fail to deal at all with

Table 2. Relationships Between Small-Group Development, Leadership Style, Group Task Maturity, and Level of Needs

Group Development	Leadership Style	Maturity Level	Maturity Level
1. Forming	Telling (S1)	Inexperienced and unwilling (M1)	Physiological needs, security needs
2. Storming	Selling (S2)	Inexperienced and willing (M2)	Belonging and social needs
3. Norming	Participating (S3)	Experienced and unwilling or not confident (M3)	Recognition and esteem needs
4. Performing	Delegating (S4)	Experienced and willing	Self-actualization needs
5. Adjourning	Participating (S3)	Experienced and unwilling (M3)	

dependency or hostility early in the development of a staff group. The resulting work atmosphere would be one of independent, individual effort in a rigid, inflexible pattern. Conversely, if a task-force leader works too hard at building relationships, the group will develop problems during the norming process (stage three) because of the leader's need to seek consensus on minor details.

Mismatches between the stage of small-group development and leadership style often create serious problems. A leader's reluctance to change styles, generally because he or she is comfortable with only one or two styles or has developed skill in using only one or two styles, limits the leader's effectiveness and the group's chances for success. For example, a supervisor who favors the Participating style may have difficulty initiating group work. Although more experienced workers may assume responsibility, the more inexperienced ones will flounder or withdraw from group action unless more task direction is provided. While seeking the security of task direction, members of new groups are likely to perceive leader behavior that is highly relationship oriented as inappropriate; in fact, they may be suspicious of it. In another example, a company president who has used the high-task, Telling style in establishing the firm may be very helpful to new project groups in their early stages. But if the president cannot change his or her leadership style once the groups become more functional, this domineering and crisis-oriented manner will prevent open discussion and true efforts at consensus. Low morale, apathy or resentment, and low productivity may cause the groups to end prematurely. In contrast, but equally ineffective, is the manager who has been encouraged to delegate more as the work force becomes more cohesive and productive but who delegates only those tasks that he or she personally dislikes doing. As the group members begin to perceive this, and especially if the manager also forgets to check on progress and provide praise or other rewards for superior work, it is unlikely that the tasks will be completed well or on time.

The consultant or trainer may want to examine the motivation and power issues of the leader and the group to ascertain the impact of these on performance behavior. These concerns also provide excellent topics for staff training and development programs in organizations and for trainers and consultants who work with groups and their leaders and who want to increase the timeliness and effectiveness of their interventions.

CONCLUSION

Ward (1982) advocates a democratic leadership style in order to allow and encourage the individual interaction necessary for group development and eventual shared leadership. The application of Situational Leadership® to small-group development suggests that this style works best during the latter stages of group life (norming, performing, and adjourning) and is not effective during the early stages (forming and storming). Fiedler (1967) suggests that a democratic style of leadership is most appropriate for moderately structured groups and that highly unstructured or structured groups profit most from a directive style of leadership. Thus, as the group is forming, uncommitted and uncertain of itself and its task, the more directive Telling style provides instruction, direction, and structure under the guidance of the leader.

During the storming stage, group members question things, ask for clarification, and begin to develop trust. The supportive Selling style encourages group-member involvement and reinforces performance while still providing some direction and impetus to the group's activities.

As group members gain experience in working together and in working on the task at hand, they are able to handle more responsibility, and a more democratic style of leadership can be used (Hersey & Blanchard, 1982). The Participating and Delegating styles of leadership offer opportunities for group members to begin norming and performing with shared and democratic leadership. Eventually, even supportive relationship behavior from the leader is reduced as it is replaced by individual pride and self-motivation.

Finally, as termination of the group approaches and the crisis of separation ensues, supportive leader relationship behavior again is increased to help the group to deal with termination issues.

It should be obvious by now that matching the appropriate leadership style with each specific stage of group development not only answers the needs of the group members and facilitates group action and development, but also encourages individual members and the group as a whole to increase in task maturity. However, the ability to diagnose the stage of development of the group and the knowledge of which style to use is not enough. Attaining skill in actually using each of the four leadership styles and the ability to change styles as the group becomes more mature or regresses are necessary developmental steps for any leader, manager, trainer, or consultant.

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■ STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Peter P. Fay and Austin G. Doyle

Changes in team leadership or the creation of new teams often results in losses of productivity due to the tendency of all groups to go through some predictable stages of growth and regression. Some typical dysfunctional behaviors of team members, team leaders, and the team as a whole when groups are in transition are shown in Figure 1. An awareness of the stages of group development is important, particularly for managers and organization-development practitioners who must lead teams during times of transition.

TUCKMAN'S MODEL OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Several models of group development are available in the literature. Tuckman (1965) summarized the results of over fifty studies into the following four-stage model, upon which this article is based:

- Stage I, Form*, characterized by testing and dependence;
- Stage II, Storm*, characterized by intrateam conflict;
- Stage III, Norm*, characterized by the development of team cohesion; and
- Stage IV, Perform*, characterized by functional role relatedness.

Stage I: Form

During Stage I, team members discover what behaviors are acceptable to the group. For newly established groups, this stage is the transition from individual to member status. For teams with new leadership, mission, or members, this stage is a period of testing behavior and dependence on formal or informal group leadership for guidance in a newly unstructured environment. This stage is also characterized by the following:

- Attempts to identify tasks in terms of relevant parameters and to decide how the group will accomplish the tasks;
- Decisions on the type of information needed and how it will be used;
- Hesitant participation;
- Tests of behavioral expectations and ways to handle behavioral problems;
- Feelings of initial attachment to the team;

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- Intellectualizing;
- Discussion of symptoms or problems peripheral to the task;
- Complaints about the organizational environment;
- Suspicion, fear, and anxiety about the new situation; and
- Minimal work accomplishment.

Stage II: Storm

During Stage II, team members become hostile or overzealous as a way to express their individuality and resist group formation. Members recognize the extent of the task demands and respond emotionally to the perceived requirements for self-change and self-denial. Other characteristics of this stage include:

- Infighting, defensiveness, and competition;
- Establishment of unachievable goals;
- Disunity, increased tension, and jealousy;
- Resistance to the task demands because they are perceived to interfere with personal needs;
- Polarization of group members;
- Sharp fluctuations of relationships and reversals of feelings;
- Concern over excessive work;
- Establishment of pecking orders; and
- Minimal work accomplishment.

Stage III: Norm

During Stage III, members accept the team, team norms, their own roles, and idiosyncracies of fellow members. Emotional conflict is reduced by patching up previously conflicting relationships. Other characteristics of this stage include:

- An attempt to achieve maximum harmony by avoiding conflict;
- A high level of intimacy characterized by confiding in each other, sharing personal problems, and discussing team dynamics;
- A new ability to express emotions constructively;
- A sense of team cohesiveness with a common spirit and goals;
- The establishment and maintenance of team boundaries; and
- Moderate work accomplishment.

Stage IV: Perform

Now that the team has established its interpersonal norms, it becomes an entity capable of diagnosing and solving problems and making decisions. Stage IV is not always reached by management teams. Other characteristics of this stage include:

- Members experience insight into personal and interpersonal processes;
- Constructive self-change is undertaken; and
- A great deal of work is accomplished.

<i>BY TEAM MEMBERS</i>	BY TEAM LEADER	BY TEAM AS A WHOLE
■ Evident anxiety regarding future	■ Attempts to take charge	■ Gain/loss in esteem identity
■ Attempts to blend into woodwork	■ Seemingly random changes	■ Competitive behavior
■ Career reassessment	■ Inaccurate assessments of staff	■ Realignment of turf
■ Rejoicing/mourning loss of old leader	■ Negative stereotyping	■ Drops in level of candor
■ Temporary confusion	■ Nepotism	■ Confusion over group's purpose/priorities
■ Sabotage	■ High expectations/frustration	■ Work suspension
■ Distrust/blaming	■ Stress reactions	■ Excessive meetings/presentations
■ Testing of new leader		■ Formation of new coalitions
■ Panic		■ Shelving of innovative plans
■ Jockeying for position		■ Change of reward systems
■ Stress reactions		■ Overuse of grapevine

Figure 1. Some Typical Dysfunctional Behaviors of Teams in Transition, Based on Tuckman (1965)

IMPLICATIONS FOR GROUP MEMBERSHIP

Because the form, storm, and norm stages result in minimal output, it is tempting to try to rush through or short circuit these stages and to hope the group can thereby achieve peak productivity. Although seductive, this idea is dysfunctional. Just as individuals go through predictable stages of growth depending on age, experience, maturity, and other factors, teams go through predictable stages, the duration of which depends on factors such as individual and team maturity, task complexity, leadership, organizational climate, and external climate. Groups can fixate at various stages. Some (like some people) are never fully functioning. Given that the stages are inevitable, one way to help

reduce the time needed for a new or changing team to be fully productive while minimizing the tension, fear, or anxiety common in the *form* and *storm* stages is to share rumors, concerns, and expectations about the group. Members of the team can contract with one another that there will be no “surprises,” and therefore an atmosphere of trust can be achieved earlier (*norm* stage), allowing for interpersonal issues to be put aside in favor of task issues and for the team to move on to *perform*.

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■ FOSTERING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GROUPS AT WORK

Patrick J. Ward and Robert C. Preziosi

It is clear that the mandates for organizational leaders is changing. The tasks of controlling and directing are evolving into facilitating—including coaching, encouraging, listening, and teaching. At the same time the focus on total quality management (TQM) and continuous improvement have given rise to an increasing emphasis on the development of groups. Yet danger lurks down the road for organizations if they do not understand how groups develop and function and if they do not recognize and plan for the complexity involved in fostering the group experience. Management training must prepare organizational leaders for their responsibilities as facilitators of group development.

Historically, many managers have begun their careers as line workers who have shown aptitude and/or loyalty in production. These characteristics, however, have not always been accompanied by interpersonal skills; people's experiences as line workers do not generally make them aware of the complexities of forming and working with groups, nor do these experiences teach them the skills they need to facilitate groups successfully.

The success of groups in the workplace depends on training managers—as well as line workers—in how groups develop and what skills are required to use a group effectively. Success also depends on an organizational environment that encourages communication, the exchange of ideas, and the ability to be self-critical in the interest of improvement. Organizational members must be open to feedback regarding themselves and their work groups. Groups must be tied to the goals and purposes of the organization, and these connections need to be clear. The function of each group needs to be supported by top management. Finally, after being trained, both supervisors and nonsupervisory employees need to nurture communication skills. Group skills should become part of the criteria on which people's performance is evaluated. In fact, ideally, evaluation would be done with the group rather than the individual.

Instead, managers in the United States often have been trained to focus on numbers. They are usually evaluated according to whether they meet quotas and stay under budget. In other words, they are judged on their production, not their communication (D'Aprix, 1982). Consequently, in dealing with employees, they become more emotionally distant to maintain objectivity and to be “businesslike”; and this behavior is sometimes interpreted as lacking emotion. The interpersonal skills needed for effective

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group work are often overtly as well as covertly discouraged. Under such norms, it is difficult to cultivate the skills necessary to enhance communication, to foster effective group work, and to be open to feedback concerning the needs of the organization.

When faced with problems within the organization, first-line supervisors may feel pressured and defensive in protecting their interests and advancement. This is particularly true if they are not properly trained in problem solving, communication, and systems practices. Managers and supervisors who lack such training may revert to rigidly doing as they are told without questioning (Argyris, 1991). This form of “learned helplessness” creates frustration but at the same time absolves them of responsibility. The organization achieves a sense of predictability and “control,” but at the expense of responsiveness and continuous improvement.

Finally, managers and supervisors succumb to attribution—attributing the causes of difficulty to others—while sensing that they have not been adequately prepared or supported. Thus, they may be blind to their own ineffectiveness and may lose contact with the overall goals of the organization. The primary focus of management—and, therefore, of the organization—ultimately becomes control in the interest of self-protection.

Without effective leadership, workers feel frustrated, ignored, and isolated. Lacking avenues of communication, they sublimate their anger and resentment, thus fostering resistance, sabotage, and passive-aggressive patterns.

To throw these groups together without appreciation for the complexity and power (both constructive and destructive) of the group process is a waste of time, money, and potential. If the proper organizational climate and support systems are not already in place, TQM, continuous improvement, and the use of groups should be postponed until training and team-building efforts can be completed.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GROUP EXPERIENCE IN ORGANIZATIONS

Groups can be a vital and important organizational tool. Gersick (1988) points out that “organizations largely consist of permanent and temporary groups,” from work units, to project teams, to special committees or task forces. Beckhard (1972) suggests the following major purposes for using groups in the workplace:

- To set goals or priorities;
- To analyze work and assign responsibility and accountability;
- To examine the norms, both formal and informal, of the organization; and
- To examine the relationships of the people doing the work.

The potential of groups to assist their organizations is enormous. For example, organizations are increasingly using task groups to meet the challenges of legal requirements. Employee input into job analysis, for instance, helps organizations in the

U.S. to comply with laws regarding Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and rights regarding “protected groups.” Improper job analysis, along with lack of awareness of changing laws and regulations, can make an organization vulnerable to lawsuits and charges of noncompliance (Veres, Locklear, & Sims, 1990). Similarly, groups can be used to meet other challenges, such as those of employee testing. Managers can be encouraged to work with groups in monitoring compliance with legal mandates governing employment tests, aptitude tests for promotion and advancement, lie-detector and drug-screen tests for potential employees, and treatment of employees and applicants with disabilities.

Knowledge of group development and dynamics can assist supervisors and employees in exploiting the opportunities presented in these cooperative experiences. The use of groups can be extremely effective in an organization, not only in protecting it from legal problems but also in:

- Helping to infuse new ideas and attitudes into the culture;
- Encouraging employee participation and nurturing a sense of involvement and increased personal investment;
- Providing employees with new insights regarding their own and their groups’ behaviors;
- Offering an alternative means for evaluating performance and evaluating the organization’s abilities to support employee efforts;
- Providing an opportunity for employees to learn through observation and modeling, thereby increasing their own skill levels and contributing more to their groups and the organization as a whole;
- Representing a microcosm and providing indicators of how clients and customers may view the organization; and
- Teaching employees how to listen and communicate—how to check their perceptions and avoid misconceptions.

It is important to note that groups also can have devastating effects if they are managed poorly, thereby driving communication underground, creating negative agendas, and setting up divisive alliances. If groups are to be used effectively, organizations must help all employees to understand the development and the life cycle of a group. For managers, such training could ease the pressures of supervising and could teach the skills associated with successful facilitating; for nonmanagerial employees, this training could teach them to derive maximum benefit from the group experience.

Success in this endeavor requires the cooperation and participation of all levels in the organization. Group leadership is a skill that can be taught, but the learner must be patient and dedicated and must grow to understand and respect the group process. It is equally important that senior management understand and respect the group process and

lend it their support. For optimal effectiveness in group work to occur, the organization must consider such work to be part of a comprehensive attempt to enhance communication. Group work is not a panacea; it is one tool among many for increasing effectiveness in meeting tactical and strategic challenges.

THE STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

As every group is a collection of individuals, each experience is unique and requires special consideration. Despite the differences among groups, though, a certain developmental progression or life cycle can be expected. The stages of group life outlined in the remainder of this article—pregroup, initial, transition, working, final, and postgroup—are meant to suggest the complexity of the group experience. This information is intended to define and describe some of the dynamics that can be expected in working with a group. The discussion is presented in terms of the leadership functions and the member functions that are applicable in each stage. In addition, Table 1 identifies the key issues at each stage.

Table 1. Key Issues at Each Stage of Group Development

Stage	Leader Issues	Member Issues	Leader/Member Issues
Pregroup	Gaining commitment from top management	Developing enthusiasm for the group	Needs assessment; diagnosis
Initial	Training for participation in group	Commitment to organizational needs	Group-process skill development
Transition	Encouraging autonomy of group members	Working through conflict	Conflict resolution; mediation
Working	Helping group members to interpret behaviors; facilitating and encouraging	Supporting one another	Esteem-building behavior
Final	Reinforcing behavioral changes by asserting influence	Completing any unfinished business	Celebration of success
Postgroup	Making resources for change available	Monitoring group effectiveness	Measurement

Although all stages of group work are important, it is most important to focus on pregroup and postgroup activities. The other stages occur naturally, while those efforts before and after the group experience require concerted energy and special effort. When the leader and the members know what to expect at various stages, they can accomplish more, follow through better in group meetings, and increase their chances of putting energy and ideas to use.

In addition to the leadership functions listed below, it is also important that the leader maintain communication with top management and with other groups. The leader is the primary linkage between the group and the other parts of the organization.

Pregroup Stage

It is imperative that every group have a purpose, a clear reason for being. Today many groups are formed as quality-improvement teams or task groups whose job is to tackle certain problems. However, a group must work on its own *processes* as well as the *problems* that it is assigned. Also, the group must be empowered to offer solutions and suggestions; and, regardless of whether these solutions and suggestions are accepted and acted on, the organization must validate and respond to them.

In addition to a reason for being, a group must have specific goals that are both understood and supported by top management. The group members must be able to answer “yes” to a number of questions:

- Do the members of the group have the assurance that their findings and recommendations will be considered?
- Do they have established parameters under which to operate?
- Do they understand not only the problem that they are to address but also the organization’s objectives in the identified area?
- Do they have a clear understanding of the organization’s goals?
- Do they have the assurance of top management that their work is of more than just passing interest and is truly important?

Leadership Functions in the Pregroup Stage

- Developing a clearly written proposal for the formation of the group, outlining its purpose and goals.
- Conducting needs-assessment interviews to gain input from potential members about needs, thereby decreasing resistance and promoting a sense of group ownership on the part of potential members.
- Presenting the proposal to top managers and obtaining their agreement concerning the group’s scheduling, purpose, and goals.
- Making decisions about the size of the group and who needs to be included in the membership. (The ideal group size is five to eight members, although as many as twelve may be included. If the group becomes too large, two groups may be formed to divide responsibilities and coordinate efforts; or the fact that many people need to be included may be an indication that the goals of the group need to be simplified and further narrowed.)

- Identifying other groups, departments, or external stakeholders who may need to be involved in group goals. For example, if the group is focused on an issue of production, do any suppliers or providers also need to have input?
- Organizing practical details for meetings, including arranging a comfortable setting and determining appropriate time frames. This organization also includes coordinating and developing any necessary audiovisual materials. *The more prepared the leader is for the first sessions, the more seriously the members will take the group.*
- Arranging preliminary group discussions to allow members to become acquainted and to orient and prepare them for a successful experience.
- Preparing psychologically for the leadership tasks and meeting with a co-facilitator if appropriate.

Group Members' Functions in the Pregroup Stage

- Including themselves in the discussions concerning the group and its work.
- Learning the facts about the group that might have an impact on them during their tenure.
- Deciding what they feel the outcome of their efforts should be. (Anxiety about the group may be lessened and enthusiasm strengthened if the group members feel that they can prepare. Also, the members will feel a greater sense of control and ownership.)

Initial Stage

During this stage the ground rules are set. The parameters of the group are established. Members identify appropriate issues to be considered as well as those that might be considered in the future. If the group is meeting on a specific production issue, for example, the members determine whether the concerns raised by group members have to do with that issue and whether the group can do anything about those concerns. It is important in this stage to clarify the parameters and narrow the group's focus.

The central issue in this stage is trust. The members are testing the group for comfort and trying to determine identities for themselves. They display high degrees of "socially acceptable" or restrained behavior, and facades may be strong. Negative feelings may arise as the members experiment to see which feelings are acceptable and as they learn group norms, both implicit and explicit. In addition, positive connections may begin to develop. Each member may ask himself or herself questions such as these:

- Will this group make a difference?
- Will it be beneficial to me?
- If I am expected to be honest, will my honesty be used against me if I disagree?

- If I disagree, is it safer to hide my opinion and simply go along with the other members?

The members may slip into problem solving or may attempt to explain away problems to avoid taking risks and identifying their own needs or concerns. They also may focus on other members' personal needs, thereby sublimating their own needs.

Leadership Functions in the Initial Stage

- Laying out general guidelines and teaching the group members how to participate actively (both by example and through didactic information): how to be specific, how to clarify, how to give and receive feedback appropriately. This function may include teaching the basics of group process, including the importance of active listening. (Some instruction may take place during pregroup sessions).
- Providing an activity through which the group members can become acquainted and can share their expectations of the group. "Brainstorming" activities also may be used to identify potential concerns. These concerns can then be prioritized by the group and placed on the group's agenda.
- Assisting members in expressing themselves; pointing out linkages among the members' ideas.
- Clarifying the division of responsibility; helping the members to identify their personal roles in the group.
- Giving positive feedback for member participation.
- Providing structure and direction for the group while allowing for member participation.
- Identifying the members' verbal and nonverbal cues.
- Recognizing and providing an opportunity for discussion of mistrust or misgivings about the group process.
- Stressing the importance of confidentiality regarding discussions within the group. (In identifying problems with the organization, the group members can put themselves at risk. It is imperative that they feel safe to critically examine the organization.)

Group Members' Functions in the Initial Stage

- Establishing a commitment to the needs of the organization, as opposed to purely personal needs.
- Participating in "brainstorming" and other team activities.

- Being responsible for their own reactions. For example, a group member who assumes responsibility says something like “I feel confused about what is happening right now” instead of “This group is confusing.”
- Listening.
- Offering suggestions for alternatives if they disagree with the group’s focus or procedures.
- Letting go of personal agendas. All members must guard against letting their personal agendas take precedence over group needs. At first the members may not be aware of their agendas, but in time these agendas become clearer.

Transition Stage

This phase in the group’s development is marked by the dropping of facades and restrained behavior and may be characterized by challenges to the leader and other group members. Resistance and conflict become more apparent. Members may be experimenting with their group identities and checking to see how much disagreement or conflict will be accepted as well as how it will be handled. This is a critical stage. The leader may feel threatened and overwhelmed, with the sense that everything is falling apart.

Whenever roles or expectations of organizational members are changed, hidden agendas and informal power structures may come to the surface. Although this development may seem like regression, it is actually a sign that the group is advancing.

If the members represent different work areas, resistance may come from the supervisors of those areas, who feel threatened or left out. It is important to remember the “linking” function of the group leader in keeping top management and other organizational groups informed. If resistance is encountered from other managers or supervisors, it might be wise for the leader to try to enlist their support and “expertise.”

Leadership Functions in the Transition Stage

- Encouraging and rewarding the open sharing of group members’ reactions during meetings.
- Validating feedback while keeping the superordinate goal of the organization in focus.
- Identifying subgroupings and ensuring that no members are taken advantage of or excluded.
- Assisting the members in recognizing their own patterns of defensiveness or resistance.
- Knowing when to direct interventions toward the group or toward individual members. For instance, examples of defensiveness may be presented to the total group rather than directed to one particular person. Also, directing interventions

at the total group involves balanced communication and decreases the likelihood of dialogue between group members and the leader.

- Encouraging members to express ideas and feelings in the here-and-now and keeping them focused on the task at hand. Such encouragement keeps the group from digressing into a complaint session about past problems and maintains a focus on finding solutions to current problems.
- Encouraging the group members to be autonomous. The leader should be stepping back, allowing the members to do more and more of the communicating among themselves. The leader's task is to facilitate and to ensure that the communication continues to flow, while allowing the members more freedom in directing the conversation. *If there are disagreements within the group, it is not the leader's responsibility to solve them;* instead, the leader should simply facilitate to ensure that no members are treated abusively in any way.

Group Members' Functions in the Transition Stage

- Moving away from dependence on the leader and establishing more independence.
- Recognizing and expressing personal reactions and/or negative feelings.
- Learning how to confront others or others' ideas in a constructive manner.
- Learning to work through conflicts rather than avoiding them. Members may begin to form subgroups. If conflict is suppressed in a group, it may go more deeply "underground," with members communicating more outside the group. Members have a responsibility to bring outside or covert material to the surface and to assist in making it overt so that it may be processed or dealt with.

Working Stage

This stage of the group's development is indicated by increasing cohesiveness among members, with open communication about different viewpoints. Leadership functions are likely to be shared by the group members; interactions are balanced between and among members, not directed by the leader.

Feedback is given more freely, and it is met with less defensiveness than previously shown. Members display a willingness to work outside of the group to implement changes. They take ownership of their behavior. Also, member empathy is high. The members assist one another in nonjudgmental ways and display greater identity with one another.

Problems at this stage may include a decreasing ability of the group to be self-critical regarding its effectiveness. Group members may have dual goals or purposes: (1) the effectiveness of the group and (2) acceptance by group members. Group members may avoid critical analysis or confrontation for fear of being ostracized.

Leadership Functions in the Working Stage

- Ensuring that the members do not collude to avoid conflict in order to maintain comfortable levels of group cohesiveness.
- Interpreting group behavior to assist the members in attaining deeper levels of understanding.
- Linking members; pointing out the norms of the group, both formal and informal.
- Assisting in clarifying and assessing the goals and accomplishments of the group.
- Encouraging the members to turn new insights and ideas into action.
- Providing the members with needed information and materials to allow them to continue functioning effectively.
- Summarizing group process and interactions and assisting the members in clarifying emerging goals in behavioral terms.
- Helping the members to identify time lines and clarify responsibilities.

Group Members' Functions in the Working Stage

- Providing feedback, confrontation, and support to one another. The members monitor one another's feedback and work toward keeping one another involved.
- Taking turns in assuming leadership behaviors; directing topics, communication flow, and the assignment of responsibilities.
- Monitoring to ensure that the group does not become too comfortable with familiar relationships and that members continue to challenge one another when necessary.

Final Stage

One of the reasons for clearly specifying the objectives of the group at the outset is to be able to tell when it has served its purpose and needs to disband. If the urgency of the problem that brought about the group has lessened, energies may be lost. It is important to remind the members why the group was formed, to point out its accomplishments, and to stress the fragility of those accomplishments if actions are not carried through.

A number of questions need to be answered at this stage of group life:

- If new procedures have been put in place, are the responsibilities clear?
- Are there ways of monitoring the ongoing results or suggestions of the group?
- Are other support systems in the organization aware of their responsibilities in connection with the group's work?
- If the group was formed to deal with a human resource issue, has the human resources department been informed of the recommendations of the group?

- Has this department responded to the group's suggestions, given alternatives, or made a commitment to the suggested actions?
- Is top management aware of the accomplishments of the group and willing to support or at least respond to the group's suggestions?

As these questions illustrate, the group leader's linking function is again important at this stage.

The final stage brings about the possibility of another issue. Certain group members may feel that their concerns have not been attended to, and now time is running out. It is important to respond to their concerns and to assign them to future groups or include them in discussion. The members must know that the work of the group is only a beginning and that a much more important demonstration of the group's effectiveness lies before them in their behaviors and actions outside the group.

Members are likely to pull back, anticipating the end of the group. They may be feeling some sadness over that ending, or they may worry about being able to continue their new-found levels of communication.

Leadership Functions in the Final Stage

- Assisting in clarifying and summarizing group goals.
- Assisting members in dealing with any unfinished business.
- Reinforcing changes that the members have made.
- Ensuring that the members have information about resources to enable them to make desired, identified changes.
- Assisting the members in operationalizing changes, determining how they will put identified goals into action. This function may involve establishing member contracts or giving "homework" assignments.
- Providing the members with opportunities to give one another feedback.
- Re-emphasizing the importance of maintaining confidentiality; continuing to respect the rights of others outside the group.
- Summarizing, integrating, and consolidating what the members have achieved in the group.
- Providing more leadership, direction, and structure to decrease anxiety and to solidify group goals.

Group Members' Functions in the Final Stage

- Clarifying personal and group goals to which the members have committed.
- Completing any unfinished business.
- Clarifying the direction/decisions of the group.

- Evaluating the impact of the group.
- Making suggestions regarding future groups.
- Realizing that the group is not an end in itself and that most of the work identified within the group must take place outside.

Postgroup Stage

Although the critical postgroup stage is often overlooked, it may be the most important of the group-development stages. The group's major contribution to the organization is likely to occur during this stage. The impact of the decisions or actions of the team must be assessed in the wider context of the organization's systems and subsystems. Obstacles to group action need to be identified, attended to, and removed if possible. Also, work during this phase may provide information that will prove valuable in establishing future groups in the organization.

A concern at this stage is that if members have problems implementing the group's approved recommendations or if they lose patience, they may become frustrated and subsequently view the entire group process as negative. The ultimate effectiveness of a group is not shown in its process or in how it ends; it is shown in what it is able to accomplish once the group experience has been completed. The group is only a beginning.

Leadership Functions in the Postgroup Stage

- Administering a postgroup assessment to help determine the group's long-range impact. This assessment should be done in multiple, longer-term follow-up stages.
- Using the information from the group to help bring about needed changes for member effectiveness.
- Making sure that resources are available for desired changes.
- Encouraging the members to continue to find some avenue of support outside the group process.
- Providing follow-up group sessions, if needed.
- Using information from the group (other than personal) in future planning of groups and as a source of needs assessment.
- Meeting with the co-facilitator, if one exists, and individually with group members to assess the overall impact and effectiveness of the group.
- Assisting the members in using identified measures of change.
- Using information to identify future training/skill building.

Group Members' Functions in the Postgroup Stage

- Finding ways of reinforcing new behaviors without the support of the formal group.
- Keeping records of changes, progress, problems, so that they can monitor the effectiveness of the group.
- Continuing relationships with one another to support individual programs for change.

SUMMARY

Traditional, autocratic leadership styles are obsolete in organizations in the United States. Although there is a place for decisive leadership at the top, the value of worker involvement and contribution must be fostered. Changes in work environments and technical developments require organizations that are proactive and responsive to change. And responsiveness depends on creative, effective communication skills—skills that are often overlooked if not covertly and even overtly discouraged.

The use of groups in the work place provides an avenue for enhancing communication skills, worker resiliency, and the effectiveness of organizations. Groups can foster more realistic job analysis, employee and job evaluation, assessment of training needs, increased motivation, and increased awareness of changes in the work environment. Groups must be considered as more than a “quick fix” or a fad, however. In order to manage groups effectively, organizations must train both supervisors and nonsupervisory personnel in the stages of group development and in ways to exploit the full potential of groups. As shown in Table 2, a number of instruments and structured

Table 2. Useful Learning Resources for Each Stage of Group Development

Stage	Instruments*	Experiential Learning Activity**
Pregroup	Organization Diagnosis	Color Me: Getting Acquainted
Initial	Feedback Rating Scales	A Note to My Teammate: Positive Feedback
Transition	Conflict Management Style Survey	The Hundredth Monkey: Shared Mind-Sets
Working	Group-Growth Evaluation Form	Stating the Issue: Practicing Ownership
Final	Self-Assessment Inventory: Behavior in Groups	Organizational Structure: A Simulation
Post group	The Individual-Team-Organization Survey: Conscious Change for the Organization	Supporting Cast: Examining Personal Support Networks

* All instruments can be found in the *Instrumentation Kit*, San Diego: Pfeiffer & Company, 1988.
 **All learning activities can be found in *The 1992 Annual: Developing Human Resources*, or *The 1993 Annual: Developing Human Resources*, J. William Pfeiffer (Ed.), San Diego: Pfeiffer & Company, 1993.

activities can be useful in providing necessary training during the various stages of group life.

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■ TEAM BUILDING

Anthony J. Reilly and John E. Jones

If a creature came from another planet to study earth civilization and returned to give a report, a “fair witness” about us would be “They do almost everything in groups. They grow up in groups, learn in groups, play in groups, live in groups, and work in groups.” Facilitators working in organizations understand that the basic building blocks of human systems are interdependent groups of people, or teams.

Some of the most exciting things about organization development (OD) are the many different, potentially useful activities and interventions that are available in this field. Many of these are oriented toward the individual working in the organization: career planning, one-to-one coaching and counseling, job enrichments, life planning. In this focus, individuals look at themselves in relation to their organization.

Another class of interventions, however—equally significant to an organization’s growth—focuses on groups within the organization. This direction includes such activities as problem solving at the group level, confrontation meetings, diagnostic meetings, and goal-setting sessions.

A TEAM EFFORT

Team building—another type of intervention at the group level—is an activity that appeals particularly to group facilitators because of their intensive growth-group background and also because it generates considerable excitement among team members.

We, along with a number of other writers in the human relations field, contend that team-building activities represent the most important single class of OD interventions.

This paper considers team building in depth: what it is, its goals, how it differs from other OD activities, the steps that have to be taken to assure that it is done well, and specifics about conducting team-building sessions.

“Team,” as it is used here, pertains to various kinds of groups. Most typically, it refers to intact, relatively permanent work groups, composed of peers and their immediate supervisor. But there are other kinds of teams, which may be more temporary in nature, whose charter is to come together for the purpose of accomplishing a particular task. Committees, task forces, “start-up” groups—each of these may be a team. For a group to function effectively as a team, several important elements must be present. (1) The group must have a charter or reason for working together; (2) members

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of the group must be interdependent—they need each other’s experience, abilities, and commitment in order to arrive at mutual goals; (3) group members must be committed to the idea that working together as a group leads to more effective decisions than working in isolation; and (4) the group must be accountable as a functioning unit within a larger organizational context.

In this light, team building is seen as a vital part of an OD effort. It affords a work group the opportunity to assess its strengths, as well as those areas that need improvement and growth. A group’s team-building effort has definite implications for the total effectiveness of the entire organization.

Team-Building Goals

Certain task and interpersonal issues impede a team’s functioning. Team building aims at improving the problem-solving ability among team members by working through these issues. This major goal includes a number of subgoals:

1. A better understanding of each team member’s role in the work group;
2. A better understanding of the team’s charter—its purpose and role in the total functioning of the organization;
3. Increased communication among team members about issues that affect the efficiency of the group;
4. Greater support among group members;
5. A clearer understanding of group process—the behavior and dynamics of any group that works closely together;
6. More effective ways of working through problems inherent to the team—at both task and interpersonal levels;
7. The ability to use conflict in a positive rather than a destructive way;
8. Greater collaboration among team members and the reduction of competition that is costly to individual, group, and organization;
9. A group’s increased ability to work with other work groups in the organization; and
10. A sense of interdependence among group members.

The final aim of team building, then, is a more cohesive, mutually supportive, and trusting group that will have high expectations for task accomplishment and will, at the same time, respect individual differences in values, personalities, skills, and idiosyncratic behavior. Successful team building should nurture individual potential.

Team Building vs. Training and Skill Building

The activities and norms developed in team-building sessions are different but complementary to those characteristic of management-training and skill-building

sessions. Concepts such as leadership styles, decision making, communication patterns, motivation, competition, and morale are all relevant to the process of team development.

However, management training may encourage sameness rather than difference in the individuals' approaches to work and the organization. Instilling company values and philosophy into an individual's work personality does promote company loyalty. Nevertheless, we contend that such an approach can reach the point of diminishing returns; if it neglects the development of the individual employee, it will ultimately become costly to the organization (Reilly, 1973).

The Consultant's Role

The consultant working with a group in a team-building effort has a key task: "responsibility"—the skill of responding to the group and of intervening in the group's life in such a way as to facilitate its problem-solving capability. Thus the consultant's allegiance is to the entire group, not to the supervisor or to a particular clique within the team. This must be clear before the team-building venture begins. Of course, the consultant does not ignore the person in charge! Indeed, this person may need special counsel from the consultant outside the formal team-building session. But, in order to function in the best way possible, the consultant must be his or her own person, free to respond equally to each team member.

We see the consultant's role in team building as a "process" consultant rather than an "expert" consultant. It is the consultant's responsibility to develop the process awareness by which the team can take a meaningful look at itself, its functions, its method of working, and its goals for change.

The process consultant in team building should help the group solve its own problems by making it aware of its own group process and the way that process affects the quality of the team's work. In other words, the consultant's aim is to work himself or herself out of a job.

With this approach, the strength of the facilitator's influence in team building is not obvious to himself or herself or to members of the team. Yet we find that the consultant's skills and values generally carry considerable weight in the work group's opinion. It is the consultant's responsibility to be aware of his or her own impact on the group.

The Role of Games and Simulations

Since the focus of team building centers on real-life issues and concerns that the work group faces on a day-to-day basis, inventories, simulations, or structured experiences generally play a minor role in team-building sessions. They are best used when there is a need to generate data that the team uses to get a clearer understanding of its own process. Inventories such as FIRO-B, for example, may serve as excellent interventions to focus on behaviors of group members. Or a structured experience aimed at discerning group-leadership functions may prove very helpful in uniting the group.

We find that an activity or inventory can be especially useful in team-building sessions for the following purposes:

1. To help team members diagnose where they are as a group—what they do well or poorly;
2. To aid in the understanding of group members' communication patterns, decision-making approaches, and leadership styles;
3. To surface latent or hidden issues;
4. To focus an issue which the team understands but seems unable to investigate deeply; and
5. To demonstrate specific techniques that group members can use to improve the quality of their time together.

However, using activities and simulations in team-building sessions can have potential pitfalls. A group may spend valuable time working on issues unrelated to its day-to-day work as a group; or a facilitator may get caught up in the excitement that comes as a result of participating in simulations and inventories of an introspective type, even though such learnings are not the main objectives of team building. The facilitator must be able to balance both the concerns of team building and the learning needs of team members.

Issues

A number of issues are important in beginning a team-building effort. Since many facilitators approach team development from T-group and/or clinical backgrounds, it is worthwhile to consider some special concerns about working with intact groups.

Climate Setting. Expectations about the differences in a group's way of working together at the completion of a team-building endeavor should be explored with the manager or supervisor of a group. In team building, the overall objective is to improve the team's performance and satisfaction through looking at its process and resolving conflicting situations. The kind of climate or atmosphere established in the group is affected by the group's new behaviors: communicating candidly, confronting and dealing with issues, and utilizing each group member's resourcefulness. Once a climate is created, it is important that it be supported and nourished.

It is critical that the consultant help the group leader understand the implications of the group's climate. For example, the supervisor may be accustomed to interacting with subordinates in an authoritarian manner. As a result, team members may harbor resentment toward him or her and also feel that they are underutilized in the group. If a norm of openness becomes established as the team building progresses, chances are that the supervisor will get this feedback. Therefore, it is vital to the success of the sessions that the supervisor enter the activity with a good understanding of the implications of opening up communications within the group.

Establishing Expectations. By devoting special time to examining its own workings, a group generally raises its expectation of improvement. This is usually realistic. However, it is easy for group members to develop unrealistic expectations. They may assume that as a result of a three- or four-day meeting, their group will be cured of all its ills. Such a notion, if not dealt with, can lead to considerable strain for the consultant and can frustrate team members so that they lose confidence in the team-building process.

It is the consultant's job to help the group set realistic and attainable objectives for its session. At the end of the meetings, participants should be able to evaluate the extent to which they have accomplished their aims. It is important that group members take responsibility for what they accomplish as well as for what they fail to accomplish in their team-building session.

At the same time, the consultant must be aware of the degree of responsibility he or she is willing to assume for the group's working through its issues. It is foolish for a consultant to guarantee that a group's problems will be solved. Rather, the facilitator's contract is to help develop a process which gives members the potential to work through their own problems.

The self-fulfilling prophecy is apparent here: If the consultant and group members set high but realistic expectations for themselves, they often accomplish their goals; on the other hand, if they expect to accomplish little, chances are they will accomplish little.

One-Shot Efforts. Ideally, team building is not a one-time experience. It can help a group develop to a higher level of functioning by strengthening group members' functional behaviors and deleting dysfunctional ones.

The effectiveness of most team-building efforts is increased if there is some follow-through after the initial sessions. This may be done formally by way of additional sessions or less formally by continuing to build on norms developed during the initial session. In either case, the consultant should stress the need for continuity in the team—that together the group is involved in an ongoing process. Such follow-up helps to ensure that action steps are implemented to resolve the issues focused during the session. Also the group is able to reassess where it is and exactly how it is functioning differently as a result of its earlier experience.

As an isolated event, then, team building decreases the learning potential for the group. It is most effectively carried out as part of a well-planned OD effort.

Systemic Effects. It is safe to assume that an intact group does not function independently of other work groups. What is done to one group more often than not affects the affairs of other groups. Team building often has systemic effects. For example, to go into an organization and work with one district within a region is likely to affect the entire region. People who have experienced successful team building are apt to want to share their enthusiasm with colleagues from other districts. By establishing new norms of working together more effectively, a particular work group

can have quite a significant impact on the lives of other groups. Similarly, if a group has an unsuccessful experience, the negative fallout may affect the entire system.

Inherent in team building is a potential for change in specified areas. It is assumed that one team cannot change without affecting, at least indirectly, the functioning of other teams.

The consultant must be aware of the impact of the intervention on the immediate group with whom he or she works as well as on related groups in the organization. Such awareness can mean the difference between success and failure.

Task vs. Interpersonal Focus. Just as it is important for a consultant to have an understanding of the climate of the groups with which he or she works, so in team-building sessions it is vitally important for the consultant and the client groups to agree on the kinds of issues around which the group focuses its efforts. Identifying needs and designing effective interventions through which the group can meet its needs are the consultant's prime tasks.

It is difficult, but extremely important, to consider the balance between task and interpersonal concerns prior to the team-building session. The consultant's job is to state his or her own biases and help the group define workable boundaries.

Some teams consciously decide not to work at an interpersonal level during a team-building session, while other teams decide to invest considerable energy at this level.

We have found it helpful to work those interpersonal conflicts that interfere with the group's accomplishment of its task goals. It may be desirable to negotiate a contract with the group to determine what data will be considered out of bounds. A group whose members have had intensive growth-group experience may profitably wrestle with issues concerning their feeling reactions to each other's behavior.

Touchy-Feely. Most individuals become members of work groups to meet goals other than intrapersonal or interpersonal development. Therefore, it is usually inappropriate for the facilitator to advocate such growth in a team-building session. It is particularly unwise, in our judgment, to use techniques commonly associated with "sensitivity training" with people who must work together on a day-to-day basis.

Effective Problem Solving

Process awareness is, to our mind, the essence of team building. When it understands and monitors its own process, a group is better able to accomplish its tasks and to utilize the talents of its group members. Each process dimension—such as sharing ideas in the group, making decisions, the feeling tone of the group, and its morale—needs to be focused on as the opportunity arises in the group.

Norms of Trust and Openness. As a result of their increased ability to confront what develops in a group, members often grow toward a greater sense of trust and openness with one another. "Trust" and "openness" are two of the softest terms used in all of human relations training—and two of the hardest dimensions to cultivate in a group of individuals who work closely together. But it is our contention that greater trust and

openness provide a greater potential for group task accomplishment as well as for personal satisfaction.

Trust and openness also lead to a climate in which conflicts are seen as healthy and productive. Dealing with conflict in a direct and forthright manner energizes groups. People say what they want to other individuals and expect other individuals on the team to do the same.

Feedback. Effective team building leads to more effective feedback to group members about their contributions to the work group. Individuals learn the value of being willing to give, solicit, and utilize feedback from their colleagues. This can lead not only to increased overall effectiveness for the group, but also to personal development and growth for team members.

Prelude to Intergroup Problem Solving

Before two groups meet jointly to improve their “interface,” it is vitally important that each team first experience team building as an intact work group. Each group should have its own house in order before attempting to join other groups to explore mutual problems. This is not to say that a group should be functioning “perfectly.” Rather, it means that group members should be able to listen effectively to one another and to approach problems straightforwardly.

Some of the variables that help pave the way for successful intergroup exchanges include being able to identify problems, to engage in feedback processes in a relatively nondefensive manner, and to be authentic and not play the game of one-upmanship.

One of the most helpful and effective interventions in getting groups prepared for an inter-group meeting is an activity commonly referred to as an organization mirror, or image exchange. Briefly, it is an activity whereby each group writes down adjectives or phrases that describe its perceptions of itself and of the other group. Group members also predict the other group’s perceptions of them as a group. These lists are generated by the two groups separately. The consultant may help each group prepare to accept and react to the feedback or exchange perceptions it is about to receive.

In our experience, Group A generally predicts that Group B sees it much more negatively than Group B actually does. Furthermore, Group B often sees Group A more positively than Group A sees itself. Such discoveries quickly dispel a lot of ogres and nonproductive anxiety.

PREPARING FOR THE MEETING

It is important for the consultant to prepare participants for what will happen during the session. The sensing interview—which will be covered in more depth later in this paper—provides an opportunity for expectations to be clarified. The consultant can describe in general what the meeting will be about. Expectation gaps can be checked out and worked through if they exist. Participants usually want to know exactly what kind of

interactions they can anticipate in the meeting. For the consultant to withhold responses to such legitimate inquiries can generate nonproductive anxiety.

Planning the Team-Building Session

Another relevant concern has to do with the physical environment surrounding the team-building session. At least two days of uninterrupted time away from the day-to-day work distractions are essential. Being away from the telephone and office interruptions can generate or free significant energy. It is also imperative that participants commit themselves to the entire team-building session. For several people to come and go over the course of the event spells potential disaster for the experience. It almost goes without saying, of course, that the team leader must be present for the entire session.

Sensing

One of the best ways for a consultant to make certain that he or she at least partially understands an intact work group is to talk with each member before the team-building session. Face-to-face interviews or “sensing” enables the facilitator to do a number of specific things in preparation for the team-building session (Jones, 1973).

First, sensing enables the consultant to gather diagnostic information about the group in its members’ own words, information that is quite subjective, since it represents personal opinions. Secondly, sensing enables the consultant to clarify his or her own perceptions of how the team functions collectively. It serves as a supplement to other available sources of information about the group. And thirdly, sensing increases the psychological ownership of the information used in the team session, because it is generated by the actual group members.

We find the following guidelines helpful in conducting sensing interviews:

1. Sensing interviews should remain anonymous but not confidential. Since it is a frustrating experience for a consultant to receive confidential data that cannot be discussed in the session, we prefer to set an expectation of nonconfidentiality. Whatever information a team member shares with the interviewer becomes legitimate information for the session. We do, however, maintain anonymity. Thus, a team member can discuss a concern without his or her name being attached to it.
2. Only information that might realistically be dealt with over the course of the team-building session should be generated. To collect more data than can be processed may lead to false expectations and frustration.
3. Sensing is a rapport-building opportunity for the consultant. He or she has to make contact with each team member and vice versa.
4. During the interview the consultant should be quite open about answering questions about the session, its objectives, format, flavor—whatever may be of importance to the individual participants.

5. It is vital that sensing data not be shared with participants before the session begins, even though it is sometimes tempting to confirm what one person has said through probing with another.
6. Taking notes during the interviews is helpful. By writing down verbatim a group member's response to a question, individual quotes can be used to substantiate general points during the session. Doing this increases ownership of the data for the team members.
7. It is important that people being interviewed be told how the information that they share with the consultant is to be used. They may not ask directly, but they do want to know.

Sensing interviews are usually far more desirable than questionnaire-type surveys. The personal contact between consultant and participants can pave the way for an effective team-building session. The two approaches, sensing interviews and surveys, can be used together to good effect.

Preparing Data Feedback

Once sensing interviews are completed, it is the consultant's job to make some sense out of the data collected. He or she may note common themes, which become major categories for feedback to the group.

We find it useful to make a series of posters depicting the general themes of the data, including specific quotes, to make the data come alive. Posters may be made representing different categories of feedback: feedback for each team member; team members' perceptions of how the group makes decisions; and goal statements for the session. The exact nature of the posters depends on the consultant's judgment of the group's level of readiness for working at a particular level. This reality should be kept in mind when designing the feedback session.

Coaching the Team Leader

Of all the individuals participating in the team-building session, it is the supervisor (boss, chairman, leader, etc.) who probably has the most, potentially, to gain or to lose from the experience. Often it is he or she who suggests team building. Making the proposal for a session is a significant intervention in a group's life. It is bound to cause group members to react, varying from enthusiastic support to indifference to overt resistance.

It is crucial that the supervisor be adequately prepared for the session, since it is he or she who is most likely to be a target of feedback in the team-building session. To help make this a growth experience for both the supervisor and subordinates, the consultant should attend to several dimensions during the planning phase.

One guideline we firmly adhere to is that the consultant should never surprise the boss. Nothing can destroy trust faster than for the consultant to make a big intervention for which the supervisor is completely unprepared. For example, if the leader expects

nothing but positive and supportive feedback in the session—however unrealistic this expectation may be—and the consultant confronts him or her with heavily negative feedback, one can well imagine the probable outcomes: hurt, defensiveness, disbelief, the feeling of being betrayed. To safeguard against this result, the consultant is wise to prepare the supervisor for the meeting.

However, the leader must not conclude, from this function of the consultant, that the consultant's role is to protect him or her from the feedback of the team members. Rather, the consultant's job is to work for the entire group, not to be partial to any one individual or to any subgroup. The client is the team, not the supervisor. In an OD effort, the real client is the organization of which the team is a part.

The method used to prepare the supervisor depends on who actually takes charge of and conducts the session, the supervisor or the consultant. Some consultants prefer for the supervisor to run the meeting. In this case, the supervisor must be given the results from the sensing interviews in enough detail to present data to the group. The consultant, then, generally will serve as a process observer, encouraging the group to take a look at its methods of working during the session.

Another option is for the consultant to conduct the majority of the session. In this case, it is of utmost importance that he or she know exactly what is going on with the group and exactly what outcome he or she wants the group to reach at the end of the session. If the consultant does not have this background or knowledge, it is better for him or her to concentrate on functioning as a reactive observer to the group's behavior.

Our own preference takes both options into account. That is, we prefer that the supervisor conduct the staff meeting while we observe the process and assist the group in studying its own process. But we also structure into the session specific activities, aimed at clarifying problems and working through to solutions.

Regardless of the format followed, the supervisor should be encouraged to be open to feedback and not to be defensive. Group members pay close attention to his or her receptivity, and his or her behavior is powerful in setting expectations. It is necessary, too, that the supervisor be authentic, that he or she not fake, for example, being receptive when actually feeling defensive. The norm should be one of strategic openness (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1972).

THE MEETING ITSELF

Expectations

It is helpful to begin the opening session by talking about what is actually going to take place. There should be no big surprises for anyone. One effective way to begin is to have both group members and the consultant specify their expectations for the meeting. In this way expectation gaps can be dealt with early.

One strategy is to have members list specifically what they want to happen and what they do not want to happen. The consultant may ask, "What is the best thing that could happen here, and what is the worst thing?"

Publishing the Sensing Data

After obtaining expectations, the data gained from the sensing interviews should be published in some form. During the presentation it is important that the team not begin to process the data. Team members should, however, be encouraged to ask for clarification so that everybody understands what the data say.

Agenda Setting

The group's next task is to set its agenda, focusing on the data at hand. This should be done within the time constraints of the meeting. If the group members commit themselves to a five-day agenda for a two-day meeting, the result can only be a frustrating experience.

Setting Priorities

Having an agenda to work on, the group should then prioritize the problem areas. It is important that the group (especially if it is undergoing its first team-building experience) be encouraged to start with a problem that can be solved. Members can then experience a feeling of success and begin to feel that they are a part of a team that is pulling together.

Problem Solving

We consider problem solving to be a pervasive and cyclical phenomenon that occurs throughout the team-building process. To assure its effectiveness, we find two techniques, used between cycles, to be helpful. One is to have the group critique (or process) its own style in working each problem on the list of priorities. That is, the group works one round, processes its functioning, and then takes on another problem. Such an approach provides an opportunity for the group to improve its problem-solving effectiveness over the course of a work session. Members can reinforce one another for their helpful behaviors and work through or lessen their dysfunctional behaviors.

Another technique is to post charts. These may include points of view about a problem, solutions, and action decisions. Such an approach enables the group to monitor its own progress or lack thereof. The chart serves as public "minutes" of the meeting, including problem statements, solutions, deadlines, and people responsible for implementing solutions.

Planning Follow-Up

The purpose of this phase of team building is to assure that the work begun by the group does not die once the group ends its formal team-building session.

It is helpful to have the group summarize the work accomplished during the team-building session: to take stock of decisions made during the session, and to reiterate

which people are responsible for implementing which decisions within specific time parameters.

Within a month following the session a follow-up meeting should be held so that group members can assess the degree to which they have carried out expectations and commitments made during the team session.

DYSFUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORS

During a team-building session it is likely that a consultant will have to assist a team in confronting dysfunctional team behaviors. Listed below are the commonly observed behaviors that tend to obstruct team development, including ways of coping with and working the behaviors in a productive way.

Sabotage

A person who commits “sabotage” engages in behaviors designed to destroy or significantly impair the progress made by the team. Examples: “I got you” (trying to catch people in the act of making mistakes), “Wait until J.B. sees what you’re up to,” “Yes, but . . .,” and “This will never work!”

Sniping

A person who takes cheap shots at group members (whether they are present or not) by throwing verbal or nonverbal “barbs” is likely to lessen the productivity of the group. For example, the sniper might say, “When we were talking about plant expansion, old J.B. (who always ignores such issues) made several points, all of which were roundly refuted.”

Assisting Trainer

A team member who wants to demonstrate his or her awareness of group process may make interventions in order to “make points” with the consultant. He or she may make procedural suggestions to the point of being obnoxious. One of this person’s favorite interventions is, “Don’t tell me what you think; tell me how you feel!”

Denying

The denier plays the “Who, me?” game. When confronted, he or she backs off immediately. The denier may also ask many questions to mask his or her statements or points of view and generally refuses to take a strong stand on a problem.

Too Quiet

Members may be quiet for innumerable reasons. It has been remarked about silence: “It is never misquoted, but it is often misinterpreted.”

Anxiety

The anxious member may engage in such counter-productive behaviors as smoothing over conflict, avoiding confrontation, doodling, “red-crossing” other members, and protecting the leader.

Dominating

Some team members simply take up too much air time. By talking too much, they control the group through their verbosity.

Side Tracking

The side tracker siphons off the group’s energy by bringing up new concerns (“deflecting”) rather than staying with the problem being worked on. Under his or her influence, groups can rapidly generate an enormous list of superfluous issues and concerns and become oblivious to the problem at hand. The game the side tracker plays is generally something like, “Oh, yeah, and another thing . . .”

Hand Clasping

Legitimacy and safety can be borrowed by agreeing with other people. For example, this person says, “I go along with Tom when he says . . .”

Polarizing

A person who points out differences among team members rather than helping the team members see sameness in the ownership of group problems can prevent the development of group cohesion. This is a person likely to have a predisposition toward seeing mutually exclusive points of view.

Attention Seeking

This behavior is designed to cover the group member’s anxiety by excessive joking, horsing around, and drawing attention to himself or herself. He or she may do this very subtly by using the personal pronoun “I” often. The attention seeker may also be a person who describes many of his or her own experiences in an attempt to look good to other group members.

Clowning

This person engages in disruptive behavior of a loud, boisterous type. He or she may set a tone of play rather than of problem solving.

CONFRONTING DYSFUNCTIONAL BEHAVIORS

The characters described briefly above have one common theme: Each inhibits and distracts the group from working at an optimal level.

In dealing with such dysfunctional roles, the consultant will find it helpful to follow three general steps.

1. Draw attention to the dysfunctional behavior itself but avoid the trap of labeling or classifying the person as, for example, a “sniper” or a “hand clasper.” Such evaluative labeling only elicits defensiveness from the individual. Instead, the behavior that is getting in the group’s way should be described.
2. Spell out what appear to be the specific dysfunctional effects of the behavior. This should not be done in a punitive fashion, but in a supportive, confrontive manner. Often the person distracting the group is unaware of the negative impact of his or her behavior. Sometimes the person really wants to be making a contribution and does not know how to be an effective team member.
3. Suggest alternative behaviors that will lead to a more productive and satisfying climate for the disruptive person and his or her colleagues.

FACILITATOR INTERVENTIONS

Process Interventions

Centering around the ongoing work of the group as it engages in problem-solving activities, process interventions include ones aimed at improving the team’s task accomplishment as well as helping to build the group into a more cohesive unit.

Process interventions to heighten task accomplishment include the following examples:

- Having the group translate an issue into a problem statement;
- Observing that the group is attending to several problems simultaneously rather than sticking to one problem at a time;
- Observing that a decision was made out of a “hearing-no-objections” norm and having the group deal with this posture;
- Inviting the group to develop action plans related to a problem solution;
- Suggesting that the group summarize what has been covered within a given problem-solving period;
- Helping the group to monitor its own style, using its resources; and
- Using instruments, questionnaires, and ratings to assess the group’s position on a particular topic.

Process interventions aimed at group maintenance or group building include the following examples:

- Pointing out dysfunctional behaviors that keep the group from achieving a cohesive climate;
- Encouraging group members to express feelings about decisions the group makes;
- Encouraging group members to respond to one another's ideas and opinions verbally, whether in terms of agreement or disagreement;
- Confronting behaviors that lead to defensiveness and lack of trust among group members, e.g., evaluative feedback and hidden agendas; and
- Verbally reinforcing group-building behaviors such as harmonizing and gatekeeping.

Structural Interventions

Another class of interventions is termed structural because it deals with the way group members are arranged physically as a group. Structural interventions include the following:

- Having group members work privately—making notes to themselves, for example, before they discuss the topic jointly as a total group;
- Having members pair off to interview each other about the problem;
- Forming subgroups to explore the different aspects of the problem and then share their work with the remainder of the group; and
- Forming a group-on-group design, to enable an inner group to work independently of an outer group, which, in turn, gives process feedback to inner-group members.

FACILITATOR EFFECTIVENESS

The technology behind effective team building is vitally important. Of greater importance, however, is the facilitator's own personal uniqueness. To become more complete as a facilitator means to become more complete as a person.

Managing one's own personal growth is an important precondition to effectiveness in facilitating team-building sessions. If a facilitator is aware of his or her own needs, biases, and fears, he or she is less likely to project these onto the groups with which he or she works. Consequently, the facilitator is able to concentrate on the needs of the group.

A consultant can increase his or her team-building skills by working with different kinds of groups. Seeking out experiences in various organizations, with different types of clients, can be a creative challenge for the facilitator.

It is important that, whenever feasible, two people co-facilitate team-building sessions. Doing so serves as a source of perception checks for each facilitator. It also

gives each the opportunity to support and enrich the personal and professional growth of the other.

Team building is an exciting activity for the facilitator. Intervening in the life of work groups affords both challenges and opportunities for direct application of behavioral science concepts.

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■ TEAM DEVELOPMENT: A TRAINING APPROACH

Lawrence N. Solomon

Organizations exist in the minds of people. Rules, procedures, policies, and norms may be codified in written form as bylaws, articles of incorporation, etc., but it is the way in which these rules are expressed in the behavior of employees who interact daily that sets the character and climate of any organization. In this sense, one may speak of the culture of an organization: habits, expectations, and attitudes that define its daily activities. Implied in this perspective is the corollary that as people change their habits and attitudes, so do organizations.

Organizational self-renewal is simply one way to conceptualize the concrete behavioral, attitudinal, and perceptual changes that may occur among the people who comprise a human social system. One currently popular means of introducing organizational change and renewal is “team building”; that is, the introduction of a systematic, long-range plan for the improvement of interpersonal relationships among those workers who are functionally interdependent. Team building implies the ultimate purpose of increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of a group in its pursuit of personal and organizational objectives.

Contemporary social trends in business, industry, and organizational life appear to be moving toward the humanization of bureaucratic structures. Increasingly, the more highly educated, younger entrants into the labor market today expect a voice in those decisions that affect them; seek more candor in their communications with others; and prefer to build cooperative, rather than competitive, relations with others. The implementation of democratic principles in organizational settings is fairly new, and attempts are imperfect and tentative. However, in those settings where efforts have been maintained in this direction, long-term effects are almost inevitably beneficial, not only for the individual but also for the organization.

Taking seriously the concept of organizational democracy will require some profound changes, both structurally and functionally, within many contemporary organizations. The need to decentralize power, to share and delegate power, and to trust a large portion of future success explicitly to one’s subordinates are some of the functional changes that can be anticipated with the further application of methods of organizational change such as team building.

Traditional hierarchical organizations are faced with the necessity of inventing new and more realistic structures to provide the channels for shared planning and decision making. Japanese management introduced some innovative concepts along these lines in

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their Sony plant near San Diego, California. As detailed by Johnson and Ouchi (1974), a “bottom-up” approach leads to effectively functioning teams of decision makers throughout all levels of the organization:

While the Japanese meticulously define the status of the leader, his role in the decision-making process is little differentiated from that of others in the organization. Rather, he sees his task as improving on the initiatives of others and creating an atmosphere in which subordinates are motivated to seek better solutions. So the responsibility of the corporation’s success rests not just with him but with all employees. (p. 62)

For a discussion of the use of organization development groups in industry, see Farry and Herman (1972).

HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The increasingly important role ascribed by business and industry to the psychological determinants of productivity traces its inception to the early research in “scientific management” shortly after the turn of the century and specifically to the now classic “Hawthorne” studies conducted in the late 1920s and early 1930s at a Western Electric plant in Illinois (Roethlisberger & Dickson, 1939).

In the early 1930s, conditions were right in the United States for the emergence of group dynamics as an academic discipline in the field of applied behavioral science (Cartwright & Zander, 1968). In education, mental health, administration, and social work, the emphasis was clearly beginning to focus on those techniques that would lead to greater group effectiveness, personal growth, and attainment of organizational goals. The crisis and aftermath of World War II provided an additional impetus. The research questions asked by both experimental social psychologists and entrepreneurs in business and industry were “How can conditions be arranged so that individuals may simultaneously satisfy their personal needs and the needs of the organization?” “How can industrial democracy be implemented without the loss of productivity and/or ‘control’ that most managers fear would follow?” “What are the most effective procedures for group management, and how can these be taught?”

Beginning with the monumental contributions of Kurt Lewin and his colleagues in the 1940s, the field of applied behavioral science has grown with unprecedented rapidity. Today there is a plethora of findings, techniques, and training programs designed to disseminate and promote the utilization of this accumulated scientific knowledge.

The need for the efficient utilization of human resources in our technological society has perhaps never been greater than it is today. Increasing sophistication in technology requires equally sophisticated human capabilities. As current economic trends close the margin between cost and profit, management is ready to adopt new approaches that promise greater efficiency. Applied group dynamics is still relatively untapped as a point of intervention into organizational systems, especially when

compared to such already rationalized and precision-engineered areas as equipment, building, cash flow, etc.

TEAM BUILDING

The total approach to organizational self-renewal that incorporates team building is called organization development (OD). As defined by John Sherwood (1972), OD is

- (a) A long-range effort to introduce planned change based on a diagnosis which is shared by the members of an organization.
- (b) A . . . program [that] involves an entire organization, or a coherent “system” or part thereof.
- (c) [A program whose] goal is to increase organizational effectiveness and enhance organizational choice and self-renewal.
- (d) [A program whose] major strategy . . . is to intervene in the ongoing activities of the organization to facilitate learning and to make choices about alternative ways to proceed. (p. 153)

Along with team building, the most frequently employed OD intervention strategies are intergroup problem solving, confrontation meetings, goal-setting and planning sessions, third-party facilitation, and consulting pairs. For a fuller discussion of these and other technologies, see Margulies and Raia (1972).

Team building is a two-phase effort, designed to (1) identify those aspects of group functioning that are barriers to effective group effort and (2) introduce strategies to modify those aspects constructively. The primary strategy is to increase the awareness of the group members regarding their own processes as a group; to focus attention not only on “what” the group is doing but also on “how” it is doing it. More often than not, the “how” question leads to the revelation of a number of dysfunctional norms that have been operating implicitly or covertly in the group and that have been preventing the group members from doing their best work together. Additionally, such analysis may also reveal the absence of needed social skills among the group members, a deficiency that subsequent training experiences could remedy.

In a team-building program, members of functionally interdependent groups are provided the opportunity to explore systematically the manner in which they relate to one another, the type of communication patterns that characterize their group interactions, the level of trust and openness that exists among them; the way in which decisions are made within the group, the kind of influence that each exerts on the other, and the degree of satisfaction each group member feels with regard to such process issues.

Values

The effort to build teams of workers in organizational settings is based on the following set of implicit values or assumptions about human nature and organizational life. These premises underlie all strategies employed in a team-building effort.

- The values of a *democratic society*, in which participation, involvement, and responsibility are prized as desirable behaviors; these behaviors are valuable not only to the individual in his or her pursuit of individual self-fulfillment and growth, but they are valuable to society in that they perpetuate and preserve the ideology of freedom on which this nation was founded;
- *Freedom of choice* among a broadened range of alternatives and responsible *accountability* for the choice to which one is committed;
- A spirit of *scientific inquiry*, which stresses the need to examine human interaction in order to better guide human interaction into constructive patterns;
- The belief that a *healthy organization* is like a healthy individual, in that members of the organization are *aware* of their own actions and the reasons for them; and
- The assumption that interpersonal competence cannot be enhanced unless individuals receive *frank and accurate information* regarding the impact of their behavior on others; such *knowledge* provides the *power* to make those changes necessary to increase effectiveness in organizational behavior.

Based on these premises, individuals in a team-building program should expect to increase their awareness of the impact of their own behavior on the functioning of others. Additionally, team members should come to understand more clearly the role they play in contributing to the achievement of organizational objectives and their roles as members of an interdependent team.

It follows from these value premises that an “effective” team is one in which group members (1) truly listen to one another in order to understand and empathize, rather than to defend, explain, or counteract; (2) speak openly, honestly, and spontaneously about the ways in which their interaction is or is not fulfilling organizational objectives; (3) deal with specific, task-related behaviors; and (4) openly inquire into ways in which they might improve their work together as a team.

Similarly, it is clear that an ineffective team is one in which the members (1) try to defend themselves against feedback by explaining, justifying, defending; (2) use “hurt feelings” as a defense against understanding; (3) share information only as part of a strategy, i.e., say only what they think others want to hear and use information as a weapon to achieve hidden personal objectives; (4) deal with deep personality factors that either are not relevant to the task or are not amenable to modification; and (5) are inappropriately competitive with one another, using their energy to demean or diminish one another rather than to work toward common objectives.

The Feedback Process

The basic objective involved in team building is to establish regular feedback mechanisms for each group of individuals who must work together to achieve organizational goals. “Feedback” is a term borrowed from engineering to refer to

corrective information that is “fed back” from a given situation to a controlling mechanism in order to maintain an optimal state in that situation. A heater thermostat is a familiar example of a feedback mechanism. In the applied behavioral sciences, the concept is used to refer to information that members of a group receive from others regarding their impact on those others. To be helpful, feedback should be specific, descriptive, focused on things that can be changed, and phrased in such a way as to enhance the probability that it will be responded to constructively. Members of a group can be taught to give one another feedback in helpful ways. A conceptual model, such as the Johari Window (Luft, 1969) is often useful as a teaching tool in this regard.

A fundamental part of any team-building program is the task-oriented feedback session, in which team members gather together, without the pressure of outside commitments or tight time constraints, to accomplish a number of aims related to group effectiveness. Among these:

- To share information that can be used as the basis of corrective action to improve personal and organizational functioning;
- To create an atmosphere of inquiry within which the participants can learn about the relationship between their own behavior and the achievement of organizational objectives;
- To discover how one’s own behavior aids or hinders the task accomplishment of others; and
- To clarify goals and objectives being sought by the participants in their organizational behavior.

Feedback Ground Rules

Generally, task-oriented feedback sessions involve all those who are functionally interdependent as an operating team in an organizational setting. Such groups may range in size from five to twenty. The ground rules for such sessions are relatively simple and straightforward. The following are taken from the original version of a tape-assisted learning program on team building that has been revised and is currently available in commercial form (Solomon & Berzon, 1976).

1. Talk about what’s happening in the group.
This means, talk about what’s going on *right now* in this group—the behavior and feelings of the members of the group. What is happening in the group will be interesting to everyone. What has happened outside the group may interest only one or two of the group members.
2. Learn to trust your own feelings.
Your feelings are your best guide to what is really happening in the group. Often persons are reluctant to share their true feelings, out of fear of ridicule or the anticipated need to explain or justify a particular feeling. However, no

explanation or justification is needed. Your feelings are factual events which are part of the group's process and so should be shared with the rest of the group.

3. Be as honest as you can when you talk about yourself.
The success of this group depends on the degree to which each of you is willing to talk about his/her feelings, to question each other when you hear something you think is false, to care about each other and even to take the chance of being hurt by others in order to learn something valuable about yourself.
4. Pay attention when others are talking.
You cannot talk and listen at the same time—even if, at that moment, you are only talking to yourself.
5. Try to understand what others are feeling when they talk about themselves.
Put yourself in their place; see if you have had an experience which might match, in some way, what others are talking about. Don't listen only for the words others use when speaking; listen for the feelings behind the words, and respond to those. Often, the words a person uses will not match the feeling he is communicating (e.g., the individual who says, through clenched teeth, "I'm not angry!") The feelings underlying what the person is saying are often better indicators of what is really going on than his words alone. (Tape 1, Side A, Session 1)

Frequently, a team-building session will begin with a request by the facilitator that each member take a moment to prepare to do one of two things: either to give feedback to someone in the group or to solicit feedback from the group. Sometimes the facilitator may suggest that the group members briefly prepare a list of "resentments and appreciations" they feel for one another and use that list as the basis for giving and asking for feedback.

The ground rules of giving and receiving feedback explicitly encourage risk taking in interpersonal communication. Prospective members of team-building programs may worry about the possibility of individuals being "hurt" by such exchanges. However, careful empirical research does not substantiate the rumored "horror stories" of individuals being severely harmed in such sessions (Batchelder & Hardy, 1968). Whether or not feedback sessions can be "harmful" depends on one's definition of that term. Properly conducted feedback sessions are no more stressful than many other forms of human interaction and not as stressful as such commonly accepted social institutions as marriage and graduate school!

For many individuals, psychological growth and maturity are painful processes. They may require relinquishing idealized and exaggerated beliefs about oneself and others. Yet most individuals report that the pain of growth is preferable to the stagnation of self-deception. It is commonly reported by participants in growth groups that, in the pursuit of self-knowledge, one simultaneously experiences the need to know and the fear of knowing. But the reward of the former is ultimately worth the cost of the latter.

Feedback, when properly given (not as an accusation, but as a statement of how behavior affects others' feelings), can be extremely helpful to the recipient. Such information can help an individual become more effective in his or her interpersonal relations, on-the-job behavior, and task accomplishment. If a person's behavior is not having the intended or desired effect, he or she can change it. Without feedback, the impact of his or her behavior on others may never be fully or accurately known. If a person's behavior is having desirable or intended effects, then feedback can help strengthen and expand such behavior. Feedback "closes the loop" in a communication cycle, allowing an individual accurately to assess the consequences of his or her own behavior.

Fear of Reprisal

When team-building efforts bring into interaction individuals from different levels of the organizational hierarchy, there is often present in the lower-status persons a fear that their candid communications will be "used against them" in some way; that "it's not safe to tell the truth when your boss is present—especially if it is something you know he or she doesn't want to hear." For example, if the person who is to conduct performance appraisals and salary reviews on others in the group receives negative feedback from a subordinate on the team, might he or she not (unconsciously?) retaliate by lowering the rating of that person's job performance or by withholding an endorsement for a salary increase?

The threat of reprisal may never be removed permanently from task-oriented feedback sessions. However, it can be dealt with directly when it arises and treated as a realistic issue to resolve, if the group is willing to do so. Also, setting guidelines for the group at the very beginning (including, sometimes, the norm of confidentiality) and holding all group members accountable for the enforcement of these guidelines may help reduce this problem. A supervisor or manager who violates a pledge to the group will lose the social control he or she has by virtue of his or her position; although the manager may retain "role power," he or she will be confronted with a situation in which those on whom he or she depends for success may be functioning in ways to undermine his or her accomplishments. Such a strategy is self-defeating, and honest discussion in the group should aid in establishing norms against retaliation or reprisal by higher-status individuals.

Team-Building Techniques

Experiential learning activities are utilized in many team-building programs to develop the awareness of group process necessary for effective teamwork. The handbooks developed by Pfeiffer & Company (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1973-1977, 1974) provide extremely helpful resource material for this purpose. Training sessions give members of operating teams a means to focus on their own functioning. Instruction is directed toward those important dimensions of group effectiveness that allow group members to analyze their own performance.

A frequently used technique for this purpose is to arrange two teams in a group-on-group configuration, with one team in the center circle performing a task and the other team in an outer circle observing the processes of the inner group. Following a brief period of interaction, the observing team rates the observed behaviors on a series of process dimensions, such as “communication patterns,” “decision making,” “task behaviors,” “maintenance behaviors,” and “self-oriented behaviors,” while the inner-group members may individually rate their degree of satisfaction with such aspects of group functioning as “how we managed our time,” “the degree to which I felt listened to,” and “the amount of trust and openness in the group.” The observer ratings are then fed back to the inner group for discussion, and an attempt is made to integrate the observer ratings with the subjective ratings of the group members themselves.

Particularly helpful in the beginning stages of a group are instruments (rating sheets, observer checklists, etc.), since most uninstructed individuals find that focusing on the process level of group interaction seems “unnatural” or even “impolite.” The facilitator’s role at this point is clearly to legitimate a change in group norms from *looking away* politely from what is really happening among people in a group to *dealing honestly* with the reality of human interaction in the group. Although concerned with such factors as tact and timing, the facilitator is responsible for seeing that these are not used to avoid issues that should be confronted.

As the group matures in its skills of process observation and feedback, the need for written instrumentation diminishes. Instead of a “postmeeting reaction sheet,” a team may eventually use a verbal critique session (five or ten minutes) at the end of each group session to accomplish the same objectives.

The major function of any instrument employed in the team-building effort is to legitimate the exercise of process awareness in operating teams and to perpetuate a continual evaluation of the group’s functioning by the group members themselves. Any “games,” simulations, small-group activities, or structured experiences should be employed solely for these purposes. It is important that the consultant be skillful enough in social interaction and knowledgeable enough about group dynamics to help the group *integrate* its experience in the training sessions into a comprehensive viewpoint about organizational behavior. One function of leadership in a team-building program is to provide “meaning attribution,” i.e., to help the group conceptualize its experiences and fit them into a meaningful frame of reference, so that the techniques of experiential learning do not become mere “fun” games with little or no carry-over to daily living and on-the-job situations.

Although the problem of transferring training may be approached in a variety of ways, the consultant will be aided in this effort by (1) directing group members’ attention explicitly to applying the learnings derived from such experiences to on-the-job situations; (2) using experiential activities that have high “transferability,” in that they clearly mirror specific job-related concerns; and (3) encouraging the invention of simulations and learning activities by the participants themselves.

DESIGNING TEAM-BUILDING PROGRAMS

A team-building program must be designed to provide optimal learning for the participants. This means a design that (1) is internally consistent; (2) is sequential, with each segment building meaningfully on the preceding segment; (3) takes into consideration the stage of development and maturity of the team being trained; (4) has built-in checkpoints to assess the degree to which all members of the team are “together” in their learning, understanding, and “internalization” of the materials being covered; and (5) develops sufficient cohesiveness among the team members early in the program to sustain the confrontation that generally emerges in later stages.

Designing team-building programs is usually a process of adapting existing techniques to specific situational constraints and demands. Although there are commercially available programs that may be used with any operating team in an organizational setting (e.g., Solomon & Berzon, 1976), most often the program is tailored to the specific needs of the team being trained. Elements common to all team-building programs, however, may be heightened process awareness, increased trust and openness among group members, and improved fidelity of communication. Beyond these most basic considerations, a team-building program should incorporate whatever is most meaningful to that team.

Once the basic group-dynamics considerations have been covered, there are usually one or two concerns or problems specific to the group’s particular situation. These, of course, inevitably lead to other issues that carry the team-building experience further.

THE CONSULTANT

Role

In most organizational settings, the role of the consultant or facilitator diminishes over the life span of the operating team. However, a consultant is essential in the early stages of a group.

The facilitator ensures that the ground rules and guidelines for the proper conduct of feedback sessions are established as group norms. Because people who work together tend to build up, over time, a set of “implicit contracts” by which they tacitly agree to avoid dealing with many of the real issues that face them, an outside consultant helps the group confront these contracts, in order to open them to examination and legitimate change.

Such efforts are essential to the effective functioning of work groups; feedback in such situations is perhaps even more important than it is in groups of strangers. Once the norm of inquiry is established and the ground rules for feedback are accepted by the group, work teams can continue to monitor their own functioning, be aware of their own process, and continually evaluate and modify their own function, without the presence of a consultant. A mature work group is one in which each member personally assumes responsibility for the success of the group and feels that whatever happens in the group is as much his or her responsibility as that of any other member.

Characteristics

The characteristics of the consultant are nevertheless crucial in determining the initial success of a team-building effort. Basically, an effective consultant for task-oriented feedback sessions in an organizational setting needs to be a well-integrated person and a skillful communicator (see Pfeiffer & Jones, 1974, pp. 153-154, and Reilly & Jones, 1974, for further discussions).

As a person, the consultant must be able to feel empathy for others, to see things from other people's perspectives, and to be accepting of others' values and goals—what Rogers calls Unconditional Positive Regard (UPR). The consultant should be congruent and flexible, aware of himself or herself and of what he or she is feeling, not dogmatic, rigid, or authoritarian. The personal dimension is the most critical characteristic for a successful consultant. He or she must be aware, sensitive, open, and understanding of others and of himself or herself.

Important as this dimension is, however, a consultant must also process certain basic communication skills: the ability “to *listen*, to *express* himself or herself (both verbally and nonverbally), to *observe*, to *respond* to people, to *intervene* artfully in the group process, and to *design* effective learning environments that make efficient use of resources” (Pfeiffer & Jones, 1974, p. 154).

EXAMPLES OF TEAM-BUILDING PROGRAMS

To make more concrete the application of group training techniques to team-building programs, two examples of such programs are outlined and discussed here.

The Tutorial Community Project (TCP)

As one of the consultants to a Ford Foundation program in the Los Angeles City Schools, I participated in developing and implementing in one school an ambitious program that was designed to accomplish several organizational objectives. Among these were the introduction of shared planning and decision making as the vehicle for school governance and policy formulation; the institution of regular task oriented feedback sessions for faculty and administration on a weekly basis; the introduction of feedback sessions into the classroom for students and teachers together; the modification of the teaching process to rely heavily on tutoring among the students themselves (i.e., intraclass and interclass tutoring); and, through a variety of small-group and community activities, the enhancement of parent participation in school activities. The basic thrust of the TCP project was to build in one elementary school a learning community in which all interpersonal transactions could be characterized as helping relationships.

The team-building effort among the teachers and principal is most significant for this discussion. It was apparent that strong feelings were present among faculty members regarding one another and, specifically, the principal. Most of these feelings centered around alleged racist attitudes, but many found their roots in the generally poor quality of the relationships that existed among the staff at the school. Suspicion, distrust,

gossip, backbiting, and hostile competitiveness were the most characteristic attributes of the interpersonal relations in that school.

Half the faculty was black; the principal was white; the student body was almost exclusively black. Initial team building took the form of four weekly “rap” sessions, held after school in one teacher’s home. The “rap” sessions were structured to allow those who so desired to express their feelings about what was perceived as racism at the school. However, if anyone was specifically indicted for racist attitudes, that person could not respond directly to the indictment during that session. The purpose of this structure was to “bleed off” the highly volatile emotions surrounding racism. After four such sessions, the group was ready to deal more directly with the interpersonal aspects of the problem; with professional guidance, the group (ten teachers and the principal) began the process of candidly exploring the manner in which their relationships had been aiding or hindering the achievement of the educational objectives of their school.

At the start of the program, only half of the teaching staff and the principal were involved in the feedback groups; the other half of the faculty was not ready or willing, at that time, to participate in an approach to organizational renewal that some of them perceived as personally threatening. As consultants, we decided to concentrate our efforts in those areas where there was willingness to proceed; later, with demonstrated success, we hoped that the reluctant faculty members would join in.

In addition to the weekly task-oriented feedback sessions, a new instrumentality, called the TCP Committee, was created. This was a broadly representative group of teachers, parents, administrators, and support staff whose job it would be to formulate policy for the school on a participatory, democratic basis. The difficulties encountered by this group in changing the governing structure from an autocratic one to a democratic one were dealt with repeatedly in the weekly feedback sessions. These sessions provided a therapeutic outlet for the frustrations, angers, and resentments, as well as the appreciations and pleasures, that the broader OD effort generated.

As the project continued into its second year, it became apparent that there was a danger of polarizing the faculty into two competing groups: those who participated in the TCP events and those who did not. After an abortive attempt to provide alternative feedback for those teachers who did not want to participate in the task-oriented feedback sessions, it became clear that those teachers were obviously employed in the wrong school. With the concurrence of the district, a small number of teachers were transferred from the school at the end of the second year, and an effort was made to recruit replacements whose philosophical orientation was more consistent with the goals of TCP.

The desired replacement process was partially accomplished through the establishment of a Personnel Committee, composed of teachers, parents, students, and the principal. This committee interviewed all prospective new teachers and jointly decided on replacements. On one occasion, exercising the intuitive wisdom of youth, the sixth-grade black student serving on the committee looked an applicant squarely in the

eye and asked, “Do you really want to work with kids like us, or are you just in it for the money?”

TCP was an ambitious undertaking, an OD project in the best sense of that term. Simultaneous efforts were mounted to change, systematically and over a long-term period, a number of dysfunctional norms in the educative process practiced at that school. After three years, several training workshops, numerous feedback sessions and committee meetings, and many consulting hours, the school was clearly functioning differently than it had been three years earlier. Whether or not the trends initiated through team building will be sustained is, of course, difficult to know.

The team-building effort was central to the changes anticipated in a TCP school. Task-oriented feedback was the primary vehicle to accomplish effective team building. Prior to beginning feedback, all prospective participants received training in two all-day sessions. In these sessions, they learned to study their own process through the use of group decision-making activities. Such activities, which allow for the comparison of individual and group outcomes, may be used to demonstrate the synergistic effect of group problem solving and to provide a vehicle to analyze team effectiveness. The NASA¹ activity was used for this purpose. Additionally, participants were introduced to the FIRO theory of group development (Schutz, 1958). Experiential activities were provided relating to each of the theory’s three group-development phases.

The specific design of the team-building program in the TCP project emerged as the consultants worked closely with the participants over the three-year life of the undertaking. As the need arose, additional training workshops were offered, with formal cognitive input sessions, as well as experiential, structured activities. However, the main core of the team-building effort was the weekly, one and one-half hour, task-oriented feedback sessions.

Dr. Jerry Newmark, director of the TCP project, evaluated its success this way:

It takes time for these sessions to work well. For some people, they are still threatening or irrelevant, but for those who have participated, they have been very valuable. School surveys have indicated that problem-solving and most person-to-person relationships have improved. When the staff and parents evaluated feedback, one teacher said, “I used to try things and fall flat on my face, and then I’d go back to my old way of doing things. But now I know I’ll try something, and if it doesn’t work, I’ll discuss it with some friends, get some feedback, modify it and try it again.”

“We’ve never shared before,” another teacher added. “Not even a pencil. We wanted to be best. Not only didn’t we share the best things, we definitely didn’t share the worst things we did. So now everybody is open about their ideas, about what they are doing, and it makes everybody happier.”

A parent said, “I do see many of the teachers relaxing, beginning to feel a little more loose about things. When a problem comes up, they really go and try to talk it out and resolve it right away, rather than let it get blown many times out of proportion.”

¹ Developed by Jay Hall, Teleometrics International, 1755 Woodstead Court, The Woodlands, Texas 77380.

A visiting principal from a non-TCP school said, "For the first time I have seen teachers talking to each other in an open honest way." (undated, p. 8)

An Industrial Team-Building Program

Recently, I have undertaken a continuing program of team building for a large Naval installation in San Diego. This facility provides repair, maintenance, and modification services for several types of naval aircraft. It employs approximately seven thousand civilian workers and has a large complement of military personnel on active duty.

The team-building program was conceived as a series of weekly four-hour sessions over a six-week period. Each training class consists of approximately forty participants.

Within each training group, there are five to seven "teams" of functionally interdependent individuals, each team with from six to eight members. The training takes place during working hours and follows a pre-established sequence.

The team-building program incorporates the following events:

Session 1: Setting Objectives. This session provides the participants with an overview of the training experience, answers any specific questions they may raise, and sets forth the program objectives clearly. The two general goals of the program are stated: (a) to enhance individuals' ability to make fuller use of their work potential through better understanding and a broadened experiencing of themselves in relation to other people on the job; and (b) to improve team cooperation and performance through improved communication.

An exploration of the mutual expectations of trainer and participants is undertaken in an activity dealing with the "psychological contract." In their team groups, participants explore their own goals for the training program (thus making a public commitment to their teammates regarding personal objectives), and trainer and team members explore mutual contributions to the accomplishment of those goals.

Session 2: Building Cohesiveness. In their team groupings, the participants engage in an activity to rank order the "ten characteristics of a good team member." This interaction provides the first opportunity for the team to analyze its own effectiveness in accomplishing a task. Brief group sessions are held, in which members are encouraged to talk about the feelings they had while working together on the ranking task. They are specifically instructed to talk about those things that happened in the group that were particularly helpful to task accomplishment or that made task accomplishment particularly difficult. Ground rules for interaction are provided. The session ends with the activity in which each team member tells the group his or her perceived strengths and the team responds in kind.

Session 3: The Helping Relationship. The trainer introduces the concept of force-field analysis. Teams are asked to analyze on-the-job situations in terms of the forces that they perceive to be "driving" for improvement and those that appear to be "blocking" improvement.

The session ends with a brief listening activity,² in which trios of team members sequentially take the part of a talker, a listener, and an observer in order to improve their listening skills. As the talker tells the listener something personal, the observer watches the behavior of the listener and then gives feedback designed to improve listening skills.¹

Session 4: Process Awareness. Participants are provided a handout detailing what to observe in a group (Kolb, Rubin, & McIntyre, 1974) and then employ a group-on-group configuration to practice process observation and feedback. Groups of six to eight members are given a task to perform (e.g., “Discuss what could be done to improve teamwork in this organization”). Equal numbers of observers record their observations of the group process on a process-observation form; each observer watches only one person and each picks a different group member to observe. After approximately twenty minutes of interaction, the individual members of the task group join their observer for five to ten minutes of feedback. Then roles are reversed and the process is repeated.

The final portion of this session is devoted to a group decision-making activity designed to illustrate the synergistic effect of group, as compared to individual, decision making. The activity also provides a vehicle for each team to analyze its own effectiveness and for the team members to discuss this openly with one another, using a written evaluation form to guide their discussion.

Session 5: Application to Job Situation. First, teams are introduced to the FIRO theory of group development (Schutz, 1958) and individual FIRO scores are interpreted. Then, the teams individually set about assessing the organizational climate of their on-the-job unit. The assessment is facilitated by a written evaluation form. The summary ratings of the perceived organizational climate for each team are plotted and discussed.

The session ends with each team selecting that aspect of organizational climate about which it would like to do something constructive and applying a formalized sequence of force-field analysis to the development of an action plan. Again, during these activities, the team engages in “instant team building” by shifting its focus from task to process and by spending a few minutes critiquing its own process.

Session 6: Team Work and Cooperation. The final session is devoted to summarizing effective leadership behaviors in group management and to conducting an experiential activity designed to confirm some team-generated hypotheses about the conditions necessary for cooperation. The cooperation activity also ends the training program on a note of optimism.

Reactions from participants in this program have been, in the vast majority, favorable. Positive comments on the evaluation forms range from “Better communications between team members; that is, more and accurate information is communicated” and “We are conducting our meetings in a more positive manner” to “We developed more trust and understanding of each other.” Still, there are occasional

² See “Listening Triads: Building Communications Skills,” Structured Experience 8, in J.W. Pfeiffer & J.E. Jones (Eds.), *A Handbook of Structured Experiences for Human Relations Training* (Vol. II). San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Company, 1974.

comments like “It is hoped that all of us reject the communistic, ‘all-equal’ doctrine preached by Dr. Solomon and others of his ilk.”

At this writing, approximately two hundred people have been through this program. Plans for its ongoing use are continuing to develop. It is expected that, as more and more people have the team-building experience, support for the program norms will spread more widely; support networks of individuals who have been in the program will develop, and the organizational climate will become increasingly facilitative of the openness, candor, caring, and accountability that define the desired qualities of healthy interpersonal relations among team members.

CONCLUSION

Improving the quality of human relationships within structured social systems improves the overall competence of that system. Team building has proven successful in helping reticent personnel become communicative; the reserved and secretive become involved and open; the conflict-oriented become cooperative; the apprehensive become trusting; the impersonal develop mutual concern and shared objectives; the independent or counterdependent become interdependent; and the individualistic develop a gregarious team spirit.

Team building is not a panacea. Judiciously applied, with proper professional guidance at its inception, it does provide one useful and proven technology for the improvement of organizational effectiveness. It enables the creation of conditions in which workers may seek and find greater self-realization and personal growth than is presently available in most organizational settings, while simultaneously contributing to the attainment of organizational objectives.

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■ TEAM BUILDING FROM A GESTALT PERSPECTIVE

H.B. Karp

Working together productively has been a concern of people for so long and in such varied contexts that it has become one of our identifying characteristics as a species. From the time the first mastodon was killed in a group hunt, we have been looking for more effective ways of combining individual human efforts in order to meet both organizational and individual needs.

WHAT IS A TEAM?

A team is a group of individuals who must work interdependently in order to attain their individual and organizational objectives. Teams can be differentiated from other types of groups by certain definable characteristics. According to Reilly and Jones (1974), there are four essential elements:

- (1) The group must have a charter or reason for working together;
- (2) members of the group must be interdependent—they need each other’s experience, ability, and commitment in order to arrive at mutual goals;
- (3) group members must be committed to the idea that working together as a group leads to more effective decisions than working in isolation;
- (4) the group must be accountable as a functioning unit within a larger organizational context. (p. 227)

The most obvious example of a team is an athletic team. The members have a purpose, which gives them an identity. Each player has a unique function (position) that must be integrated with that of the other members. The players are aware and supportive of the need for interdependent interaction, and the team usually operates within the framework of a larger organization (a league).

Not all working groups, however, are teams, nor should they necessarily be. The faculty of a department in a university is a good contrast to an athletic team. Although there is a reason to work together, and departmental faculty members do function as part of a larger organization, there is very little need for interdependent action, since normally each member is totally responsible for the design, execution, and evaluation of his or her own work, i.e., teaching and/or research. In this case, team building would have little or no relevance. (Recently, a professor jokingly described her department as “a bunch of screaming anarchists held together by a common parking lot.”)

Other examples of work groups that are not teams are committees, in which the purpose is representation, rather than interdependence; training groups, for which no

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charter exists; and “love puddles,” in which the emphasis is on getting along well rather than on working together effectively.

From a Gestalt point of view, there are several necessary assumptions concerning the nature of teams. The first assumption is that all the talent necessary to allow the team to be anything it wishes is already present within the group. The second is that everyone already knows what he or she wants to do; the prime focus is on how the members are stopping themselves from doing what they want. Third, the team’s maximum potential for strength and effectiveness is limited only by the limitations each individual member sets on his or her potential. And, fourth, the work itself is potentially exciting.

TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

Two perspectives can be applied to the question of how team effectiveness is achieved: vertical (through leadership) and horizontal (through group dynamics).

Leadership

Much has been written and spoken advocating the participative leadership approach as the one best way to manage team development; currently, the participative approach is highly favored in the business setting. Nevertheless, autocracy or any other particular leadership style is not precluded from being effective; one has only to look at the sports team to see that this is true. It is highly unlikely that either the Green Bay Packers or a high school football team would vote as a team, prior to each game, on what plays will be run.

More important than the particular leadership style is the team leader’s ability to combine individual efforts into group output, provide the necessary liaison between the team and the total organization, and accomplish this in a manner consistent with the values of the team leader and other members.

Group Dynamics

The very nature of teamwork depends on the effectiveness of the interaction among team members. The concepts of *contact*, *role*, and *values* are elements of effective team interaction.

Contact

Good contact is based on authenticity among team members. It implies that each individual is aware of his or her individuality and is willing to state views and ideas clearly and to support the principles of *awareness* and *conscious choice*.

Effective work teams are also characterized by relationships that are fairly relaxed but not necessarily warm; i.e., team members get along well enough to attain organizational objectives. The norm can be stated: “You are free to be who you are, and I am free not to like you, as long as this does not detract from team effectiveness.”

An environment that encourages the open expression of disagreement as well as agreement accepts the reality that an individual may like some people more than others. This is legitimate as long as openly stated preferences do not result in discriminatory, unfair, or task-destructive behavior.

Role

Two elements, function and relationship, are combined in the concept of role. *Function* is the specific task each member is there to perform; *relationship* relates to the interaction necessary to get the task completed—with whom each member must interact and how the interaction occurs.

In the well-functioning team, role clarity is evident. The team's objectives are clear and agreed on, and each team member knows each member's unique contribution to those objectives, thus eliminating any duplication of effort. Usually, the effective team consists of individuals who have complementary, rather than similar, talents and approaches.

Values

All decisions, whether made by individuals or by groups, are based on values. Three specific values seem to identify good working teams: *task effectiveness*, *dealing in the present*, and *conflict viewed as an asset*.

- *Task Effectiveness.* The well-functioning group places a high value on task effectiveness, with greater emphasis on doing the right things, rather than on doing things right. This value implies that the team also focuses on the objective, or end result, rather than only on the team's ongoing activity.
- *Dealing in the Present.* The effective team focuses on "right here, right now," an emphasis that allows a flexible response to changing conditions within the team itself and within the larger organization. The team can make more appropriate decisions when it is concentrating on what is happening rather than why it is happening.
- *Conflict Viewed as an Asset.* Conflict provides two very necessary elements to the effective work group. First, it is the prime source of energy in systems, and, second, it is the major source of creativity. Since conflict is absolutely unavoidable, in any case, an effective team's approach to dealing with it is to use it rather than to try to resolve, avoid, or suppress it. More potential for ineffectiveness and marginal performance exists in avoiding conflict than in conflict itself. When conflict is seen as an asset, the preferred approach is to deal with it through collaboration, although competition or even compromise is not precluded, when called for by the situation (Karp, 1976).

WHY TEAMS?

Although establishing teams frequently involves much hard work, the effort provides three important factors to group effectiveness: *synergy*, *interdependence*, and a *support base*.

Synergy

What energy is to the individual, synergy is to groups. The synergy of a group is always potentially greater than the sum of the combined energies of its members. Thus, it is not infrequent in laboratory exercises that a group effort results in a better performance than that achieved by the group's most competent member (Nemiroff & Pasmore, 1975).

When team concepts are applied to group formation, the result is not only the effective use of energy, but also the creation of new energy.

Interdependence

Effective teams are made up of highly independent individuals who must combine their separate efforts in order to produce an organizational result. The focus of the team effort is on combining, rather than on coordinating, resources. Interdependence in today's organizations is a simple reality. Most products and services are too complex, and their respective technologies too specialized, for any one individual to accomplish alone. The team concept provides the necessary link to approach organizational objectives from a position of strength and creativity.

Support Base

It is no overstatement that the average adult spends most of his or her waking hours in a work setting. It is also a reality that the individual carries all his or her needs with him or her at all times, regardless of the location or situation. From this perspective, the quality of life must be attended to in the work setting as much as in the home setting.

The team constructed along authentic lines has the potential to provide social and emotional support for its members, producing a more satisfying and work productive environment. It is important to note that, in order for a group truly to function as a support base, the group norms that emerge for any specific team must originate from within the team itself and not represent a set of "shoulds" from the behavioral sciences, social institutions, or other external sources. Sometimes, also, it is simply more fun to work with someone else than to work alone.

CONCLUSION

Team construction is one of many viable organizational approaches and structures. It is a situational alternative and not a matter of organizational dogma and clearly needs to be based on conscious choice. Some questions can help determine whether teams are appropriate in a particular organizational situation: Is there a need for interdependent

work in order to meet organizational objectives and, if so, to what extent? Can individual satisfaction or higher and better output be better attained through the combination of individual efforts? If the responses to these questions are positive, team building would seem to be a good choice.

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■ A NEW MODEL OF TEAM BUILDING: A TECHNOLOGY FOR TODAY AND TOMORROW

Chuck Kormanski and Andrew Mozenter

In this age of rapidly changing technology, market-driven decision making, customer sophistication, and employee restlessness, leaders and managers are faced with new challenges. For corporations, small companies, educational institutions, and service organizations to become competitive and to survive, new structures must be built and new skills must be mastered.

As our work settings become more complex and involve increased numbers of interpersonal interactions, individual effort has less and less impact. In order to gain control over change by increasing efficiency and effectiveness, a group effort is required. The creation of teams to accomplish tasks and effect desired change has become a key strategy in many organizations. Team building has become necessary as a process to control organizational change by a group whose members are joined together in pursuit of a common purpose.

Although much has been written about the management of change (Ferguson, 1980; Kanter, 1983) and the new leadership required to inspire excellence (Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Burns, 1978; Maccoby, 1976; Peters & Waterman, 1982), surprisingly little has been written about the elements of effective team building. As teams rapidly replace individuals as the primary unit of focus in innovative companies and organizations, learning how to build, nurture, lead, and dismantle teams becomes a critical management skill.

Hellriegel, Slocum, & Woodman (1986) state that team building is used to improve the effectiveness of work groups by focusing on any of the following four purposes: setting goals and priorities, deciding on means and methods, examining the way in which the group works, and exploring the quality of working relationships. A cycle then develops; it begins with the awareness or perception of a problem and is followed sequentially by data collection, data sharing, diagnosis, action planning, action implementation, and behavioral evaluation. This cycle is repeated as new problems are identified.

TEAM ELEMENTS

Some work groups technically are not teams. Reilly and Jones (1974) note four essential elements of team behavior: the team members must have mutual goals or a reason to

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work together; team members must perceive a need for an interdependent working relationship; individuals must be committed to the group effort; and the group must be accountable to a higher level within the organization. Karp (1980) cites the example of an athletic team. A reason to work together is defined by team goals and overall purpose. Individual players have specific assignments for which each is independently responsible, but each player also must depend on other team members to complete their assignments. Lack of commitment to team efforts creates dissension and reduces overall effectiveness. Finally, the team usually operates within the framework of a higher organization such as a league.

Teams are differentiated from groups in that they possess the four essential elements of goals, interdependence, commitment, and accountability. Groups that are not teams include the following: a group of workers who meet daily for their coffee break but who have no defined goals and no accountability for what happened during the break; a monthly coin club composed of individual collectors who are not accountable to a higher organization; a group of pageant contestants who are working independently to win and who have little commitment to the group if it lessens their chances of winning; and an office staff that does not volunteer for but is assigned to a training program.

Team Objectives

The overall objective of a team is to exercise control over organizational change (functionally, this involves increased decision-making and problem-solving efforts), although a side effect may be to increase the productivity of individual members. Solomon (1977) stresses the need in contemporary work settings to provide for increased organizational democracy. From a structural perspective, new work groups may be created that will differ in terms of composition, time span, and assigned tasks. A primary objective will be to increase awareness of group process. In essence, the group members will learn how to control change externally by experimenting internally. The team-building effort will concentrate on barriers to effective functioning and the selection of strategies to overcome these barriers.

Peters and Waterman (1982) discuss breaking things into manageable “chunks” as a means of facilitating organizational fluidity and encouraging action and note that the small group is the most visible of the chunking devices. They also state that the small group is critical to effective organizational functioning and that the task force is a key strategy in creating a bias for action. Gibb and Gibb (1969) identify the group experience as being more powerful and more permanent if it is embedded in significant organizational life. Team building is an essential element in improving the effectiveness of small groups and task forces and must be a key part of a total program of organizational change.

Values

As the cultural values of our society change from “selfish” to “concerned,” with emphasis on personal fulfillment, increased concern for others is required of each individual (Schnall, 1981). New criteria are emerging for success. More attention is paid to job-related creativity, interdependence, and freedom as well as to more intangible factors such as health, education, family, and leisure time. Individuals are not afraid of hard work but they also seek increased appreciation for their efforts and more involvement in the decision-making process. The growth of quality circles is an example of values translated into action in the workplace. Employee volunteers meet on a regular basis to analyze work-related problems and suggest solutions. Quality circles are valuable team efforts that can improve both production and quality of work life (Lawler & Mohrman, 1985).

Solomon (1977) identifies five values that represent implicit assumptions about human nature and organizational life. The values underlie the strategies used in team-building efforts. They include a belief in and advocacy of democratic society, freedom of choice, scientific inquiry, a healthy organization, and interpersonal knowledge. Peters and Waterman (1982) cite the values of quality, innovativeness, informality, customer service, and people. As a team operates within an organization, the role of leadership is to instill and protect the values of the organization (Burns, 1978). The role of the team is to act on those values.

Team Characteristics

Organizational failures often are not a result of poor leadership but of poor followership. Numerous training programs have been developed to teach leadership theories and skills but few teach how to be an effective follower. More importantly, few teach how to be an effective member of a democratic group. A team member is one of a group of mutual followers. Observation of individuals functioning within teams leads to the following list of characteristics of an effective team member. Such a person:

- Understands and is committed to group goals;
- Is friendly, concerned, and interested in others;
- Acknowledges and confronts conflict openly;
- Listens to others with understanding;
- Includes others in the decision-making process;
- Recognizes and respects individual differences;
- Contributes ideas and solutions;
- Values the ideas and contributions of others;
- Recognizes and rewards team efforts; and
- Encourages and appreciates comments about team performance.

These characteristics are in a sequential pattern, alternating task and relationship behaviors. This pattern of behaviors is the starting point for the development of a model of team building.

A NEW MODEL OF TEAM BUILDING

The following model is in accord with current theories of group development (e.g., Bennis & Shepard, 1956; Bion, 1961; Gibb, 1964; Schutz, 1958, 1982; Tuckman, 1965; Tuckman & Jensen, 1977; and Yalom, 1970). A summary of selected theories is presented in Table 1. Because Tuckman's work is a summarization of numerous studies and is expressed in short, descriptive terms, it will be used as a generic model. Tuckman's (1977) stages of group development are forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning.

Table 1. Models of Group Development

Models	Stages				
	One	Two	Three	Four	Five
Tuckman (1965, 1977)	Forming	Storming	Norming	Performing	Adjourning
Bennis and Shepard (1956)	Dependence	Counter dependence	Resolution	Inter-dependence	
Shutz (1958, 1982)	Inclusion	Control	Openness/affection	Control	Inclusion
Bion (1961)	Dependency	Fight/flight	Pairing	Work	
Gibb (1964)	Acceptance	Data flow	Goals and norms	Control	
Yalom (1970)	Orientation and hesitant participation	Conflict, dominance, and rebellion	Intimacy, closeness, and cohesiveness		Termination

The model presented here is sequential, developmental, and thematic, as are most theories of group development. The model is sequential in that there are five stages that occur in order; each stage has a general theme that describes group activity. The developmental nature of the model requires that the theme activities be accomplished and problems resolved at each stage before movement to the next stage. The model includes behaviors that are task oriented and relationship oriented and it reflects the elements and characteristics of teams presented earlier in this paper. Table 2 is a presentation of the model.

To summarize the model, the five themes and their respective task and relationship outcomes are as follows: awareness (commitment and acceptance); conflict (clarification

and belonging); cooperation (involvement and support); productivity (achievement and pride); and separation (recognition and satisfaction).

Table 2. A Model of Team Building

Stage	Theme	Task Outcome	Relationship Outcome
One	Awareness	Commitment	Acceptance
Two	Conflict	Clarification	Belonging
Three	Cooperation	Involvement	Support
Four	Productivity	Achievement	Pride
Five	Separation	Recognition	Satisfaction

Stage One: Awareness

The forming stage of group development involves the task objective of *becoming oriented* and the relationship objective of *resolving dependencies*. Awareness is an overall theme. In team building, team members need to understand and become committed to group goals as a task behavior and to be friendly, concerned, and interested in others from a relationship perspective. The desired outcomes for the first stage are *commitment* and *acceptance*. These outcomes are critical to team development and are prerequisites to movement to the next stage.

In team building, individuals must begin by getting acquainted with one another. The unique identities and personal skills of individuals are important resources to be shared in order to create feelings of acceptance. However, getting acquainted is not enough; there are many groups in which the members feel comfortable with one another and know one another's strengths and weaknesses yet accomplish nothing. Therefore, the initial task activity is *setting goals*. This gives meaning to the team's existence. Not only do individuals need to understand how the team fits within the organization, they also need to understand how they are related to the team's goals.

Stage Two: Conflict

The storming stage of group development involves the task objective of *resistance* and the relationship objective of *resolving feelings of hostility*. Conflict emerges as a general theme. Team-building behaviors at this stage include acknowledging and confronting conflict openly at the task level and listening with understanding to others at the relationship level. Desired outcomes in this stage are *clarification and belonging*.

It is important that individuals listen attentively and actively to all viewpoints at this stage. The diversity of opinions shared provides the team with a vital source of group energy. Team members become responsible for developing an atmosphere that encourages and supports the expression of opinions. This opportunity for individuals to

contribute to the group effort fosters a sense of belonging. As opinions are shared, there undoubtedly will be both expressed and unexpressed disagreement. By openly confronting and managing disagreements, a team further clarifies its purpose and begins to define its most effective means for working together. Thus, effective conflict-management strategies contribute to a deeper understanding and a more accurate clarification of the team's purpose.

Stage Three: Cooperation

The norming stage of group development involves the task objective of *promoting open communication* and the relationship objective of *increasing cohesion*. The overall theme is one of cooperation. Appropriate behaviors for team members are including others in the decision-making process (to meet task needs) and recognizing and respecting individual differences (to meet relationship needs). The desired outcomes for teams in the third stage are *involvement and support*.

Effective team members recognize and respect individual differences. They see that opportunities for group success increase as they share power and resources. Collaboration becomes a team norm, and a feeling of genuine support develops. Members realize that if they are to work effectively together, they must learn to give and receive feedback. As the giving and receiving of feedback increase within the team, members have a better understanding of where they stand and become more involved in decision making.

Stage Four: Productivity

The performing stage of group development involves the task objective of *solving problems* and the relationship objective of *promoting interdependence*. The general theme is productivity. Team-building behaviors encourage team members to contribute ideas and problem solutions and to value the contributions and ideas of others. Desired outcomes for this stage are *achievement and pride*.

In team building, members work collaboratively to achieve desired goals and objectives. In successful teams, members are challenged to work to their greatest potential in order to do this. A major concern at this stage is sustaining momentum and enthusiasm. Teams are faced with complex goals and objectives that require the creation of incremental steps and subgoals. The establishment of milestones or benchmarks for success at such points and the celebration when these points are reached contribute both to motivation and team revitalization.

Stage Five: Separation

The adjourning stage of group development may occur for groups that have a specified lifetime. It also may occur when a major task is completed or when a number of new team members are added. Some ongoing teams do not conclude at the fifth stage but recycle from stage five to stage one without adjourning.

During stage five, the task objective *involves recognizing and rewarding team efforts*, while the relationship objective stresses *encouraging and appreciating comments on team performance*. The desired outcomes of the final stage of team building are *recognition and satisfaction*.

For those groups that are adjourning, an evaluation of team accomplishments provides important feedback regarding job performance and working relationships. This documentation of team history can be used to plan future ventures involving other teams. This also provides a sense of closure for the group and allows individuals to either say good-bye or commit to a future of further collaboration. This stage is, in essence, a final celebration that includes both recognition and satisfaction.

Table 3 presents an integration of group-development theory and the team-building model described here. For each of the five stages of Tuckman's model, a task and relationship behavior is noted, a general theme is identified, and both task and relationship team-building outcomes are listed.

Table 3. Integration of Group Development Theory and a Model of Team Building

Group Development				Team Building	
Tuckman Stage	Task Behavior	Relationship Behavior	General Theme	Task Outcome	Relationship Outcome
1. Forming	Orientation	Dependency	Awareness	Commitment	Acceptance
2. Storming	Resistance	Hostility	Conflict	Clarification	Belonging
3. Norming	Communication	Cohesion	Cooperation	Involvement	Support
4. Performing	Problem Solving	Inter-dependence	Productivity	Achievement	Pride
5. Adjourning	Termination	Disengagement	Separation	Recognition	Satisfaction

OTHER MODELS

Three team-building models have appeared in the literature. Francis and Young (1979) describe a four-stage model by noting participant reactions. Sequentially, the stages are testing, infighting, getting organized, and mature closeness. In this model, the first three stages appear to be behaviors while the fourth is an outcome. Francis and Young also provide an activity to rate stages of team development; it is composed of adjectives (polite, open), a noun (difficulties), specific behaviors (developing skills, giving feedback), and an emotion (feeling stuck). However, the stages do, in a general way, resemble the themes suggested in this paper.

Woodcock (1979) also presents a four-stage model. The sequential stages describe team performance and are: the undeveloped team, the experimenting team, the consolidated team, and the mature team. The initial stage is described as a floundering stage full of negative characteristics and behaviors. Stage two is a set of positive behaviors focused on listening and experimenting. Stage three sees the addition of some

work methods and procedures to the behaviors listed in the second stage. Finally, stage four adds another set of behaviors, which describe work outcomes, to those of the preceding two stages.

Woodcock and Francis (1981) propose a model consisting of five stages and based on a revision and combination of their earlier efforts. The first stage is called ritual sniffing, but the behavioral description of team members continues to be one of negative floundering. Infighting is the second stage; it appears more positive, and the focus is on beginning to develop relationships. Experimentation is moved from stage two to stage three and continues to involve improved relationships. However, task functions are described negatively at this stage. The fourth stage is a renamed version of the third stages of the two earlier theories. It is called effectiveness and highlights working relationships and task functions. The fifth stage resembles the fourth stages of the two earlier models and is called maturity. It includes the description of stages three and four plus a description of ideal team functioning in both the task and relationship spheres.

TEAM-DEVELOPMENT RATING SCALE

All three of the models described in the previous section are presented in terms of team-member behaviors, with the final stage representing a desired outcome. The new model presented in this paper identifies specific outcomes at each stage. This permits an assessment by team members of the effectiveness of the team's functioning. Figure 1 presents a Team-Development Rating Scale to be used for such a purpose.

LEADERSHIP

Although team development is presented as a process in which the members are mutual followers, the context in which team building occurs requires the facilitator or team leader to have a thorough understanding of the process of leadership. The two are mutually reciprocal. Effectiveness in one improves performance outcomes as well as working relationships; effectiveness in both creates a synergistic effect.

Kormanski (1985) describes the relationship between group development and leadership style. Using the Situational Leadership® theory of Hersey and Blanchard (1982), he matches leader behavior with follower readiness and pairs them with stages of group development. A high-task, low-relationship leadership style (S1: Telling) is used with a group in stage one (awareness), which implies a low level of readiness. Relationship behavior by the leader is increased as performance and level of readiness improve. This results in a high-task, high-relationship style (S2: Selling) as the group moves into stage two (conflict). The leader's task behavior is reduced as the readiness level increases and the group enters stage three (cooperation). The leadership style involves low-task, high-relationship behaviors (S3: Participating), with the followers

INSTRUCTIONS: Provide a rating from one (low) to ten (high) by circling the appropriate number that you think is most descriptive of your team.

1. Commitment

Team members understand group goals and are committed to them.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

2. Acceptance

Team members are friendly, concerned, and interested in each other.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

3. Clarification

Team members acknowledge and confront conflict openly.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

4. Belonging

Team members listen with understanding to others.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

5. Involvement

Team members include others in the decision-making process.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

6. Support

Team members recognize and respect individual differences.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

7. Achievement

Team members contribute ideas and solutions to problems.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

8. Pride

Team members value the contributions and ideas of others.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

9. Recognition

Team members recognize and reward team performance.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

10. Satisfaction

Team members encourage and appreciate comments about team efforts.

10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

Figure 1. Team-Development Rating Scale

assuming more task responsibilities. Relationship behavior by the leader is reduced as stage four (productivity) evolves. Readiness is at its highest level, and the appropriate leader style is a low-task, low-relationship one (S4: Delegating). Finally, when the group enters stage five (separation) and concludes a particular task or its own existence, a crisis occurs. This requires the leader to increase relationship behaviors in order to support the team members (followers) as events move toward a close. This results in a low-task, high-relationship (S3: Participating) style that matches the decreasing readiness level of the members brought on by the crisis of separation. Table 4 presents a summary of the stages of group and team development, along with the appropriate leadership styles.

Table 4. Stages of Group and Team Development and Leadership Style

Stage of Group Development	Group/Team Development Theme	Situational Leadership® Style	Group/Team Leader Behavior	Follower-Readiness Behavior
1	Awareness	Telling	High task, low relationship	Inexperienced and hesitant
2	Conflict	Selling	High task, high relationship	Inexperienced and willing
3	Cooperation	Participating	Low task, high relationship	Experienced and hesitant or unconfident
4	Productivity	Delegating	Low task, low relationship	Experienced and willing
5	Separation	Participating	Low task, high relationship	Experienced and hesitant

Hersey and Blanchard (1982) describe leadership as influence. Burns (1978) says that outcomes ought to reflect the aspirations and expectations of both leaders and followers. He also defines two fundamentally different forms of leadership: transactional leadership involves the exchange of valued things as the major purpose, and transforming leadership increases awareness and acceptance of higher levels of motivation and morality.

Bennis and Nanus (1985) suggest that the difference between transacting and transforming is the difference between managing and leading. Leaders, they say, influence and inspire others through value-driven vision; persuasive, anecdotal communication; and the development of a strong, predictable self. Managers, on the other hand, lead by employing the skills necessary to get the job done. The truly successful teams are both managed and led. While managing skills enable teams to successfully advance through each stage of team development, leading skills inspire individual team members to realize their full potential at each stage.

Both forms of leadership are critical if outcomes of both a task and relationship nature are desired. However, team members require more transactional leadership during the early stages of group life (and low levels of follower-readiness) in order to achieve the team-building outcomes of commitment, acceptance, clarification, and belonging. Increased transformational leadership is required as the team develops and matures. The team-building outcomes of involvement and support require equal amounts of transactional and transformational leadership. Finally, in the advanced stages of group development and readiness, more transformational leadership is required to bring about the team-building outcomes of achievement, pride, recognition, and satisfaction. Figure 2 presents a summary of team-development outcomes and Burns' (1978) forms of leadership.

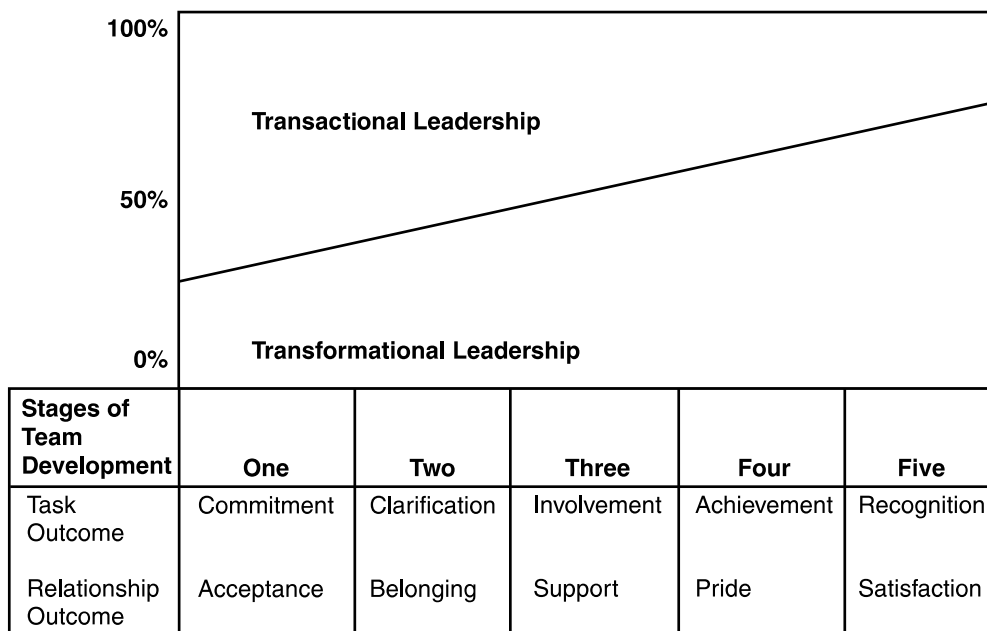


Figure 2. Forms of Leadership and Team—Development Outcomes

Skills

In order to bring about the desired outcomes of the team-development process, the team leadership needs to master specific skills and teach them to the team members. Although all of these skills may be needed and used all the time, a special group of skills is especially needed at each stage of team development. As has been stated, both transactional and transformational skills are required during the early stages of team development, while more transformational skills are needed during the latter stages. Team leaders will discover more opportunities to use transformational skills, and team members will find more situations in which transactional skills are required.

Transactional Skills

The literature describes a number of transactional skills useful in team building (Alexander, 1985; Francis & Young, 1979; Karp, 1980; Reilly & Jones, 1974; Shonk, 1982; Solomon, 1977; Woodcock, 1979; and Woodcock & Francis, 1981). The skills used extensively during stage one (awareness) to bring about commitment and acceptance are getting acquainted, goal setting, and organizing. The skills that bring resolution to stage two (conflict) and develop clarification and belonging are active listening, assertiveness, and conflict management. During the third stage (cooperation), the skills used most frequently to promote involvement and support are communication, feedback, and affirmation. The fourth stage (productivity) requires the skills of problem solving, decision making, and rewarding to develop achievement and pride. Finally, during the fifth stage (separation), the skills needed to create recognition and satisfaction are evaluating and reviewing.

Transformational Skills

Transformational skills have received attention only recently. Although Selznick (1957) was one of the first to suggest the importance of these skills as critical components of dynamic leadership, it was Burns (1978) who provided a thorough introduction to them. More current literature continues to offer insight into the importance and development of transformational skills (Ackerman, 1984; Bass, 1985; Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Ferguson, 1980; Kanter, 1983; Peters & Waterman, 1982).

In the awareness stage of the team-development model, the transformational skills needed to encourage commitment and acceptance are value clarification, visioning (identifying mission and purpose), and communicating through myth and metaphor (using stories and anecdotes to describe philosophy and define culture). During the conflict stage, the skills of flexibility (developing openness and versatility), creativity, and kaleidoscopic thinking (discovering new ways of viewing old problems) will assist with the development of clarification and belonging. The cooperation stage requires the skills of playfulness and humor, entrepreneurship, and networking (building coalitions of support). At the productivity stage, the skills of multicultural awareness, mentoring, and nurturing (forecasting outcomes through trend analysis) help to create achievement and pride. The last stage, separation, requires the skills of celebrating (using ceremony to acknowledge accomplishment) and closure to promote recognition and satisfaction.

The skills essential for successful team development are both simple and complex. They are used by both team leaders and team members. One set (transactional) provides for efficient management, and the other (transformational) promotes effective leadership. Table 5 depicts the team-building skills that are used predominantly in each stage of team development.

Table 5. Team-Building Skills

Stage of Team Development	Task and Relationship Outcomes	Transactional Skills (Management)	Transformational Skills (Leadership)
1. Awareness	Commitment and acceptance	Getting acquainted, goal setting, organizing	Value clarification, visioning, communication through myth and metaphor
2. Conflict	Clarification and belonging	Active listening, assertiveness, conflict management	Flexibility, creativity, kaleidoscopic thinking
3. Cooperation	Involvement and support	Communicating, feedback, affirmation	Playfulness and humor, entrepreneurship, networking
4. Productivity	Achievement and pride	Decision making, problem solving, rewarding	Multicultural awareness, mentoring, futuring
5. Separation	Recognition and satisfaction	Evaluating, reviewing	Celebrating, bringing closure

PRACTICAL APPLICATIONS OF THE MODEL

The team-building model and its relationship to group development provides a sound basis for organizational use in the formation, growth, and conclusion of groups that might function best as teams in order to accomplish specific goals. With the identification of both task and relationship outcomes at each stage of development, progress can be assessed and interventions can be made when time is critical or when barriers to development occur. Skills for both team leaders and team members can be identified at each stage, and appropriate leadership styles can be determined.

This model also is an excellent starting point for the design of team-building programs. In addition to teaching new groups about the team-building process and skills, it can be used to enhance and/or remedy groups in all stages of the developmental sequence. Groups that have mastered the transactional skills can be encouraged to acquire the transformational skills or vice versa.

The Team-Development Rating Scale (see Figure 1) can be used to monitor progress on all ten outcomes. Both task and relationship functions can be assessed, along with the two related outcomes, to determine each stage of development. A total score also can be obtained. Data from the rating scale currently is being collected in business, industrial, educational, volunteer, and sports settings. Initial data suggest that new teams usually rate themselves relatively high on each outcome (from 7 to 9.5 on the ten-point scale). Overall scores also tend to be high (between 75 and 90) and suggest a somewhat

positive expectation of success. As the team members spend more time working together, the ratings decrease until the stage-two outcomes are achieved. Following this critical point, effective teams gradually show increasingly higher ratings until they reach the approximate level of the initial scores. Figure 3 presents a graphic interpretation of the general sequence of team development in relation to the scores from the Team-Development Rating Scale for twenty-three teams, each consisting of five to seven members, who worked on a planning/implementing task for five weeks. (These initial findings are tentative, and data is continuing to be collected and analyzed.)

The team-building model and rating scale provide an internal measurement of the effectiveness of the team to accompany external assessments of goal accomplishment. Both are important, but too often little attention is paid to how the group members work as a team. Essential outcomes can be measured by team members and used to enhance team development.

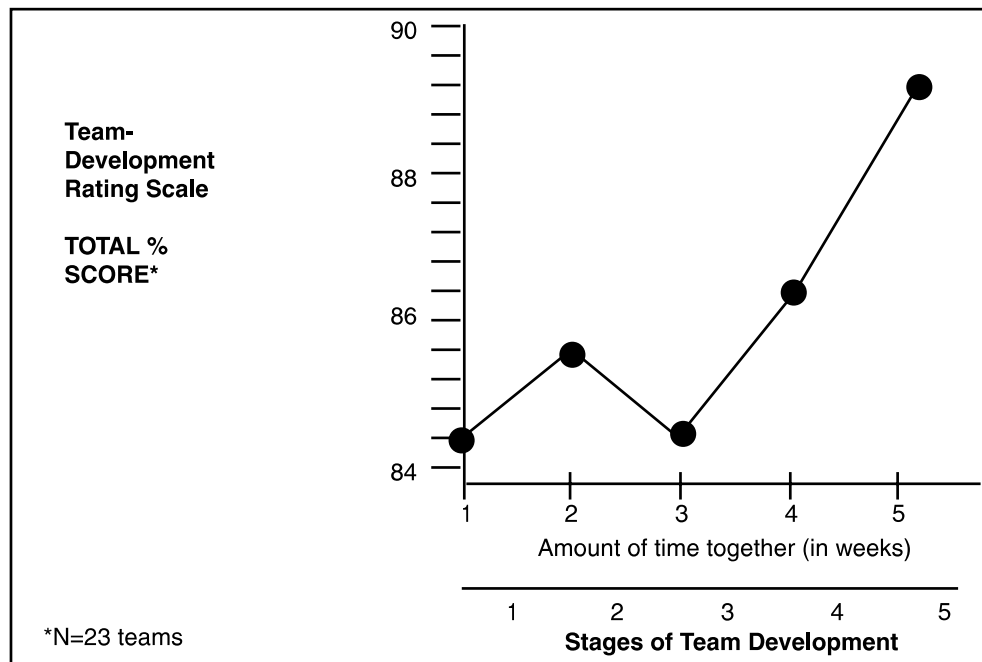


Figure 3. Team-Development Rating Scale and Stages of Team Development

SUMMARY

The model of team building presented in this paper is compatible with major theories of group development. It emphasizes the role of the team members as mutual followers. Using specific elements, objectives, and values as a starting point, it identifies a group of observable behaviors that characterize effective teamwork. Descriptive outcomes representing both the task dimension and the relationship dimension for each stage of group development are identified. The team-building model is integrated with group-

development theory using the five major themes of awareness, conflict, cooperation, productivity, and separation.

This paper also discusses other models of team building and presents a Team-Development Rating Scale. The role of team leader is discussed in relation to appropriate leadership style for each stage of team development. Specific skills for team leaders and team members are outlined for each stage of team-building, including both transactional and transformational skills. Finally, some practical suggestions are offered for the use of the model, and tentative research data is presented.

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■ THE SEARCH FOR BALANCE: TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

Tom Noonan

Abstract: A major challenge for organizations today is to match the right person to the right job so that every team consists of the most effective members possible. Unfortunately, when the wrong candidate is chosen for a job, often the choice is attributable to insufficient, inaccurate, or ignored data.

Dr. Meredith Belbin of the Industrial Training Research Unit of Cambridge University in England has conducted extensive research and has developed a system that can help in placing the right person in the right job. Belbin's research has led to the identification of nine roles that are critical to team success. The team that possesses all nine roles—without an imbalance of too many people in too few roles—is well on its way to being a high-performance team.

Belbin's system is the subject of this article. The nine roles—Plant, Coordinator, Resource Investigator, Monitor Evaluator, Implementer, Team Worker, Complete-Finisher, Specialist, and Shaper—are defined, and the uses and benefits of team-role theory are thoroughly discussed.

Business today is not business as usual. New values, new technologies, new geographical relationships, new lifestyles, and new modes of communication have combined to create a much different business environment from that of yesterday. As has often been said, change is the only constant.

In addition, global market competition demands that businesses learn to respond quicker with less cost and higher quality. Those organizations that are able to adapt to rapid and unpredictable levels of change will be more likely to survive in the next century.

It is obvious to many in the field of human resource development that the decision-making processes and structures of the past cannot meet the challenge of the future. Many believe that teams are the answer and that the members of those teams should be the best-qualified people available to solve problems and implement solutions.

TEAM ROLES: A SYSTEM FOR DEVELOPING HIGH-PERFORMANCE TEAMS

The Difference Between Functional Roles and Team Roles

Dr. Meredith Belbin of the Industrial Training Research Unit of Cambridge University in England has studied management teams for more than twenty years (Belbin, 1994). His research has resulted in a system for understanding the roles that people play in teams and for enhancing the effectiveness of teams. Belbin has found that every team

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member plays dual roles: a functional role and a team role. An individual's *functional role* contributes to his or her team's performance in the form of specific expertise (for example, a person's functional role may be as an engineer, an accountant, a copywriter, or a salesperson).

An individual's *team role* is less obvious but is equally critical to a team's performance. Indeed, the members' ability to play their team roles effectively may mean the difference between success and failure for a team.

The concept of team roles is apparent every day in the predictable behaviors of team members. For example, one member may be the one who always comes up with bright ideas, another may typically press for decisions, and yet another may tend to challenge new ideas. This natural pattern of behaviors is observable in any team. The enduring behavioral characteristics of team members lead to their assuming particular roles within the team.

The Nine Team Roles

Over a seven-year period, Dr. Belbin and the members of his research team studied more than 120 management teams during competitive business simulations. Great volumes of data were collected during every team session, including a variety of recorded contributions from different team members.

Psychometric tests were used to generate a profile of psychological traits for each participant. From these test results and the observations of Belbin's researchers, team-role patterns began to emerge. It became obvious that each team member had a preferred or natural role, a secondary role (one that he or she was able to assume when necessary), and least-preferred/best-avoided roles.

Belbin's initial research produced eight team roles, and later a ninth role was identified. All nine, which are briefly described in Figure 1, are important to team performance¹

In reality, any team member can play—and probably has played—each role while contributing to the objectives of a work team. The important issue is the extent to which each member contributes from his or her natural team-role strength(s).

Allowable Weaknesses

Although each team role contributes a valuable strength to the composition of a team, it also carries the weight of what Dr. Belbin refers to as an "allowable weakness." For example, the Plant has the strength of being able to generate original ideas but also has the allowable weakness of being disinterested in details.

¹ *The Belbin Team-Roles Package* contains everything needed to understand and implement Dr. Belbin's groundbreaking team-role concepts. The package includes self-perception inventories, observers' assessments, a user's guide, and software for processing the data. For further information, contact Pfeiffer & Company.



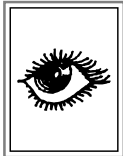
Plant: Devises creative solutions to problems.



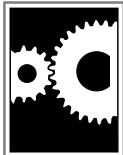
Coordinator: Interprets objectives; encourages decisions; facilitates appropriate resources.



Resource Investigator: Finds useful contacts and resources outside the team.



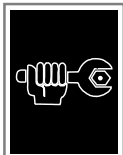
Monitor Evaluator: Discerns options; makes insightful judgments.



Implementer: Translates ideas into action and organizes the process.



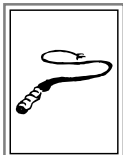
Team Worker: Resolves disagreements; concentrates on diplomacy.



Completer-Finisher: Fixes errors; ensures work is complete; meets deadlines.



Specialist: Offers knowledge or skills that others may not have.



Shaper: Challenges others to overcome difficulties.

Figure 1. Belbin's Nine Team Roles

Attempting to overcome an allowable weakness may dilute a person's strength, though. Consequently, team members should be encouraged to tolerate one another's weaknesses and to focus instead on one another's strengths.

DESIGNING TEAMS FOR HIGH PERFORMANCE

High performance seems to happen in one of two ways. In a crisis, a team often rises to the occasion. Whether the team members are saving lives in a hospital's emergency room or coming together and pooling resources after a devastating earthquake in a community, their performance level tends to be sustained for a short period, the length of the crisis.

The second way in which a team rises to the occasion is by mastering the phases of team development. Although few teams consciously follow the process of their own development, certain characteristics have been found to be common to long-term high performance. For example, in such a team there is a "chemistry" formed in which the members contribute on the basis of their individual strengths. Also, activities are well coordinated and focused on team goals. Finally, the roles are balanced so that there is adequate coverage of all nine without a concentration on only one or a few roles (Drexler, Sibbet, & Forrester, 1988).

A balance of roles within a team increases the likelihood of positive contributions from individual members, decreases the likelihood of destructive conflict among members, and enhances the team's ability to adapt to changing and unpredictable circumstances.

THE USES OF TEAM-ROLE THEORY

Assessing roles in an existing team helps the members to recognize, acknowledge, and take advantage of the different contributions from individuals. When the team members share information about natural roles (those that they naturally assume without effort) and least-preferred roles, they are able to identify any areas of imbalance as well as any roles that are not covered within the team.

The process of learning about, identifying, and employing team roles offers other advantages:

- Tasks can be assigned to members on the basis of the roles for which they are best suited.
- The team leader or mentors within the team can coach other team members on developing secondary roles that represent avenues of growth for them and for the team.
- New team members can be selected for team-role balance, thereby ensuring the right mix of natural role composition.

- Team members can be redeployed after a merger or an acquisition on the basis of roles needed within new teams. Thus, unfavorable situations can provide a unique opportunity to create balanced teams that are designed for success.

No one individual is so well-rounded that he or she can assume all of the roles necessary for effective team performance. But by assembling the right mix of individuals, an organization can create the most effective team possible.

THE BENEFITS OF TEAM-ROLE THEORY

As a management consultant, I am always wary of claims that one product, one system, one profile, or one management tool can meet many different client needs. However, during the 1994 Belbin Users Conference in Cambridge, England, I became convinced that the Belbin system of measuring team-role contributions, composition, and suitability (using self-perception inventories, observer assessments, and job analyses) can and does live up to the claims of its proponents. Human resource and organization development professionals who need accurate and useful information to encourage, influence, and facilitate change can benefit greatly from examining and using Belbin's approach.

At the conference were company representatives (from British Nuclear Fuels, IBM, British Airways, the Rover Group, and others), industrial psychologists, and independent consultants who made presentations about the utility and wide applicability of Dr. Belbin's system. My personal experiences with this system—in companies like Exxon Chemicals, GE Aircraft Engines, GE Appliances, AT&T Global Information (formerly NCR), Motorola, Pulte Home, and many others—reinforce the presenters' claims.

Following is a sampling of the benefits experienced and shared by the presenters:

- Increased involvement of team members, based on employing natural team roles to help meet team objectives;
- An ability to identify areas in which conflict is most likely to occur within a team;
- The provision of a framework (using Belbin's terminology) for openly and safely discussing sensitive team-viability issues;
- The identification of the most appropriate tasks for individual team members;
- The provision of a context within which team members can set/voice their expectations of one another;
- The realization that the functional leader does not have to "do it all";
- Higher-quality decisions and teams that are more highly motivated to carry out those decisions;

- An enhanced understanding and more effective management of one's own contribution to team effectiveness;
- An increased understanding of people's reactions to stress and outside pressures;
- An enhanced ability to diagnose people's readiness for change;
- Facilitation of an open dialogue about the organization's cultural norms and expectations;
- Facilitation of discussions about job design for current and future business operations; and
- The development of greater insight into the match or mismatch of candidates for new roles or jobs.

CONCLUSION

Currently Dr. Belbin's observations and conclusions are underutilized as a system for human resource management. I strongly urge practitioners to take a look at this approach and to discover what I have—that it is an excellent way to help organizations meet the challenges of the Twenty-First Century.

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■ CONTRACTS IN ENCOUNTER GROUPS

Gerard Egan

The notion of contract is offered here as one possible way of clearing up some of the confusion associated with both the conceptualization and the practice of encounter groups. Some critical, ethical and procedural issues can be clarified and handled, I believe, in a contractual framework. Since this is a handbook, this article will be relatively short and practical. I deal more extensively with contracts in sensitivity training elsewhere (Egan, 1970, 1971).

The notion of contract, though not widespread, is not a new one in the psychology of human encounter. Pratt and Tooley (1964, 1966) and Shapiro (1968) suggest contractual models to conceptualize both interpersonal transactions and the relationships a person has with himself or herself. For Pratt and Tooley all of life is a patterning of contractual arrangements that people make with themselves and with others. Contracts, then, become the instrumentalities for both the creation and exchange of values among people. They go so far as to say that people “are their contracts” (1966, p. 882). Shapiro (1968) suggests that an important source of difficulty in close interpersonal relationships is the lack of explicit interpersonal agreements: “It is often difficult to get people to say openly and explicitly what they want and need from one another” (p. 172). It is difficult for participants to do this in an encounter group, even when this is one of the explicit goals of the group. In short, it is suggested here that contractual clarity, in both intra- and interpersonal relationships, is a useful, if not necessary, foundation for effective interpersonal living.

CONTRACTS AND THERAPY

Contracts have been used, however sparingly, to give greater clarity and definition to the structures and processes involved in what Truax and Mitchell (1968) call “human encounters that change behavior,” the encounters that constitute counseling and psychotherapy. Goldstein, Heller, and Sechrest (1966) have combed the research literature in various areas of psychology in search for hypotheses with respect to procedures that would increase the effectiveness of therapeutic encounters. One of their hypotheses states that “giving patients prior information about the nature of psychotherapy, the theories underlying it, and the techniques to be used will facilitate progress in psychotherapy” (p. 245). They go on to say that they find it “remarkable [I believe they mean “deplorable”] that psychotherapists have apparently been unwilling to

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impart to their patients more than a little of the process of psychotherapy” (p. 245). Few therapists spell out the therapeutic contract, especially a contract that includes not only patient but also therapist and situation variables. In a word, the client looking for therapy of a traditional stamp must too often buy a pig-in-a-poke. Encounter groups, too, fall into the general category of “human encounters that change behavior.” Its practitioners would be well advised to avoid mistakes similar to those of the counselor or therapist.

Contracts, whether they are called that or not, govern much of the behavior of those engaged in “peer self-help psychotherapy groups” (Hurvitz, 1970) such as Alcoholics Anonymous. For instance, the participants in groups such as these agree (contract) to submit themselves to a good deal of social pressure to change their behavior, but they do so in return for the fellowship of the group and the promise of a better life.

Behavioral modification programs use “behavior contracts” (Krumboltz and Thoresen, 1969) to structure the administration of reinforcements. For instance, all those concerned with a particular behavior problem (e.g., disruptive student, teacher, principal, and parents) meet with the counselor to commit themselves to a contract designed to change behavior (in this case, the behavior of the disruptive student). The student learns that he or she will be dismissed from class as soon as he or she disrupts it. The principal commits merely to checking the student out of school without further comment. The parents agree not to administer further verbal or behavioral punishment at home. The contract clarifies and controls the situation. Beneficial punishment (dismissal from class) works because the contract prevents it from being contaminated by irrelevant forms of punishment. The student learns to control his or her behavior because ultimately he or she does not want to leave the classroom.

OPERATIONALIZING THE GROUP GOALS

Peter Drucker in his *Age of Discontinuity* (1969) claims that many organizations (education, government, church) remain ineffective because they do not have clear criteria by which they can judge success or failure. There is a great deal of evidence in the psychological literature indicating that groups achieve a high degree of operability only through clear goals and clear means to these goals. March and Simon (1958) distinguish between operational and nonoperational goals. A nonoperational goal is one that is quite general in itself and is not realized by a particular sequence of group activities. For instance, a common encounter-group goal, “to become sensitive to others,” is not very concrete. To become effective it must receive some kind of operational definition and then the kinds of interpersonal transactions that lead to such “sensitivity” (however it is defined) must be spelled out. Contracts can define encounter-group experiences and delineate in concrete, operational terms the goals of such groups.

Raven and Rietsema (1957) found that members with a clear picture of the group goals and the paths to them had a deeper involvement with the goals, more sympathy with group emotions, and a greater readiness to accept influence from the group than those who were unclear about goals and means. Deeper involvement in the encounter-

group process, greater sensitivity to the emotional dimensions of the group, and an openness to influence from others are certainly assets in encounter groups. Contracts can clarify in concrete, operational terms the kinds of interaction geared to achieving the goals of the encounter group.

Furthermore, there is a great deal of evidence that cooperation (*not* its look-alikes—conformity, dependency) rather than competition makes for smoother performance and increased productivity in a variety of group situations. There is also a great deal of evidence that cohesiveness in groups is enhanced if members work together for common rather than mutually exclusive and individual ends (Lott and Lott, 1965). Groups whose members are concerned primarily with self-oriented rather than group-oriented needs are relatively ineffective (Fouriezos, Hutt, and Guetzkow, 1950). However, if the members of a group commit themselves by contract to the same goals and processes, clearly defined, before they enter the group, then it is more likely that they will cooperate with one another. Since they are working for common goals, it is also more likely that they will become cohesive more quickly. And cohesive groups are generally more productive than noncohesive groups (Lott and Lott, 1965).

CONTRACTS IN ENCOUNTER GROUPS

A contract can help stimulate a high degree of operability in the encounter group in various ways.

(1) *Definition of the group experience.* Good ethics suggests that the prospective member has a right to know what he or she is getting into. This is especially true in view of the bewildering variety of groups presently available. Even though two different group experiences are given the same name—let us say “encounter group”—there is no assurance that one experience will resemble the other, for differing sponsoring agencies and different group leaders have different conceptions of encounter-group process. If the sponsoring agency does not divulge the nature of the experience and thereby asks the prospective client to buy a pig-in-a-poke (even a succulent pig), then the buyer has every reason to beware.

Ethics aside, the logic of commitment demands that prospective members know what kind of group they are about to join. If they know what kind of experience to expect, they can commit themselves to it in a way that would otherwise be impossible. It is my hypothesis that such clarity would insure a higher degree of what Golembiewski (1962) calls psychological (participative) rather than merely formal (spectator, nonparticipative) membership in the group. It is an agonizing experience to try to integrate a couple of people into an encounter group who did not realize what they were getting themselves into. The energies the group uses to deal with the uncommitted could more profitably be used elsewhere.

(2) *High visibility rather than ambiguity as a group value.* A number of theoreticians see “planned goallessness” as essential to a variety of laboratory-training groups (e.g., Benne, 1964; Bennis, 1964). The group, it is hypothesized, must begin

goalless since one of the principal goals of the group is to create its own goals. The interactions involved in this creative process contribute to the growth of the participants. Tuckman (1965) sees this struggle for viable goals as essential to the establishment of group cohesiveness: “All the relevant T-group development studies see the stage of conflict and polarization as being followed by a stage characterized by the reduction of conflict, resolution of the polarized issues, and establishment of group harmony in the place of disruption. It is a ‘patching-up’ phase in which group norms and values emerge” (p. 392).

In practice, however, I do not think that this is an accurate picture of present-day encounter-group experience. Most groups begin with a greater specificity of goals than is admitted. The sponsoring agency, the group leader, even the participants themselves—especially as participants become more and more sophisticated with respect to encounter-group theory and practice—all have certain goals and procedures in mind, even though they might be vague and undifferentiated. Goals, however hidden, abound! To assume, then, that such a group starts goalless is not realistic. What happens is that a great deal of effort goes into sharing and refining goals already possessed. I find one practical difficulty with such a procedure. The members often spend so much time elaborating goals and structures to provide a framework within which they can interact with one another that they often have no time left to engage in the contract so painfully elaborated. It is true that the formulation of a viable interactional contract often demands intense interpersonal interactions and is often quite growthful. But this process, I believe, belongs in a kind of laboratory experience that differs from the encounter-group laboratory. Slater (1966) in his *Microcosm* discusses an academic laboratory experience the goal of which is to learn about the nature of small-group formation and interaction through the actual process of becoming such a group. “To learn about groups by becoming a group,” however, is not the goal of the encounter group as I see it. Ambiguity is essential to Slater’s experiment but not to the encounter group. The primary goal of an encounter group is the development of relationships among the participants, not the elaboration of an interactional contract. The least that may be said is that goallessness is neither an accurate nor necessarily a desired state of affairs at the beginning of an encounter-group experience and that, whatever the advantages of a goallessness approach, it is not the only viable approach to laboratory experiences. I advocate high visibility in small groups as a way of preventing manipulation on the part of the sponsoring agency, the leader, or the participants themselves. A simple contract both defines the experience and allows the participants to get to the substantive work of the group more quickly.

One of the reasons why planned ambiguity is deemed essential to the encounter-group process is that ambiguity breeds anxiety and anxiety is a drive that keeps members at the work of the group. There is no doubt that a moderate degree of anxiety is helpful in groups. The group that is too comfortable gets little or nothing done. However, there is no reason why ambiguity should be the source of anxiety in the group. If the members enter the group by contract, if they see the kinds of behavior expected of

them, then the source of anxiety is the contract itself. I think that contract anxiety is preferable to anxiety stemming from ambiguity because the former is more real. It serves as a drive toward goals that are clearly defined.

The contract can be dramatized in various ways. It need not be just a written document. One way of dramatizing the contract is to show prospective participants or participants videotapes or movies of good group interaction. However, care should be taken not to raise anxiety too much. For instance, showing a movie such as Rogers' *Journey into Self* may be too anxiety arousing for neophyte encounter-group participants. A series of short videotapes may be more useful. These tapes can show the various phases in the life of a group (samples of these phases, rather, for they should be short) and thus serve as a graded series of stimuli.

(3) *Linking concrete interactional processes to concrete goals.* In the encounter group the contract should outline the procedural goals and the kinds of interactions appropriate to the pursuit of these goals. One reason for poor research results in the investigation of encounter groups is a lack of goal clarity: the goals of the sponsoring agency or facilitator, the goals of individual participants, and the interaction and integration of the two. It is difficult to design an experiment when outcome is not defined operationally and when the means for achieving a particular set of goals are not clearly delineated.

Perhaps the best way to demonstrate what I mean by linking concrete interactional processes to concrete goals is to outline a sample contract. The following contract, then, is addressed to the prospective participant.

AN ENCOUNTER-GROUP CONTRACT

Goals

The general goal. The general goal of this group is the establishment of an intimate community within which the members are free to investigate their interpersonal styles and experiment with interpersonal behaviors that are not normally a part of that style.

A general procedural goal. The procedural goal is simple to state but difficult to put into practice. It is this: Each member of this group is to try to establish and develop a relationship of some intimacy with each of the other members of the group. Each member should come to know each other member in more than a superficial way. This goal is difficult to put into practice because it means that each person must take the initiative to go out of himself or herself and contact each of the other members of the group. It is not assumed here that you will be successful in establishing a relationship in each case. However, you will learn a great deal from both your successes and your failures.

Diagnosis as a goal. As each member interacts with the others he or she both observes his or her own behavior and receives feedback with respect to the impact he or she is having on others. This feedback gives the person the opportunity to get a clearer

picture of and deeper feeling for his or her interactional style. In this process the participant can learn much about both his or her interpersonal strengths and his or her interpersonal weaknesses.

Experimentation with “new” behavior as a goal. As members learn more about how effective or ineffective they are in contacting others, they can attempt to change those behaviors that prevent them from involving themselves creatively with others. This would be “new” behavior. For instance, if a participant tends to control others and keep them from interacting with him or her by monopolizing the conversation, he or she can change by inviting others to dialogue. The person who tends to fall silent in groups experiments with “new” behavior by speaking up.

Personal goals. The goals outlined briefly are the contractual goals of the group. However, each member comes with certain personal goals. These goals and the ways they might conflict with the stated goals of the group should be shared openly with the other participants, for the group will tend to stagnate if individual members pursue their own “hidden agendas.”

Interactions

Certain interactions are common to all encounter groups. One function of this contract is to point out these interactional “values.” If all the participants commit themselves to these values, then the chance of establishing a cooperative community in which the above goals can be pursued is heightened considerably.

Self-disclosure. Self-disclosure in the encounter group is important, but not an end in itself. If the others are to get to know me and enter into a relationship with me, I must reveal myself to them in some way. The participant, therefore, should be open primarily about what is happening to himself or herself as he or she goes about the business of contacting others and trying to establish relationships with them. “Secret dropping” may be sensational but it is not a value in the group. The participant is important, not his or her secrets. If participants reveal their life outside the group, they should do so because it is relevant to what is happening here-and-now and because it helps establish and develop relationships more effectively in the group. It is up to each participant to choose what he or she wants to disclose about himself or herself in order to establish contact with others.

Expression of feeling. Second, the contracts call for expression of feeling. This does not mean that the participants are asked to manufacture feeling and emotion. Rather they are asked not to suppress the feelings that naturally arise in the give-and-take of the group, but to deal with them as openly and as honestly as possible. Suppressed emotions tend eventually either to explode or to dribble out in unproductive ways.

Support. Third, and perhaps most important, the encounter contract calls for support, whatever name it may be given—respect, nonpossessive warmth, acceptance, love, care, concern, “being for” the other, or a combination of all of these. Without a

climate of support encounter groups can degenerate into the destructive caricatures often described in the popular press. On the other hand, if a person receives adequate support in the group, then he or she can usually tolerate a good deal of strong interaction. Without a climate of support there can be no climate of trust. Without trust there can be no intimate community. Support can be expressed in many different ways, both verbally and nonverbally, but it must be *expressed* if it is to have impact on the other. Support that stays locked up inside a participant is no support at all.

Confrontation. If there is an adequate climate of support, of “being for” one another, then the participants can benefit greatly by learning how to challenge one another effectively. Confrontation does not mean “telling the other off.” This is merely punishment, and punishment is rarely growthful. The participant should confront only if he or she follows these two simple rules. (1) Confront only if you care about the other and your confrontation is a sign of that care. (2) Confront in order to get involved with the other, as a way of establishing a relationship with him or her. Remember, it is possible to confront others with their unused strengths as well as their demonstrated weaknesses. There is evidence that the former is a more growthful process. Remember also that your confrontation will be better received if you first build up a base of support for the other.

Response to confrontation. Most of us, when confronted, react either by defending ourselves or by attacking our confronter—or both. The encounter contract, however, calls for something more growthful than defense and attack—self-exploration in the context of the encounter community. “What you say disturbs me, but I think that I should explore it with you and the others here” is not an easy response, but it can be very growthful. Both the one who confronts and the one being confronted should learn to check out the substance of the confrontation with the other members of the group.

Procedural Rules

Certain procedural rules help make for a climate of greater contact and immediacy in the group.

The following rules, then, govern the interaction:

(1) *The here-and-now.* Deal with the here-and-now. When you talk about things that are happening or have happened outside the group, do so only if what you are saying can be made relevant to your interaction with *these* people in this group. The there-and-then can prove quite boring, especially if it is not helping you establish and develop relationships in the group. This does not mean that you may never deal with your life outside the group, but you should deal with it in such a way as to pursue the goals of this group.

(2) *Initiative.* Do not wait to be contacted by others. Take the initiative, reach out, contact others. The importance of initiative cannot be overstressed.

(3) *Speak to individuals.* As a general rule, speak to individual members rather than to the entire group. After all, the goal is to establish and develop relationships with individual members. Speeches to the entire group do not often contribute to this end. Furthermore, they tend to become too long, abstract, and boring. The group cursed with consecutive monologues is in bad straits.

(4) *“Owning” the interactions of others.* Part of taking initiative is “owning” the interactions of others. In the group when two people speak to each other, it is not just a private interaction. Other participants may and even should “own” the interaction not just by listening but by contributing their own thoughts and feelings. Each member should try to own as many of the interactions as possible.

(5) *Speak for yourself in the group.* Avoid using the word “we.” When you use “we,” you are speaking for the group. Rather speak for yourself. The word “we” tends to polarize; it sets the person spoken to off from the group. Furthermore, when you are speaking of yourself use the pronoun “I” rather than its substitutes—“we,” “you,” “one,” “people,” etc. Strangely enough, the pronouns you use can make a difference in the group.

(6) *Say it in the group.* A wise person has said that there is one excellent criterion for determining the level of trust in the group: Do people say in the group what they tend to say outside the group (to wives, friends, participants from the group to whom they feel closer). As much as possible, then, say what you mean *in* the group.

Leadership

The facilitator is in the group because he or she is interested in interpersonal growth. While it is true that the facilitator brings certain special resources to the group because of his or her theoretical background and experience, his or her purpose is to put those resources at the service of the group. The facilitator subscribes to the same contract as the other members do. In the beginning the facilitator will be more active, for one of his or her functions is to model the kinds of behavior called for by the contract. Another way of putting this is that the facilitator will strive to be a good member from the beginning. Another facilitator function is to invite others to engage in contractual behavior. However, the ideal is that whatever leadership (in terms of contractual behavior) the facilitator manifests should become diffused in the group. Eventually in the group there should be no leader but a high degree of shared leadership. This will be the case if individual members take the initiative to contact one another according to the terms of this contract.

CONTRACTS AND RESEARCH

It is a truism that macro- as opposed to molecular research is very difficult in the behavioral sciences. This is certainly true with respect to research in the areas of laboratory training in general and the encounter group in particular. The most obvious

problem is control. Laboratories use a wide variety of techniques—for example, lectures, activities, both verbal and nonverbal, and different kinds of face-to-face conversation. Trainers use a variety of styles: some are quite passive, while others are very active. Laboratories take place in a variety of settings with different kinds of populations—e.g., volunteers who attend a two-week residential laboratory, students in courses in interpersonal relations, nonvolunteers representing a cross-section of an organization, volunteers in weekly local groups conducted by different kinds of leaders. It is practically impossible to replicate studies, for descriptions of what takes place in the training situation are either nonexistent or too sparse to be meaningful. The goals for different kinds of group experiences are often extremely vague—and this naturally affects outcome studies. The processes considered necessary to achieve even these vague goals are not given any kind of operational definition.

If research is to be done and if the possibility of replication is to become a reality, then the object of study must be some kind of unitary phenomenon. Contracts delineate goals, leadership styles, and the kinds of interaction in which members engage. In short, contracts offer the possibility of a unitary phenomenon. A wide variety of contracts would produce a wide variety of group experiences, but each kind could be replicated in some meaningful sense of that term.

Most outcome studies deal with group scores. The problem with group scores, however, is that individual differences are lost. If a dozen people attend a group experience and six of them participate fully while the other six remain spectators, it is unfair to lump all together in assessing the outcome of the experience. Mere exposure to the group experience, at least in my opinion, is not expected to do anything. A contract approach makes it possible to measure, again in some meaningful way, the degree of each member's participation, for there are well-defined criteria of participation. High-participants should differ in outcome from low-participants.

A contract approach to self-actualization through the small-group experience might not appeal to some, but at least it does standardize the experience to some degree. If such standardization is impossible, then so is research, and all that an interested party can do is listen to the testimony, both positive and negative, given by those who engage in small-group experiences.

GROUP FACILITATION WITH CONTRACTS AND A CHECKLIST

The sample contract is not a definitive outline of what encounter groups should be. Obviously there can be a variety of contracts leading to a wide variety of group experiences. In some groups the contract can take the place of a formal leader. Leaderless groups that are filled with leadership are most exciting.

The contract is not meant to control the group members, to restrict their freedom unduly. Its purpose is rather to channel the energies of the group toward specific goals. For instance, in the contract outlined above, each participant still has a good deal of *lebensraum*. While the contract, for example, indicates that self-disclosure is a value, it

does not dictate either the content or the level of self-disclosure. Each participant must determine how and to what degree he or she is going to reveal himself or herself in the group. Self-disclosure should be an organic process arising from the participant's desire to achieve the overall goal of the laboratory and from the give-and-take involved in the process of establishing and developing relationships.

One of the needs a participant has upon entering the group is to know whether he or she is successful or not. He or she has to have some way of knowing whether he or she is achieving or not. But without explicit group and/or personal goals, this is difficult, if not impossible. The contract provides each participant with some kind of criterion for determining success or failure.

The following is a checklist I have devised to help me understand what is taking place in groups as I supervise student facilitators. But the checklist has much wider use. I give a few copies of it to both facilitator and group members and have them use it to check out their own behavior several times during the life of the group. The list helps the participants identify areas of strength and areas of weakness. This is at the heart of the diagnostic process mentioned above and provides starting points for experimentation with "new" forms of behavior within the group. For instance, because of the contract and the checklist many people come to realize in a rather dramatic way just how passive they are in interpersonal situations. They realize that they hardly ever initiate interactions. Others must come to them; they are reactors rather than actors in life.

ENCOUNTER GROUP CHECKLIST

1. *Tone.* What is the tone of the group (spontaneous, dead, cautious, etc.)?
2. *Commitment to goals.* Answer the following questions in view of the general procedural goal. Each member is to attempt to establish and develop a relationship of some intimacy with each of the other members.
 - a. Are members working at establishing relationships with one another?
 - b. Have a number of significant relationships emerged?
 - c. Are relationships becoming deeper or remaining superficial?
 - d. Is there consensus that the group is moving forward?
3. *Initiative.*
 - a. Do members actively reach out and contact one another or do they have to be pushed into it?
 - b. Is there some risk-taking behavior in the group?
4. *A climate of immediacy.*
 - a. Do members deal with the here-and-now rather than the there-and-then?
 - b. Are there a large number of one-to-one conversations as opposed to speeches to the group?

- c. Is the content of interactions concrete and specific rather than general and abstract?
 - d. Do members use “I” when they mean I instead of substitutes (one, you, etc)?
 - e. Do members avoid speaking for the group, using the pronoun “we”?
5. *Cooperation.*
- a. *Cooperation.* Is there a climate of cooperation rather than one of antagonism, passivity, or competition?
 - b. *Polarizations.* Are there polarizations in the group that affect the quality of interactions (e.g., leaders vs. group members, active group members vs. passive group members)?
 - c. *Owning interactions.* Do members tend to “own” the pair interactions that take place in the group? When two members are having difficulty talking to each other, do other group members help them? Do those having difficulty seek the help of others?
 - d. *Checking it out.* Do the members, when they confront one another, check out their feelings and evaluations with other members?
 - e. *Hostility.* Is there any degree of hostility in the group? Does the group or do individual members wallow in it or do they seek to resolve it? Is there covert hostility? If so, what is done to bring it out into the open?
6. *The principal modes of interaction.*
- a. *Self-disclosure.*
 - Was it appropriate, that is, geared to establishing here-and-now relationships of some intimacy?
 - Was then-and-there disclosure related to the here-and-now, that is, specifically to this group or one’s relationship to this group?
 - Was it related to the process of encountering (establishing relationships) rather than counseling (dealing with there-and-then problems)?
 - Was it meaningful disclosure or superficial?
 - b. *Expression of feeling.*
 - Did people deal with feelings and emotions?
 - Did expression of feeling help establish and develop relationships?
 - Were feelings authentic or forced?
 - Are participants able to express themselves spontaneously?
 - c. *Support.*
 - Was there an adequate climate of respect, acceptance, support?

Were members active in giving support or is the climate of support principally a permissive, passive thing?

Did the group prevent any member from clawing at anyone?

d. *Confrontation.*

Were people willing to challenge one another?

Did members confront one another because they cared about one another and wanted to get involved?

Was there any degree of merely punitive confrontation?

Is conflict allowed in the group? Is it dealt with creatively or merely allowed to degenerate into hostility?

Is confrontation really an invitation to another to move into the group in a more fruitful way? Do the members take the initiative to invite one another into the group in various ways?

e. *Response to confrontation.*

Did members reply to responsible confrontation by self-exploration rather than defensiveness or counterattack?

If the person confronted found it difficult to accept what he or she heard, did he or she check it out with other members of the group? Did the other members take the initiative to confirm confrontation without “ganging up” on the one being confronted?

7. *Trust.*

a. Is the level of trust deepening in the group?

b. Do members say in the group what they say outside?

c. If there are problems with trust, do the members deal with them openly?

8. *Nonverbal communication.* What do members say nonverbally that they do not say verbally (e.g., concerning their anxiety, boredom, or withdrawal)?

9. *Leadership.*

a. Does the facilitator model contractual behavior?

b. Was the facilitator acting too much like a leader, that is, trying to get others to do things rather than doing things with others?

c. Is leadership becoming diffused in the group? Or are the members sitting back and leaving most of the initiating to the facilitator? Who are those who are exercising leadership?

d. If necessary, did the facilitator see to it that no one became the object of destructive behavior on the part of others?

10. *Activities* (if any).

- a. If used were they appropriate? Did they fit into what was happening?
- b. Were they well introduced? Were the instructions clear?
- c. Were they forced on an unwilling group?
- d. Is there too much dependence on activities?
- e. Does the group always flee activities even though they might be helpful?
- f. Did the activities used accomplish their goals?

11. *Anxiety.*

- a. What is the anxiety level of the group? Too high? Too low?
- b. Is there always some motivating tension or is the group too comfortable?

12. *Modes of flight and problematic interactions.*

- a. What are the principal ways in which the group as a whole took flight?
- b. In what ways are individuals resisting the process of the group?
- c. Do members continue to claim that “they do not know what to do”?
- d. *Analysis.* Do members spend a great deal of time analyzing past interactions (an ounce of interaction followed by a pound of analysis)?
- e. *Interpretation.* Do members tend to interpret and hypothesize about one another’s behavior instead of meeting one another directly?
- f. *Quiet members.* Did quieter members move into the group on their own initiative? If not, how was the problem handled? Do individuals or the group rationalize nonparticipation?
- g. *Control.* Are there members who control the group by specific behaviors (e.g., by always having the focus of attention on themselves, by cynicism, by hostility, or by silence)?
- h. *Pairing.* Were coalitions formed that impeded the progress of the group?
- i. *Tacit decisions.* Has the group made any tacit decisions that affect the quality of the interaction (e.g., not to discuss certain subjects, not to allow conflict, not to get too close)?
- j. *Dealing-with-one.*
 Does the group tend to deal with one person at a time?
 If so, is that person usually consulted about being the center of attention for an extended period of time?
 Does dealing-with-one mean that others may not contact one another until the person in the focus of attention is “finished”?
 Do some people withdraw from the interaction when one person is dealt with for an extended period of time?
 If this is a problem for the group, is it dealt with openly?

13. What is needed to improve the quality of the group?

Obviously other kinds of checklists could be drawn up for different kinds of groups. The checklist should be related to the goals—overriding, procedural, and interactional of the group.

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■ CYBERNETIC SESSIONS: A TECHNIQUE FOR GATHERING IDEAS

John T. Hall and Roger A. Dixon

The term “cybernetic session” is used here to identify a technique for generating and gathering ideas, quickly and effectively, from people in moderate-sized to large groups.

We will describe our *objectives* (what it is we think we are doing). Then we will describe our *process* (what we are doing), our *uses* of the technique, its range of possibilities, and some of its benefits.

OBJECTIVES

The technique described here is called “cybernetic” because of the way things appear to happen when it is used. Just as the human brain can manage a myriad of complex relationships, and the computer can keep track of and classify a large volume of inputs in an incredibly brief span of time, so the cybernetic session allows us to bundle many variables and a large volume of input into a concise time frame. This technique works by collecting input and feedback from individuals arrayed in a variety of configurations. As the collection process proceeds, synthesis and evaluation also occur, the primary value of the technique being the ease with which it allows us to comprehend and gather complex ideas from groups of people.

Through the dynamics of capture, feedback, and recapture of thoughts in a changing interpersonal environment, users get much closer to the reality or at least to the shape of group opinions and ideas—closer, certainly, than any survey or questionnaire techniques we have used or seen used in the management field.

The cybernetic technique can be compared in a rather simplistic way with the usual approach to gathering ideas and opinions.

Normally, a collection of random group ideas is reduced to a structured format, which lists alternatives to that particular question. Instead, with the cybernetic approach, the collection of data is approached in a self-organizing fashion; the usual rigid format is not imposed. By not making the usual assumption that participants speak the same language, the cybernetic self-organizing approach produces a much less standardized result.

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PROCESS

The design for a cybernetic session includes these steps:

1. Classifying concerns of an activity (e.g., how to organize) into four areas or questions. These areas may overlap but should allow enough latitude to embrace the universe of the particular concern.
2. Constituting the questions as stations.
3. Assigning an itinerary for each participant by filling out a card (Figure 1) that shows the participant where he or she should be (station) and when he or she should be there (period). The itinerary card is derived from the table in Figure 2.
4. Assigning a person to each station to record data and to review what has been said previously as new participants come to the station. The recorder is not a discussion leader.

By following the itinerary card, each participant works at each of the four stations and interacts with other participants in eight different participant configurations. At eight- to fifteen-minute intervals half of the people at each station move to a new station. The remaining half maintain the continuity of the discussion. The new members bring fresh ideas. The departing members do not move as a body but disperse so that interpersonal conflicts are not carried forward from station to station. The direct products of the sessions, usually completed in one to two hours, are gathered from the recorder at each station.

Participant 6			
<i>Period</i>	<i>Station</i>	<i>Period</i>	<i>Station</i>
1	F	5	N
2	X	6	B
3	X	7	B
4	N	8	F

Figure 1. A Cybernetic Session Itinerary Card

Advantages

In most instances our use of the cybernetic session has obtained these advantages:

1. A great deal of information is gathered in a relatively small amount of time.
2. Group opinions and concerns are shaped or self-organized. This shaping process has the obvious advantage of distilling random thoughts into ideas that can be acted on, but it also works as an educational experience: People develop a fuller

		Participant Number																							
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24
Period	Station																								
1		N	N	B	B	F	F	X	X	N	N	X	X	B	B	F	F	B	B	F	F	N	N	X	X
2		N	B	B	F	F	X	X	N	N	X	X	B	B	F	F	N	B	N	F	X	N	F	X	B
3		B	B	F	F	X	X	N	N	X	X	B	B	F	F	N	N	N	N	X	X	F	F	B	B
4		B	F	F	X	X	N	N	B	X	B	B	F	F	N	N	X	N	F	X	B	F	X	B	N
5		F	F	X	X	N	N	B	B	B	B	F	F	N	N	X	X	F	F	B	B	X	X	N	N
6		F	X	X	N	N	B	B	F	B	F	F	N	N	X	X	B	F	X	B	N	X	B	N	F
7		X	X	N	N	B	B	F	F	F	F	N	N	X	X	B	B	X	X	N	N	B	B	F	F
8		X	N	N	B	B	F	F	X	F	N	N	X	X	B	B	F	X	B	N	F	B	N	F	X
		Participant Number																							
		25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48
Period	Station																								
1		F	F	B	B	N	N	X	X	X	X	N	N	F	F	B	B	B	B	N	N	X	X	F	F
2		F	B	B	N	N	X	X	F	X	N	N	F	F	B	B	X	B	X	N	B	X	F	F	N
3		B	B	N	N	X	X	F	F	N	N	F	F	B	B	X	X	X	X	B	B	F	F	N	N
4		B	N	N	X	X	F	F	B	N	F	F	B	B	X	X	N	X	F	B	X	F	N	N	B
5		N	N	X	X	F	F	B	B	F	F	B	B	X	X	N	N	F	F	X	X	N	N	B	B
6		N	X	X	F	F	B	B	N	F	B	B	X	X	N	N	F	F	N	X	F	N	B	B	X
7		X	X	F	F	B	B	N	N	B	B	X	X	N	N	F	F	N	N	F	F	B	B	X	X
8		X	F	F	B	B	N	N	X	B	X	X	N	N	F	F	B	N	B	F	N	B	X	X	F

**Figure 2. Cybernetic Session Matrix:
4 Sessions, 8 Periods, and up to 48 Participants**

understanding of the whole area of concern through self-expression and listening to others.

3. Many people are “in” on things from the beginning.
4. Supervisors and subordinates, perhaps because the cybernetic experience is new for both, are in a better position to influence each other than they would be in a structured discussion or a committee with a leader.
5. Later interviews with people involved in the session are especially fruitful because of (a) the fuller understanding of the whole area of concern mentioned above and (b) a willingness to discuss views openly. Because the interviewer is able to come directly to the point in the follow-up interview, much less time is spent in gathering information.
6. A feeling of involvement (we need to solve the problem) develops.

USES OF CYBERNETIC SESSIONS

In the applications we have attempted, the most impressive results have been the variety and volume of output captured by the recorders. Our first practical experiment, designed to elicit questions regarding management functions at a government agency, produced a list of seventy-eight distinctly formulated inputs from twenty-five or thirty participants. Next we began to use the technique on a larger scale: getting specific user requirements for the agency's Management Information System; studying the needs of an organization's clerical-secretarial staff; and redesigning an organization's financial management systems. In these sessions the participants were for the most part employees at lower organizational levels, who would not normally be consulted, even about matters that had considerable impact on the performance of their jobs.

A Case Study

An experiment in the use of a Theory-Y approach to management was a critical test of the cybernetic technique. The experiment was requested by one of the technical divisions following a presentation of Douglas McGregor's Theory-X (authoritative)/Theory-Y (participative) concept of management.

The experiment began with a cybernetic session involving the professional staff of the technical division. We developed four stations, which we felt would increase the probability of achieving both ideas and a self-organizing movement: Station N—Objectives; Station B—External Coupling; Station F—Internal Relationships; and Station X—Internal Structure. Figure 3 shows an excerpt from the notice that each participant received prior to the session.

Over eighty percent of the division's professional staff participated in the session, which was introduced by the senior management analyst responsible for the entire

Cybernetic Session	
Friday, July 25—9:30	
Lecture Room C	
<i>Station</i>	<i>Discussion Area</i>
N	Are the objectives of the Technical Division clearly defined to you? Are they the correct objectives? If not, what should they be?
B	What are the appropriate external relationships (groups) for the Division? Are those relationships being adequately maintained? Are there outside groups that the office should be using or serving that it is not?
F	What are appropriate internal relationships between the Division and other divisions within the organization? Is there capability or expertise within the organization that the Division should be using?
X	Does the internal structure of the Division foster dynamic working relationships? What new methods of disseminating information would improve communications?

Figure 3. Notice to Participants of Cybernetic Session

Theory-Y experiment. As the session proceeded, the four recorders (members of the Management and Organization Division) noted each item introduced—i.e., idea, viewpoint, opinion, complaint—with, of course, no source identification. The session lasted eighty minutes. Twenty-five hours later, each recorder had assembled the input material from his or her station and relayed it to the division chief and his staff. In this case, the cybernetic session generated responses to the question “What’s wrong with this division?”

This experiment of the cybernetic process was a success. It proved for us the value of the cybernetic technique, which we had been experimenting with for two years, as an input device. We found we had an untapped reservoir of ideas for program improvements. We also had a clear insight into individuals’ views of the objectives and internal structure of the organization, together with a better view of the strengths and weaknesses of the way this structure operated.

The input from the cybernetic session was followed by subsequent interviews. A number of rather easily implemented changes resulted in a significant increase in the morale and productivity of the organization. Confidence also was established in the cybernetic session as a stimulus for bringing about change.

Range of Possibilities

We have also used this technique in a broad range of subjects, such as determining user needs for management information, developing policies and procedures for equipment and space management, and managing financial resources. For these subjects we distribute a general invitation to the staff. Input is then used by the particular design team or task force to structure its own work approach and to develop interview/questionnaire material following the standard approach.

Figure 4 shows an invitation issued for a cybernetic session on managing financial resources. The results became a major input to a task force on financial management. Recommendations from the task force then determined several major changes in the organization’s financial-management policies.

Extra-Work Use

Members of a church retreat used a cybernetic session to determine ways to implement previously established goals. The morning was spent in the cybernetic session; during the lunch period the recorders assembled the ideas from the sessions into related areas. The afternoon session began with a presentation of the results to the whole group. Each member then chose the area on which he or she would like to work, and the group organized itself into several smaller groups (task forces) to work on specific problems. One of the task forces divided again when its members felt that their area of concern was too broad. Specific assignments were made, and the task forces met again to follow up on the action taken.

The Financial Management Task Force #1, "Allocation of Funds for Administrative and Technical Support," is preparing recommendations and alternatives for the Executive Staff on ways to improve the management of financial resources at the project, section, program, division, institute, and organization levels.

A number of cybernetic sessions will be conducted on July 2 and July 8 in Lecture Room B, Administration Building. Section Chiefs, Project Leaders, and other interested staff members are invited to provide inputs to the task force. Each workshop session will last one hour and forty minutes.

We seek input on such questions as these:

1. What should be your financial authority and responsibility?
2. What financial information do you need to carry out your technical work?
3. How should overhead costs be supported by technical projects?
4. To what degree must section chiefs and project leaders be involved in estimating costs for other agency work?

If you wish to attend one of these design/workshop sessions, please complete the form below and return it to us in the enclosed envelope.

To: Financial Management Task Force #1
A902 Administration Building

Participant: Name _____ Bldg. & Room _____
Extension _____ Div. & Sec. _____

Session preferred (please check)

July 2	9 a.m. _____	3 p.m. _____
July 8	9 a.m. _____	3 p.m. _____

Figure 4. Invitation for Cybernetic Session

A high degree of commitment resulted, perhaps because people felt a definite sense of openness during the sessions. One person said, "I've said things today I've wanted to say for years, but I never felt I could."

In another instance, the technique was used first to develop an entire year's social program for a church group and then to plan each activity. Planning sessions were held on a quarterly basis, with the chairman for each activity acting as recorder at the station concerned with his activity. The fourth station was used to gather feedback about activities of the previous quarter. When the sessions were used to gather ideas for monthly meetings and programs, enough good ideas were generated for two years. An interesting idea, suggested but not yet tried, was to have a "cybernetic social."

Cybernetic sessions were also used to determine the best way to raise funds for the construction of a church. After the usual gathering of ideas, one member of the planning group classified the suggestions according to return and risk. The committee then selected several ideas, which were presented to the congregation for a vote. Building and selling a house was the method chosen. Through the process of the cybernetic session, the idea was developed and carried out. With the successful result of this first project, the group now plans to build a house each year until the new church can be financed.

Student Use

The technique has also been used in working with high-school students. In this case, the subject was social situations that challenged personal moral standards, and all participants and recorders were peers. Through the cybernetic device, the students attempted to determine a “correct” course of action. Many students commented that this was their first opportunity to talk about such things in a positive way, and several said that the discussions brought out alternatives that had not occurred to them before.

BENEFITS

Our use of the cybernetic session has shown that the specific advantages derived from the session vary according to the type of group involved and the presence of a comprehensive strategy for the session. This process does not evaluate the ultimate worth of the ideas generated; it is a technique of exploration.

In addition to the data gathered through recorders, benefits include a positive morale boost through participation in a leveled employee-supervisor relationship. Also, ancillary benefits result from developing new interpersonal relationships. We have found that not only do people convey to one another a significant amount of useful information on matters outside the scope of the sessions, but that new relationships develop as a result of the contact between individuals.

■ COMMON PROBLEMS IN VOLUNTEER GROUPS

Ed Bancroft

Working with volunteers can be exceptionally rewarding or extremely frustrating. A volunteer group with the basic skills for success is an extremely exciting and enjoyable client; a volunteer group without these skills can be frustrating.

These remarks are addressed to consultants who work with volunteers, managers who use volunteer labor, and chairpersons of voluntary groups.

The “voluntary group” may include several organizational structures: the totally voluntary community group; the funded organization dependent on volunteers to function; and committees or groups within institutions (especially schools) established for a specific purpose. These structures share a potential for serious problems, and the problems should be diagnosed collaboratively by both the consultant and the volunteer group, before solutions are suggested.

Five recurring problems characteristically emerge in volunteer groups: too many goals, lack of an adequate contract, lack of leadership and accountability, lack of rewards or recognition, and lack of attention to group process.

TOO MANY GOALS

Most volunteer groups attempt more than they can accomplish. Their goals are usually so broad and vague that they create frustration in volunteers, leading to rapid turnover. Often the effort fails. One major goal in working with volunteer groups is to push toward specific, achievable goals. Achievement leads to a feeling of success—the only thing that can sustain volunteer effort. All other problem solutions mean little unless members feel that they are progressing toward an achievable goal. Several methods may help groups set realistic objectives. One method, based on consensus and group decision making, is for volunteer groups to set aside a block of time to devote totally to planning.

Planning Workshop Design

Step 1. Brainstorming, or having each member make a list of all possible action plans for the group, is an effective approach. The ideas can be recorded on newsprint. If the group is larger than ten to twelve members, subgroups can be used, which can then present their ideas to the total group.

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Step 2. The leader asks the group to pick the three or four most important priorities. Experience indicates that no imposed process (i.e., brainstorming, weighted voting, etc.) should be used for this decision. The group should use its usual decision-making method.

Step 3. Once priorities are established, the group sets aside the lesser ones. These ideas will be available when the group has the time for them.

Step 4. Group members then decide on their desired goal, or, in other words, “How will we know when we have accomplished our objective?” The inability of the group to answer this question invites frustration.

Step 5. Individual program charts are useful for each objective. These charts should include answers to five questions:

- What will be done?
- How will it be done?
- Who will do it?
- When will each task be completed?
- By what date will our objective be accomplished?

Step 6. At each group meeting these objective charts become the first agenda item. The question should be “Are we keeping pace with our goals?” The purpose of all meetings is to move the group toward its objectives.

LACK OF AN ADEQUATE CONTRACT

One of the broadest and most basic problems facing volunteer groups is the lack of an adequate contract between the group and its membership. Most groups and organizations are not explicit about expectations for their members. Most groups also do not allow the members to indicate their resources, experience, and backgrounds. Hence, a specific agreement between members and the organization regarding what each person can and will do is rare. Discovering members’ resources and establishing members’ time commitments usually occur informally and haphazardly, costing the group much maintenance time. Underutilization of volunteer skills and experiences is often the result. There are several methods for developing this specific contract.

Group Meetings

A group meeting to share individual resources and group expectations is useful. Members are asked the following questions and record their answers on newsprint.

- “What resources do I bring to this group?”
- “How much time per month can I devote to this group?”

- “What do I expect from this group?”

Members then can introduce themselves to other members by presenting their newsprint sheets.

Individual, Written Job Descriptions

Specific, written statements of expectations for each volunteer help clarify individual responsibilities. Each member may first write a specific job description for himself or herself. Included in this description could be the time and days he or she is available, specific responsibilities, and specific roles for achieving group objectives. Then this job description should be developed with the volunteer leader or other members. This process helps develop a coordinated effort toward organizational goals. Each member receives copies of all job descriptions so that he or she will know where to direct certain kinds of work.

Permanent Agenda Item

Asking specific questions at every meeting will legitimize explicit discussion about members' mutual expectations. A permanent agenda item could be “Are we fulfilling our individual job descriptions?” or “How should they be changed or updated?”

LACK OF LEADERSHIP AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Reluctance to confront the problem of leadership accountability is common in volunteer groups. Since volunteers are not paid, this issue is especially uncomfortable. Failure to establish adequate leadership structures and to make members accountable for their responsibilities can be extremely serious. There are several ways to avert this.

Project Leaders

An effort should be made to select project leaders for each major program attempted. If possible, this task should be assumed by an active volunteer. The project director is responsible for seeing that the project is successfully completed. Program charts and job descriptions will aid in getting volunteers to accept their responsibility.

Volunteer Coordinator

Many budgeted organizations do not provide adequately for volunteers in their structure. If the money is available, a full-time volunteer coordinator is useful to maximize the contribution of volunteers. If it is not possible to have a full-time coordinator, a staff member can be given this duty. This person links the paid staff and the volunteers. Without effective linkage, the volunteer effort may be very disorganized and haphazard.

Regular Staff Meetings

The volunteer coordinator conducts regular volunteer meetings, intended to examine progress toward objectives, to exchange volunteers' information about their work, and to air problems. These meetings may result in a sense of group cohesiveness and a climate of support.

Orientation

Another function the volunteer coordinator can perform is to orient new members to the group or organization. The more time spent on orientation, the quicker the volunteer becomes a working member of the organization. One orientation method uses the "buddy system": assigning one volunteer to work closely with each new member, to answer questions, and generally to familiarize him or her with the work. The veteran member can also assist the new member in developing his or her job description.

LACK OF REWARDS OR RECOGNITION

A major failure of staffed organizations lies in neglecting to recognize volunteer efforts. Volunteers quietly assist the organization but may not be recognized for their contributions. Volunteers should be rewarded for specific accomplishments.

Staff Openings

Qualified volunteers should receive first consideration for full-time staff openings. A job also might be subdivided into part-time components so that two or three volunteers could receive payment for their efforts.

Grants for Volunteer Expenses

It is expensive to volunteer. Baby-sitting, lunch, and transportation costs must be absorbed by the volunteer. Several Federal government programs (e.g., ACTION and OEO) compensate volunteers for these expenses. It is possible that a particular volunteer program would qualify for Federal funds, local foundation grants, or United Way support.

Training

Volunteers could be invited to community or staff training programs, which could help make volunteers more employable.

LACK OF ATTENTION TO GROUP PROCESS

Most volunteer groups do not give adequate thought to how they work together. Decision-making methods and other group norms are not determined explicitly. Group-process activities can aid the group in becoming more effective.

Workshop on Process Issues

Structured experiences, role plays, and discussion may help the group generate process objectives for improved functioning. For example, an objective might be “Our group will solicit views of quiet members.” The group should design these process objectives for itself. These could serve as a checklist for future meetings and provide structure for a process observer.

Process Observer

Assign a group member as a process observer. This role makes group dynamics a legitimate discussion item. The observer points out those items that are hindering group effectiveness and suggests preventative actions. Examples would be persuading the group to pursue the subject or preventing certain members from dominating. The role of the process observer could revolve so that all members become accustomed to observing process. A checklist of process objectives could be an important aid for the observer.

Agenda Item

Regular agenda items for meetings can sustain the group’s thinking about its process. The question might be as simple as “How are we performing as a group?” More complicated instruments can also be used. However it is accomplished, it is important to continuously monitor process.

CONCLUSION

These five problems are common to volunteer groups. Knowing how to confront difficulties with goals, group-membership contracts, leadership responsibility, rewards, and group process can make the work of these groups effective and satisfying. Attention to these problems can reduce the frustration and increase the excitement of working in volunteer groups.

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■ THE DELPHI TECHNIQUE: A PROJECTION TOOL FOR SERIOUS INQUIRY

Richard L. Bunning

Used to predict the future, assess current needs, gain expert consensus while clarifying minority opinion, and as a teaching technique as well, the Delphi technique has been applied in such diverse areas as national defense, economic forecasting, and the analysis of educational needs. It is a creative, futuristic, and sometimes controversial tool that gives each participating individual equal input into the reaching of consensus, although that person may be miles apart from and perhaps unacquainted with the other participants.

DEVELOPMENT AND BACKGROUND

The Delphi technique was developed by Helmer and several of his associates at the RAND Corporation in the early 1950s to obtain group opinions about urgent national-defense problems. An unclassified description of the technique was published and came to be employed in a number of settings (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963).

Named “Delphi” in honor of the oracle of Apollo, “the method provides for an impersonal anonymous setting in which opinions can be voiced without bringing the ‘experts’ together in any kind of face-to-face confrontation” (Pfeiffer, 1969, p. 155). The technique is essentially a method of collecting and organizing data comprised of expert opinion. An effort to produce a convergence of group consensus is accomplished through a series of three or four questionnaires dealing with future-oriented questions. A setting is provided in which ideas can be modified on the basis of reason rather than according to the bandwagon effect of majority opinion (Dalkey & Helmer, 1963).

Contact is usually made with the respondents through a set of mailed questionnaires, with feedback from each round of questions used to produce more carefully considered opinions in succeeding rounds. The exact procedure followed in using the Delphi technique may vary depending on the type of study and the anticipated results. However, generally the technique serves (deBrigard & Helmer, 1970) as a method to:

1. Elicit relatively brief statements regarding expected major developments in any of a variety of fields.
2. Offer these points of view to other members of the group to elicit their opinions.

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3. Establish an overall set of expectations without a great deal of argument or debate.

The goal of the Delphi procedure is to gain consensus on the various predictions or statements under consideration. If the judgment of the panel does converge, the agreement could be considered to be an improved judgment because of the consensus (Adelson, 1970).

Writing about the consensus and dissensus in the use of the Delphi technique, Gordon (Gordon & Ament, 1969) stated:

In the few instances in which no convergence toward a relatively narrow interval could be obtained, opinions generally polarized, so that independent schools of thought regarding a particular issue could be discerned. This may have been an indication that the opinions were derived from different sets of data, different interpretations of the same data, or different understanding of the question. In such cases it is conceivable that more rounds of anonymous debate by questionnaire eventually might have tracked down and eliminated the basic cause of disagreement and thus led to true consensus. But even if this did not happen or if the process were terminated before it had a chance to happen, the Delphi Technique would have served the purpose that led to the positions which were taken and, thus, would have helped clarify the issue. (p. 3)

Later Gordon (Gordon et al., 1971) wrote about the reinforced academic value of the Delphi exercise even when consensus was not reached:

The research for future possibilities is worthwhile nevertheless, not only because it helps illuminate new options and previously unrecognized challenges, but it also illustrates how current policies and future possibilities may work together to form the desirable future. (p. 6)

THEORETICAL EXAMPLE

The following theoretical example will help to exemplify the technique.

A company (a plastics corporation) has developed a new improved product called “Plasteel.” In order to better plan production, marketing, future investments, etc., the company’s management decides to solicit the participation of a panel of individuals who have expertise relating to the product. These experts, perhaps recruited from universities, are then sent a questionnaire (Figure 1) which asks for open-ended responses about the probable future of “Plasteel.” This particular questionnaire uses two questions, one concerning existing markets and a second exploring possible emerging or future markets. However, the questionnaire can be adapted to use as many or as few questions as the study requires.

After the first questionnaire is returned, a second questionnaire is created from the generated data; this questionnaire, designed to find a consensus (most researchers have chosen a “modal” consensus) on the importance or probability of the data, is mailed once again to the panel of experts for a priority rating. Figure 2 (continuing with the theoretical “Plasteel” example) shows an abbreviated Delphi Questionnaire II. The data provided are usually edited by the researcher.

DELPHI PROJECT PLASTICS CORPORATION
QUESTIONNAIRE I

Plastics Corporation is interested in soliciting your expert opinion about potential markets for its new product "Plasteel." You and other experts from across the country have been selected because of your knowledge of the plastics industry, your familiarity with "Plasteel," and your stated willingness to participate in this Delphi study. Please take a few moments now to complete this brief questionnaire and return it at your earliest convenience.

1. What existing markets could utilize "Plasteel" in the manufacture of their products?

2. What emerging or future markets could utilize "Plasteel" in the manufacture of their products?

Figure 1. Theoretical Delphi Questionnaire I

After data from Questionnaire II are collected and tabulated, a third questionnaire is created to provide feedback on modal consensus and to give the participants an opportunity (1) to join consensus or (2) to contribute minority opinions about the reasons for not joining consensus. Figure 3 displays an abbreviated third questionnaire. On the first item, as the respondent was among those in consensus, no consideration was necessary. On the second item the participant joined consensus, while on the third item he wished to remain outside consensus and justified his opinion.

It is possible to carry the Delphi process several steps further in an attempt to gain greater consensus. However, most efforts to do so have found major convergence on the third questionnaire with little further agreement on succeeding rounds.

ADVANTAGES OF THE DELPHI TECHNIQUE

Although any study that attempts to deal with future events is likely to raise concerns over the credibility of the technique, the Delphi does have unique merits built into its special techniques and various modifications. Enzer (Enzer, Little, & Lazer, 1971) has listed some of its major advantages:

1. It maintains attention directly on the issue.
2. It provides a framework by which individuals with a lack of propinquity can work together on a problem.
3. It tends to minimize psychological communication barriers, such as leadership influences, hidden agendas, and personality conflicts.
4. It tends to minimize specious persuasion.

DELPHI PROJECT PLASTICS CORPORATION
QUESTIONNAIRE II

The following listings represent potential present and future markets that could use "Plasteel" in the manufacture of their products. These listings are the edited results of the responses provided in Questionnaire I by you and by other study participants.

Directions: Rate each item according to the following scale by circling the appropriate priority response.

- 1 — highest priority, a *definite* market for "Plasteel."
- 2 — high priority, a *probable* market for "Plasteel."
- 3 — medium priority, a *possible* market for "Plasteel."
- 4 — low priority, a *doubtful* market for "Plasteel."
- 5 — lowest priority, a *highly doubtful* market for "Plasteel."

Present markets to consider in promoting "Plasteel" for product manufacture are:

- | | | | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. the toy industry | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. the auto body industry | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. the furniture industry | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Emerging or future markets to consider in promoting "Plasteel" for use in product manufacture are:

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. solar energy devices | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 2. aquatic farming equipment | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 3. artificial human organs | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Figure 2. Theoretical Delphi Questionnaire II

DELPHI PROJECT PLASTICS CORPORATION
QUESTIONNAIRE III

This questionnaire is a duplicate of Questionnaire II except that it contains both the modal "consensus" (marked with a square) of all persons who scored the questionnaire and your rating of each item (marked with a circle) when it was different from the "consensus."

Directions: If you are outside consensus on any particular item and wish to remain so, please state your primary reason directly below that particular item. Otherwise, for any item on which your priority rating is outside consensus and for which you do not list a reason, your rating will automatically be changed to a consensus rating.

- Your Response Consensus

Emerging or future markets to consider in promoting "Plasteel" for use in product manufacture are:

- | | | | | | |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|---|---|
| 1. solar energy devices | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|-------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|---|---|

Reason: _____

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|
| 2. aquatic farming equipment | 1 | 2 | <input type="checkbox"/> 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | 5 |
|------------------------------|---|---|----------------------------|----------------------------|---|

Reason: _____

- | | | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|
| 3. artificial human organs | 1 | <input type="checkbox"/> 2 | 3 | <input type="checkbox"/> 4 | 5 |
|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|----------------------------|---|

Reason: Artificial organs will receive less research emphasis than preventative procedures.

Figure 3. Theoretical Delphi Questionnaire III

5. It provides each participant with equal opportunities for influences.
6. It provides documentation of a precise nature.

The Delphi is also thought to have the advantage that it places no restrictions on the methodology used by the participants in forming their opinions (Mandonis, 1969). The initial questionnaire of the technique is generally allowed to be completely unstructured, thus providing an opportunity for responses limited only by each participant's background.

In most Delphi studies, the participants are a panel of experts. Hirsch (Hirsch et al., 1967) contended that expert judgment must be sought because it is more reliable than lay opinion. Helmer (Gordon et al., 1966) reported that the use of experts is more effective when the participants are asked to rate themselves on their own level of expertise and that in such cases, more desirable results are obtained.

A rating scale (which can be developed in several formats) is generally used to move toward consensus after the results of the first questionnaire are edited. If the process has to do with a weighted scale to judge the feasibility of a trend developing within a certain period of time, a format such as the following (Gordon et al., 1971) can be employed:

The likelihood or feasibility of this trend developing will be:

- 4 — almost certain
- 3 — probable
- 2 — possible
- 1 — improbable
- 0 — virtually impossible

If a scale is needed to show the desirability of a trend or incident occurring, the following rating scale (Enzer, Little, & Lazer, 1971) can be used:

The desirability of this trend occurring will be:

- 4 — very great
- 3 — great
- 2 — moderate
- 1 — slight
- 0 — no or none

In a study of the future training needs of public school principals, the following rating scale (Carey, 1972) was adopted to assess the importance of various training needs:

- 1 — highest priority
- 2 — above average priority
- 3 — average priority
- 4 — below average priority
- 5 — lowest priority

In addition to a rating or weighting, the process has been further refined by some investigators to ask for reasons for a particular value:

The authors recommend: development of techniques for the formulation of sequential questions that would probe systematically into the underlying reasons for respondents' opinions in a deliberate effort to construct a theoretical foundation for the phenomena under inquiry. (Mandonis, 1969, p. 164)

Both the inquiry into the reasons and the subsequent feedback of the reasons adduced by others may serve to stimulate the experts into taking into due account considerations they might through inadvertence have neglected, and to give due weight to factors they were inclined to dismiss as unimportant on first thought. (Gabor, 1964, p. 7)

One of the Delphi's greatest strengths is its ability to avoid the pitfalls of public group discussion: group pressures, an unwillingness to abandon publicly stated opinions, and the effects that individuals have on groups (Gordon et al., 1966; Pyke, 1970).

Concerns do exist about the validity and accuracy of the Delphi technique, and several studies have been addressed to these problems. In 1966, Campbell compared Delphi forecasting to conventional methods commonly used in a business forecasting setting. His study proved the Delphi to be more accurate (Campbell, 1966). A study of scientific development made by the Institute for the Future found that a full two-thirds of the developments forecast via the Delphi technique in 1964 had occurred prior to 1970 (Gordon et al., 1971). In a UCLA study, twenty students using the Delphi technique were rated against twenty using a non-Delphi technique. The results showed the Delphi's accuracy to be greater in fourteen of the sixteen items examined in the study (Uhl, 1971).

Dalby (Gordon et al., 1971) found the results of a Delphi questionnaire to be significantly more accurate than those gained at an open conference. He conducted an additional Delphi with statements that had known answers, but the answers were not typically part of the participants' knowledge. Some highlights of Dalby's findings (Enzer, Little, & Lazer, 1971) were:

1. The spread of opinion tended to narrow after the second questionnaire, and the medium, more often than not, shifted toward the true answers.
2. Delphi interactions generally produced more accurate estimates than did face-to-face confrontations.
3. Generally, the narrower the range of opinions, the more accurate the answers.
4. Self-appraisal of expertise was a powerful indicator of accuracy.
5. Accuracy improved when respondents were allowed thirty seconds for deliberation. Shorter or longer intervals led to greater error.

Additional strengths of the Delphi technique are thought to be the following (Hirsch et al., 1967):

1. It crystallizes the reasoning process by pointing to some central concerns and the participants' reaction to them; and

2. It helps to pinpoint controversies and the assumptions that lie at their roots.

An added value is summarized by Mandonis (1969):

The output from such enriched Delphi experiments need not be only a consensus, or dissensus, on matters explored. Perhaps more importantly, it will be a learning experience which the participants could not acquire by any other means. (p. 165)

DISADVANTAGES OF THE DELPHI TECHNIQUE

Most authorities agree that any system dealing with future predictions will have some problems and limitations.

The only thing certain in dealing with the future is that forecasts will seldom prove entirely correct or complete. Inevitably, there will be discoveries and events that cannot be anticipated: new scientific understanding for which no paradigm exists, political traumas, natural catastrophes. (Gordon et al., 1971, p.5)

Enzer (Enzer, Little, & Lazer, 1971) listed some problems, limitations, and difficulties encountered in future analysis:

1. Some future events are always unknowable.
2. Understanding of basic societal change is limited.
3. Under- or overestimating the likelihood of future development is common.
4. Unquestioned belief and values limit the ability to foresee basic changes and goals.
5. There is an inherent difficulty in imagining the future even after key events have been assumed.
6. It is often difficult to distinguish desires from forecasts.
7. It is often difficult to define and integrate cross-impacts among specific forecasts.
8. Important possibilities are sometimes overlooked.

Weaver (1971) felt that the Delphi technique is not a forecasting tool at all but that it shows promise as a method for studying the ways in which people think about the future. In addition, he stated that the use of subjective judgment in place of quantifiable data or the acceptance of statements from experts because experts are objective is unsatisfactory.

The problem of the expert is carried one step further because it is difficult to identify the group of experts:

It is very tempting to include in this group all who are influenced substantially or can make a significant and/or unique contribution to the resolution of the problem. (Anderson, 1970, p. 8)

There are still other limitations:

1. It is impossible to state expectations using the crispness of language and the precision of judgment more often associated with technological changes (Weaver, 1971).
2. Participants do not like to start with a blank piece of paper, but instead need some projections to stimulate thinking (Bernstein, 1969).
3. The heavy expenditure of time in completing the questionnaires is a limitation (Weaver, 1971).

ADAPTATIONS OF THE DELPHI TECHNIQUE

Early Delphi studies, frequently conducted in various fields of science, sought only a consensus of opinions relating to the actual date on which an event might occur. Today there are many variations in the use of the technique. The range of its applications in planning is unlimited, and it can be applied to all areas of contemporary inquiry: business forecasting, social trends, science, education, organization development.

IMPLEMENTING THE TECHNIQUE

Two initial steps in implementing the Delphi technique are crucial: (1) the selection of the responding panel of experts and (2) the design of the initial questionnaire. Various studies have employed anywhere from a handful to 140 “experts” for their panels. No guidelines exist that describe the most appropriate number of experts to select for the Delphi process. It may be that fifteen or twenty well-selected respondents will provide a broad range of expertise, giving the researcher a comfortable data base with which to work. Absolute criteria to determine “experts” are also nonexistent, but professional station (i.e., university professor, established researcher, etc.) or reputation (i.e., author, editor, lecturer, developer of a demonstration project, etc.) are commonly used criteria. An initial commitment to cooperate is often elicited before the first questionnaire is sent.

Two points are of importance in designing the initial questionnaire. First, the number of questions should be limited to as few as possible. Second, the questionnaire should provide only limited space (perhaps three or four lines) in which the participant can respond. These limiting factors are important since future questionnaires tend to be much longer. (See Figure 1.)

Good timing and follow-up on each round of questioning will enhance response rates. A ten-day “turn-around” time is reasonable. Respondents who have not returned their questionnaires on time are then immediately sent a second copy of the questionnaire with a tactful reminder letter. Response rates tend to be better if the cover letter is individualized and if the envelope conveys a sense of urgency, e.g., by being stamped “RUSH” in bright-red ink or being delivered by Special Delivery. Stamped, self-addressed envelopes add to the convenience of the respondent, and a coded identification of the questionnaires will help provide a sense of anonymity.

The most subjective and therefore most difficult phase of the Delphi inquiry is editing the raw data found in Questionnaire I so that it truly reflects the respondents' viewpoints when presented for ratings in Questionnaire II. This problem of semantics is often increased by respondents' compound sentences, subtle differences in terminology, individual variances in perception, and even indecipherable handwriting. An editorial panel familiar with the specific field of inquiry may be engaged for this phase of the project. The information on Questionnaire II should reflect the viewpoints of the panel of experts rather than the researcher's.

Few problems are found in the distribution and processing of Questionnaire II. However, a potential problem exists when tabulating the data if the modal response is the criterion for finding consensus: tie votes or bimodal consensus. The researcher may wish to handle this by finding a mean and breaking the "tie" by choosing the modal response closest to the mean, or the data may simply be referred back to the respondents as part of Questionnaire III.

Questionnaire III is the most difficult to complete and generally has the greatest rate of respondent attrition. Since it is rather complicated, a cover sheet giving examples of alternative ways of responding to questions helps assure accuracy. Also, differentiation between consensus answers and individual answers can be enhanced by color as well as shape (i.e., black squares for consensus and red circles for the individual's response). As in Questionnaire I, it is important to provide only a limited space for the handwritten (minority opinion) responses. (See Figure 3.)

Some researchers, in an attempt to gain even greater consensus, have conducted a fourth round of questioning to present the Questionnaire III consensus, the individual respondent's rating if it was still outside consensus, and an edited summary of the minority opinions for each question. Little further agreement is usually found, however, when succeeding rounds are conducted.

Final reports from the data then usually contain a ranking of statements by priority, the amount of dissensus for each statement, and a listing or summary of minority opinions.

Professional courtesy dictates that a summary of the findings be provided to the panel of experts. Indeed, these results may be promised in the initial letter of solicitation as compensation for responding to the repeated rounds of questioning.

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■ VIDEOTAPE TECHNIQUES FOR SMALL TRAINING GROUPS

Jerry L. Fryrear¹

Videotape is enjoying increasing use in human relations training and psychotherapy, leading to the development of many innovative approaches. In recent reviews, Davidson (1979), Hung and Rosenthal (1978), Fleshman and Fryrear (1981), and Francis (1979) describe some creative applications of video equipment. Often, however, the videotape recorder is simply turned on during group sessions and later the group members view the tape. Such self-confrontation is no doubt valuable, especially in allowing one to view oneself from an external perspective. A more strategic approach, however, based on a model of group interaction, would be more advantageous and heuristic.

THE SMALL-GROUP ADAPTIVE SPIRAL MODEL

This paper proposes a workable model, the Small-Group Adaptive Spiral model (diagrammed in Figure 1), and describes examples of human relations training that follow from the model. The model is specifically designed to provide a theoretical rationale for the use of videotape with small groups of people who desire to improve their social skills.

The adaptation of an individual to a small group follows the spiral shown. Each individual member enters the group for the first time with a set of social orientations that exercise a basic influence on his or her perceptions of the group. The individual may be generally affiliative, generally suspicious, generally affectionate, etc. These social orientations determine the individual's perceptions of other members in the group, and these perceptions in turn influence his or her personal goals with respect to each other person in the group. For example, the individual may wish to invite one person to dinner later, may want to find out where another buys his shirts, and so forth. In order to carry out his or her goals, the individual plans social strategies involving each of the group members. A person may plan strategically to avoid talking to one member, flirt with another, lie to a third. The individual then puts the strategies into effect, resulting in group interaction and communication. All members, of course, are simultaneously employing personal strategies that automatically produce conflicts and the need for compromise.

As a result of the new information that comes from interaction and communication, the perceptions each person has of the other members will change. Because of the

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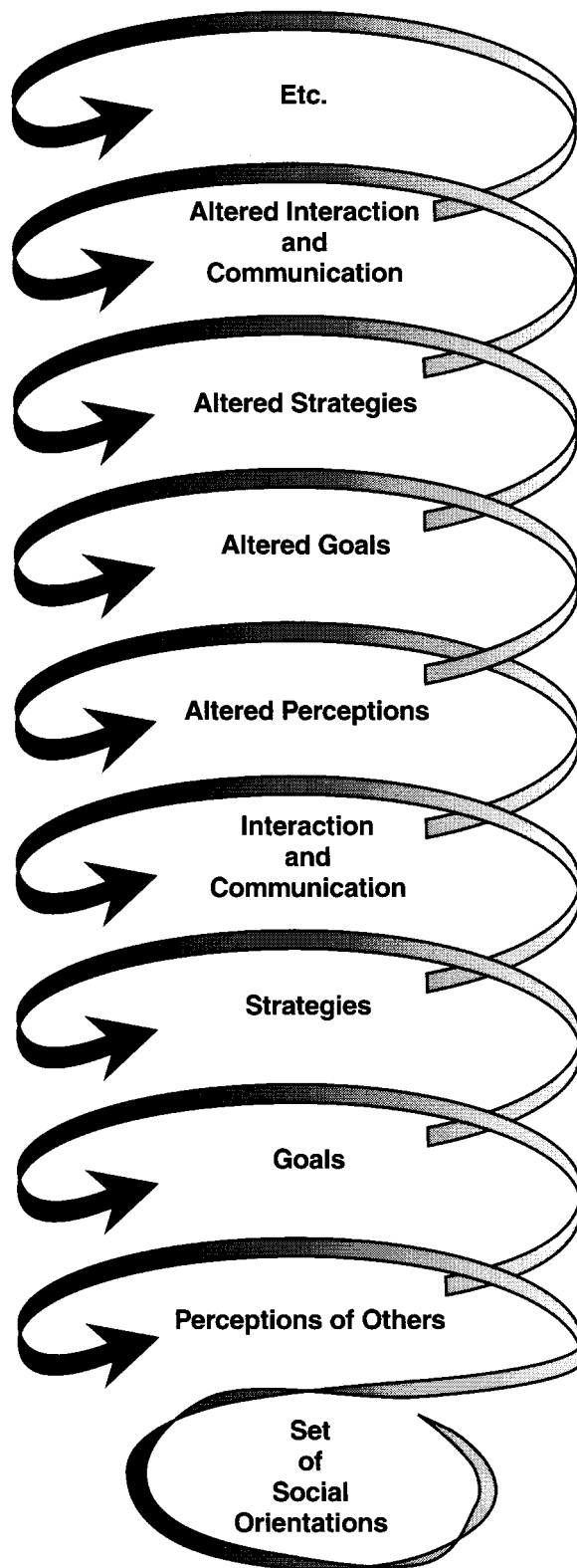


Figure 1. The Small-Group Adaptive Spiral Model

conflict in goals and the need for compromise, goals will also change. Therefore, further interactions will be altered, further perceptions will be altered, further goals will be altered, and so on in a spiral that ends only when the group dissipates. In rare instances, such as might occur in group therapy or human relations training, the individual's basic social orientation may also change. He or she may become less fearful, more confident, less boastful, more poised, or less suspicious. An important point to consider for the purposes of human relations training is that an individual's perceptions may be more or less accurate, goals may be more or less realistic, strategies may be more or less effective, and communication may be more or less clear. A person will be socially skillful to the extent that he or she perceives others accurately, establishes realistic goals with respect to the group, plans effective strategies, and communicates clearly.

VIDEOTAPE TECHNIQUES

Videotape is useful in developing social skills by helping a person develop more accurate perceptions, plan more realistic goals, establish more effective strategies, and communicate more clearly. All of these improvements should result in more adaptive and satisfying social orientations.

Using the Small-Group Adaptive Spiral as a model, several videotape techniques can be suggested for use with human relations training groups of three to seven people. All of the techniques use as a central idea the prescription of incompatible goals. The group interaction, during which each member attempts to realize his or her goal, is then videotaped, and the tapes are used as the stimulus for a group examination of the perceptions, strategies, and communications of each member.

Living Sociograms

In one session, each member is asked to write down on an index card the name of one other member with whom he or she would like to spend the next ten minutes (a standard sociogram). Members are asked not to show the cards to one another. The facilitator collects the cards and then asks the group members to make their choices. Naturally, there is not perfect reciprocity, and the group members soon find that they must adapt to a situation in which their personal goals are at variance with the goals of some other members. The "living sociogram" that unfolds is videotaped and, after a set period of time (usually ten minutes), the action is halted. The group members are then asked to write down the name(s) of the people who they believe had chosen them. This second "perceived sociogram" is a valuable indication of both unclear communication of goals and insensitivity to other people's goals.

The group leader now has three sociograms that will be used as the basis for group discussion. The first is the standard sociogram that is diagrammed on a blackboard for the group members' information. The second is the perceived sociogram, which is diagrammed also. The third is the living sociogram which has been captured by the video recorder. All three sociograms are then used to stimulate a group discussion of the

interaction that took place during the taping. The discussions examine what the individual group members wanted to do (standard sociogram used as a reference), what they perceived the others wanted to have happen (perceived sociogram), and the interactions, communications, insensitivities, and strategies that were employed (living sociogram). Ineffective strategies, unclear or conflicting communications, and a wealth of other information are readily obvious on the tape. For example, a member may be so intent on carrying out her own goals that she turns her back on a person who is approaching her. As another example, not a single person may make the simple statement, "I choose you." A direct approach may carry too much risk of rejection, and an ambiguous approach may be seen as safer but may not be, in the long run, more satisfying than a direct approach.

Hidden Agendas

A second technique makes use of hidden agendas. Group members are told they are at a convention in San Francisco and are obligated to present a group symposium the next day. An index card specifying instructions for a particular agenda is given to each member. On the index cards, one member might be instructed to persuade the others to spend the next few minutes going over the program in anticipation of the presentation. Another member is instructed to talk privately with just one other member to discuss a personal problem. A third member is excited about being in San Francisco and wants to get the entire group to go out to dinner and a nightclub. A fourth wants to go shopping, but not alone. A fifth person simply wants to be left alone.

As in the first technique, these incompatible goals give rise to elaborate strategies as each member tries to carry out his or her agenda. Again, the interaction is taped for a few minutes and the tape used as a vehicle for discussion. The situation and agendas can be modified to reflect the interests of the group members. College students, for example, can be asked to imagine that they all live in the same dormitory and one wants to study, one is taking a survey for the school paper, one wants to have a party, and one wants to go to the movies with someone.

At the conclusion of the taping, members are asked to write down their perceptions of each of the others' agendas. Again, these perceptions serve as excellent stimuli for an examination of unclear or conflicting communication (which can be pointed out during the replay) or insensitivity on the part of members to others' goals and needs. Also, in either of these two techniques, there will be many examples of effective social strategies and skillful and sensitive social interactions that can be pointed out and reinforced.

Other Techniques

Several other structured activities can be used with this model.

Joining a Club

All but one of the group members are directed to form an imaginary club by standing in a circle with their arms around each other. The one who is left out is to try to join the club. Each member is given a turn as the “extra” member and his or her efforts to join the group are videotaped. Strategies, apparent perceptions, and communications, as captured by the camera, are discussed later.

Bribery, flattery, flirtation, trickery, and appeals to reason or compassion are frequently used strategies. Of special interest in this activity is the person toward whom a particular strategy is directed. Most people seem unaware of the motivations behind the selection of a particular individual to attempt to influence, but the selection process is worthy of discussion. The selected individual may be surprised and even angry at the discovery that someone perceives him as easily influenced by a certain strategy such as flattery.

First in Line

Another activity asks group members to imagine that they all arrive at a movie theater at precisely the same time, and each wants to be first in line. This activity readily identifies people who are unassertive and points out other strategies and communication styles. For a group of shy, unassertive people this is a very difficult and threatening activity. It might be wise to use it only after several group sessions.

CONCLUSION

It is not difficult to invent situations that lend themselves to the Small-Group Adaptive Spiral model (see Pfeiffer & Jones, 1969-1985). The activities outlined here have in common the prescription of goals that lead to interaction and communication and the necessity of adjusting to a group. It is possible, using the Small-Group Adaptive Spiral model as an intervention, to structure human relations training in other ways. A facilitator can, for example, influence members' perceptions of each other by giving them real or imaginary information about each other prior to an activity. The interaction and communication itself can be structured by using a fixed role-play technique or by otherwise specifying interaction and communication patterns. The goal, of course, remains the same—the attainment of more satisfying and effective social skills for each group member.

Whether these videotape activities are either effective or (perhaps) harmful is an empirical question. The model lends itself well to research, however, and should prove to be heuristic in that respect. Basic social orientations, accuracy of perceptions, clarity of communications, and effectiveness of social strategies are all quantifiable. Social orientation can be measured by instruments such as the FIRO-B and FIRO-F (Schutz, 1976). Accuracy of perceptions and clarity of communication can be assessed by using judges or by asking the opinions of the group members. Before-training and after-training tapes of an activity can be compared in order to measure improvement in social

skills. Fryrear and Van Dusen (1978) have carried out one study using this model, and further studies are planned. Now that videotape is in widespread use, this approach provides an additional alternative for application in training and research. Its flexibility lends itself to creative applications beyond those envisioned here.

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■ MEETING MANAGEMENT

David R. Nicoll

A conservative estimate would indicate that most of us who work spend four hours per week attending meetings. At this rate, each of us can anticipate sitting through more than eight thousand hours of meetings in a lifetime of work. This time is valuable, both to us and to our organizations. A productive meeting of fifteen top managers can cost an organization from one thousand to four thousand dollars per hour; an unproductive meeting during which problems are not solved and intelligent decisions are not made can cost much more.

Most of us have learned how to run meetings by osmosis—by watching another person, who, in turn, learned by watching someone else. This method of learning would be valid if the observed processes worked. But what is usually learned is a weak version of Roberts' Rules of Order, which may have worked for the House of Lords in the nineteenth century but is grossly inadequate for twentieth-century meetings.

Fortunately, behavioral scientists have developed various methods for running meetings that work for thousands of individuals in all kinds of organizations across the country. The purpose of this article is to convey a few of the concepts that have been developed and a number of suggestions that will help foster the effective management of meetings.

TYPES OF MEETINGS

In productive organizations, meetings are of distinctive types. All meetings have specific purposes for being held and specific tasks to be performed by the participants. These meetings are effective only when the participants clearly understand the type of meeting they are holding and then make sure they accomplish the tasks associated with that type of meeting. The different types of meetings conducted in organizations are as follows:

Informational. The purpose of this type of meeting is to disseminate data and facts as well as decisions and policies made by people or groups in the organization senior to those holding the meeting. Three subtypes of informational meetings exist: from supervisor to subordinates, in which the former conveys information; from subordinates to supervisor, in which the subordinates convey information; and interactional, in which the supervisor and subordinates share information.

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Validational. This type of meeting is held to announce a previously made decision to the employees affected so that the supervisor can obtain their assent to the decision's implementation. The desired outcome of a validational meeting is the participants' agreement to the wisdom, appropriateness, or logic of the decision. The informational flow here is primarily from top to bottom.

Planning/Strategizing. The purpose of the planning/strategizing meeting is the generation of long-range (one- to ten-year) action plans for the work group in attendance. Involved is an effort to define how the group would like to see its future evolve. Often the outcome of such a meeting is a description of both an ideal state and the sequence of action needed to achieve it. The conversational flow is generally from peer to peer.

Problem Solving/Decision Making. The objective of this type of meeting is also the generation of action plans, but the time factor considered is short (one day to six months), and the focus is on day-to-day business rather than on long-range planning. The conversational flow is from peer to peer or interactional.

Staff Conferences. This type of meeting is held to ensure the progress of action plans generated in planning and problem-solving meetings. Progress reports are provided, a full expression of opinions is solicited, and coordination of disparate actions is achieved. The flow of conversation is from peer to peer and interactional.

Feedback/Evaluation. The purpose of the feedback/evaluation meeting is to assess progress in accordance with the schedules set forth in previous planning and/or problem-solving meetings. Organizational and/or personal performance is the focus. The informational flow is often from supervisor to subordinates, occasionally from peer to peer. Generally, it should be from implementing subordinates to supervisor.

Training. This type of meeting is held to educate the staff. The goal is to expand the knowledge, improve the skill, or change the behavior/attitudes of the participants so that they will perform in their jobs more effectively. The informational flow is downward and interactional.

Celebrational. The celebrational meeting is held so that the participants can enjoy being together, relax, and have a good time. The conversational flow is in all directions.

For each type of meeting, Figure 1 lists the kinds of tasks to be performed and those who should perform them.

CONVENER/MANAGER RESPONSIBILITIES

The meeting convener or manager has two primary responsibilities. The first is to declare the type of meeting being held. Ideally, this announcement is made before the meeting is convened and is repeated at the start of the meeting to focus the participants on the objectives. The second convener responsibility is to declare his or her function in the meeting and that of the participants as well. The choices of function are limited to

Meeting Type	Tasks	Task Performer
Informational	Disseminating information Listening Questioning for clarification	Information holder Participants Participants
Validational	Disseminating decisions Listening Presenting action assignments Assenting/dissenting	Decision maker or a representative of the decision maker Participants Supervisor Participants
Planning/Strategizing and Problem solving/ Decision Making	Identifying the problem/issue Developing data Generating alternatives Selecting a solution Planning action Presenting action assignments	Decision maker Participants Participants Decision maker Participants Supervisor
Staff Conference	Developing data Identifying progress Identifying the problem/issue Generating alternatives Selecting a course of action Planning action Presenting action assignments	Participants Decision maker/participants Decision maker Participants Decision maker Participants Supervisor
Feedback/Evaluation	Developing data Identifying the problem/issue Generating alternatives Selecting a solution Planning action Presenting action assignments	Participants Decision maker Participants Decision maker Participants Supervisor
Training	Presenting the concept Listening Experimenting	Trainer Participants Participants
Celebrational	(As appropriate)	Participants

Figure 1. Tasks to Be Completed In Meetings

decision maker, participant, resource expert, facilitator, and data recorder. It is important for all concerned to know what parts they are to play, and unfortunately these parts are not always obvious.

PACING CUES

The concept of “pacing cues” suggests that every successful meeting, regardless of type, has a definite and distinctive pace. It follows, then, that each type of meeting also has

cues or signals governing movement toward a satisfactory conclusion. The distinct phases of a meeting are as follows:

- Definition of the task;
- Application of energy to the task;
- Consolidation; and
- Closure.

Three kinds of cues signal that a meeting is ready to move from one phase to another:

- Quick repetitions of the same points by different people;
- Successive lulls in the dialogue; and
- A feeling of confusion on the participants' part, often vocalized in terms of statements such as "What are we doing now?"

When these cues are noted, someone should take responsibility for suggesting that the meeting is ready to move to the next phase of the process.

Another cue worth noting is the tempo of successful meetings. Each meeting type is listed below along with its characteristic pace.

<i>Meeting Type</i>	<i>Pace</i>
Informational	Crisp, quick
Validational	Episodic (ebb and flow)
Planning/Strategizing	Slow, deliberate
Problem Solving/Decision Making	Meandering
Staff Conference	Repetitive (long-then-short cycles)
Feedback/Evaluation	Slow, contemplative
Training	Smooth, flowing
Celebrational	Rambling

Pacing cues should be used as indicators as to whether the meeting is moving toward a successful conclusion. The meeting manager should monitor the tempo of the meeting and alter the pace when necessary.

CONCLUSION

Meetings are microcosmic organizations, and as such they should be structured and designed carefully. The checklist in Figure 2 provides a means by which the meeting manager can plan and execute a well-designed, properly structured meeting.

Advance Preparation

1. *Set the agenda and post a meeting notice.*
 - a. Designate the meeting topic.
 - b. Designate the meeting type and the attendees.
 - c. Specify expectations.
 - Set the activity-level standards.
 - Decide on the attendees' responsibility regarding functional role.
 - Identify resource people.
2. *Assign any necessary prework.*
3. *Establish and secure a base of information.*
4. *Make the logistic arrangements.*
 - a. Space
 - b. Time
 - c. Seating
 - d. Materials (audiovisual equipment, etc.)

Meeting Dynamics

1. *Opening Phase—Defining the Task*
 - a. Convene the meeting.
 - b. Introduce the participants (if necessary).
 - c. Reinforce/change expectations.
 - d. Reinforce participation and norms of representation.
 - e. Introduce the resource experts.
 - f. Identify the problems/issues that will not be dealt with during the meeting.
 - g. Present the time schedule.
2. *Middle Phases—Application of Energy and Consolidation*
 - a. Test issue formation and understanding.
 - b. Reiterate the decisions that are made.
 - c. Monitor pace.
3. *Closing Phase*
 - a. Evaluate the progress that has been made.
 - b. Assign tasks.
 - c. Establish a means for dealing with unfinished business (such as including it in the agenda for the next meeting).

Follow-Up Documents to Be Produced

1. Minutes
2. Action-plan summaries
3. Individual action-assignment sheets
4. Action-review reminders
5. Completion reminders
6. Appreciation/recognition notes

Figure 2. Meeting-Management Checklist

■ A STRUCTURED FORMAT FOR IMPROVING MEETINGS

Jack J. Rosenblum

All organizations hold meetings—often long or unproductive or frustrating or boring or all four at once. Traditionally, organization development consultants try to improve meetings by having the participants identify (a) what they did not like about a meeting, (b) what an ideal meeting would be like, and (c) how they can move from the former to the latter. The process is generally slow. Meetings can be improved, but the success of a meeting depends on the quality of interaction among the component parts. Some meetings almost literally hum with efficiency, enthusiasm, and general good feeling; others just grind in lethargy or warble in cacophony. There are four main stages during a good meeting: (1) *agenda building*, (2) *information sharing*, (3) *discussion leading to decisions*, and (4) *evaluation*.

SOME GROUND RULES

Certain ground rules must be established for conducting meetings. If everyone abides by the ground rules, the group process during the four main stages of each meeting will be simplified because everyone can concentrate on the task at hand. The basic ground rules are as follows:

- Barring an earthquake or other act of God, every meeting must begin and end on time. Starting late rewards the stragglers, punishes those who have been most responsible, and creates a norm of sloppiness from the outset. It also wastes expensive time. If whoever convenes a meeting is willing to negotiate the starting time for the convenience of group members and begin the meeting on time regardless of who is there, eventually everyone will have a clear message and can be held accountable.
- It is always appropriate for anyone in the meeting to question whether a particular agenda item is appropriate. The Continental Congress did not try to draft the Declaration of Independence in plenary session; it delegated the task to the Franklin subcommittee, which in turn handed it over to Thomas Jefferson. Some tasks are simply inappropriate or unmanageable for large groups or are not ready to be discussed. One important way that a group protects its ability to function

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effectively is to judge whether or not each agenda item is ready for consideration by this particular group; if not, it can be delegated to a subgroup.

- Group maintenance must be everyone's responsibility. Is the group off the subject? Has a consensus decision been reached implicitly but the conversation is still dragging on? Are some members engaged in conversation on the side? Is one member not being heard or being interrupted or being put down? Anyone who notices has the right and the responsibility to surface the process issue. If more group members are concerned with process as well as content, the odds of having a productive meeting improve proportionally.

AGENDA BUILDING

The first task in a successful meeting is to *build the agenda*. The chairperson must check whether other people have agenda items and whether these are *information* items (i.e., those purely for informational purposes) or *discussion* items (i.e., those requiring action planning or decision making). The agenda items can be collected on two separate lists and written legibly on newsprint. If advance preparation is needed before the group can deal with an item, such an item should be submitted at a prior meeting or distributed to group members in advance. Unless extensive preparation is necessary on an item, the advantages of building an agenda on the spot using the current, here-and-now concerns of those present outweigh any costs in terms of lack of preparation. Meetings with week-old agendas tend to have a stale quality. Once all agenda items have been collected and written on the information-item list or the discussion-item list, the first stage is over and members can proceed to the information-sharing stage.

INFORMATION SHARING

The second task consists of going over the information items, typically at a light, rapid pace. Members can share information with the group or ask for information from others. Members can seek clarification of items, but if any member wishes to discuss an item more fully, the item is added to the discussion list. Discussion is *not permitted* at the information-sharing stage. When all the information items have been covered, the second stage is over.

DISCUSSION LEADING TO DECISIONS

The third task consists of prioritizing discussion items and allocating time for each. The discussion stage is the heart of any meeting, but the most difficult to implement. If it goes well, the meeting will be highly productive; if not, not much will be accomplished. Discussion items can be prioritized by allowing group members three votes to distribute in any way they wish (i.e., all three votes on a single item, one vote each on three items, etc.). The list of priorities will emerge from the vote tally.

Time allotments can be set by asking the originator of each item to estimate the time required to reach a decision on that item. If the total time required for all items does not exceed the time remaining for the meeting, the group can proceed. If more time is required, the group can decide either to table certain items, to delegate some items to subgroups, or to reduce the time spent for one or more of the items. Of course, some discussion items will eventually require more time to complete than was originally allotted. In that case, the group must decide whether or not to proceed and, if so, from which other item to borrow the extra time. There is no assumption during the discussion stage that every discussion item will be covered completely. The group simply takes up the items in the established order of priority and utilizes the time available as effectively and efficiently as possible.

As each new discussion item comes up for consideration, the group must define its objective: Is a recommendation for action needed or are alternative strategies or options for further consideration necessary? Should all ramifications of a proposed policy change be explored? Will the chairperson make the decision or will the group actually make the decision? Defining the group's objectives for each agenda item at the beginning of the discussion saves time and misunderstandings.

When all the agenda has been covered or all the time available has been used, the discussion stage is over. If some items were not covered, time must be allotted for deciding what to do with them. One option is to decide not to deal with an item.

EVALUATION

The evaluation stage is indispensable as a commitment to continued growth and improvement. If the quality of meetings is to improve, the group must make a conscious choice to examine itself for a few minutes at the close of each meeting rather than dealing with another item from the agenda or leaving a little early.

An excellent and deceptively simple system is to have each member rate the meeting on a scale of 1 to 10—10 being “the best meeting I have ever attended” and 1 being “the worst meeting I have ever attended.” Ratings should be written down and collected and then made public. Members can discuss (a) why they chose the numbers they did, (b) what in their opinions the group did well, and (c) what a meeting with a 10 rating would have been like. After each group member has addressed the three issues, a process that can usually be completed in ten or fifteen minutes, the evaluation stage is complete. The chairperson might ask in conclusion if anyone has anything additional to add. If not, or after any responses to that invitation, the meeting can be adjourned.

THREE WAYS TO INTRODUCE THE NEW FORMAT

A manager or an external or internal consultant can introduce the four-stage format just described easily, particularly if participants have not been satisfied with previous meetings. Sample meetings can be conducted and then groups can be asked to

experiment with the new structure for three or four weeks and then to evaluate their meetings to see whether the quality has improved. After three or four meetings, they will have ample data on which to base a decision about using the model.

Someone familiar with the format can introduce it by waiting until a meeting has gone awry and then describing the new system to an audience guaranteed to be receptive.

An alternative method of introducing the system is through the supervisor in charge of a work unit or department, who can be taught to use the model in future meetings. Training workshops can also be set up for all supervisors within a company or for those most likely to lead meetings. However it is introduced, the structure can help rid the world of grim, dissonant meetings.

■ TOWARD MORE EFFECTIVE MEETINGS

Mike M. Milstein

Meetings potentially can perform several integrative functions. First, they can provide an excellent forum in which members of a group can share information and clarify their preferences. Second, they can enable wide input into decisions that might affect the group's members. Third, when decisions for action are made, meetings can help to identify members who have the ability to perform tasks and increase the probability that these people actually will carry them out. Finally, meetings can bring group members together to remind them that they share common values and purposes even though they may have different roles.

Unfortunately, most meetings do not live up to their potential. Organizational members frequently regard meetings as a waste of time and something to be avoided unless absolutely necessary. Common complaints are that meetings are:

1. Too long;
2. Boring;
3. Dominated by formal leaders or by a few influential or verbal people;
4. Poorly organized and/or poorly led;
5. Called too frequently or, just as bad, not frequently enough;
6. Diverted by members with hidden agendas;
7. Subverted by members whose behaviors are destructive; or
8. Not focused on important issues.

Most people who attend such meetings leave wondering how they are related to the group's purposes or ongoing activities and thinking that "there must be a better way!"

Meetings that come closer to fulfilling their potential functions are guided by basic rules regarding their planning, conduct, and follow-up. Such rules reduce members' frustrations while increasing the potential for productivity; thus, the meetings become meaningful encounters in which people work hard, produce important outcomes, and leave with a sense of accomplishment.

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PREPARATION

What actually happens during a meeting is as dependent on careful planning as it is on meeting-management techniques. The following rules can help leaders to avoid some common traps.

1. *Define the Purposes of the Meeting.* A clear notion of what is to be accomplished is the foundation on which everything else rests. Not only should the leader have a good idea of what he or she wants to accomplish, but, equally important, the suggestions of the group members should be solicited. This feedback helps to assure that the meeting will focus on relevant issues. It also promotes anticipation, curiosity, and preparation.

2. *Develop an Agenda.* Once considerations are identified, they should be sequenced in a formal agenda so that those topics that are most urgent appear at the beginning of the meeting. This increases the likelihood that the most relevant issues actually will be considered.

3. *Distribute the Agenda Prior to the Meeting.* Keeping the group members informed about the pending meeting increases their sense of responsibility and helps them to be aware of the purposes of the meeting, prepared to attend it, and, one would hope, more enthusiastic about participating.

CONDUCTING MEETINGS: SEQUENCING ACTIVITIES

With the preparation completed, the next concern is to conduct the actual meeting. The following rules describe how to manage a meeting.

1. *Start on Time.* It is very frustrating for members to have to wait for other members before the meeting can begin. Starting on time, even if only a few people are present, sets a precedent and suggests that members should be more punctual. It also rewards those who arrive on time.

2. *Review the Agenda and Set Priorities.* Initially, agenda items may need to be removed, combined, reordered, or added (as new business at the end of the agenda). This review provides a check on the planning and gives the group members one more opportunity to take responsibility for the meeting.

3. *Stick to the Agenda.* A common problem occurs when the leader allows the members to explore new topics before completing the established agenda. Such a discussion is likely to be unsatisfactory because there has been no opportunity for systematic preparation of information. More important, it is likely that other agenda items will not be explored because discussion of the new topic will take up allotted time. Group members may not like being constrained to agendas, but they are even more dissatisfied when many agenda items remain unexplored. Leaders can minimize this problem by consistently requiring that any topic raised at a meeting be put under “new business” and considered after the listed agenda has been completed (or put on the agenda for the next meeting if no time remains).

4. *Assign Responsibilities and Establish Target Dates for Task Accomplishment.* Decisions that call for tasks to be performed require, either during the meeting or soon thereafter, that members be assigned to carry them out within established time periods. This not only promotes task accomplishment but also provides a clear sign to the group that decisions made at meetings will be pursued. Nothing motivates group members more than seeing that things are done!

5. *Summarize Agreements Reached.* Reviewing the outcomes of a meeting reminds group members about the major decisions that were reached. Assuming that feedback is permitted during the leader's summary, it also enables members to correct any misinterpretations the leader may have made. This activity also provides a sense of completion for the members and increases the potential that members will leave in agreement about what occurred.

6. *Close the Meeting at or Before the Agreed-On Time.* Leaders who ask group members to stay for "just a few minutes longer" to complete a "critical" agenda item may be perceived as being insensitive to others. It usually is better to end on time or even a few minutes early. Members will appreciate the leader's concern about their other commitments. If the agenda is organized appropriately, items that are scheduled for the end of the agenda, except in extraordinary circumstances, can be put off until the next meeting. It probably is an indication of insufficient planning if many agenda items are left over on a regular basis.

7. *Keep a Written Record.* Clear, complete, and accurate minutes are important because they provide the group and the leader with the ability to recall decisions that were made, actions that were called for, and responsibilities that were assigned. The minutes remind members to get on with their tasks. Equally important, conflicting interpretations of meeting outcomes can be minimized if complete and accurate minutes are available.

CONDUCTING MEETINGS: DEALING WITH DIFFICULT MEMBERS

If some members of a group behave in ways that are disruptive, participation becomes difficult for others. The leader must learn to deal with the following behaviors:

1. Talking for the sake of being heard;
2. Conducting side conversations;
3. Challenging attempts to move the group toward decisions;
4. Joking about everything that happens;
5. Interpreting criticism of ideas as personal attacks;
6. Waving off or negating all suggestions or new ideas from others;
7. Urging the group to take action before a problem is clearly identified; and

8. Insisting on a precise, clear definition of each idea to the point that the group becomes bogged down.

Such disruptive behaviors may occur because preparation for the meeting has been inadequate. Clarification of purposes and development of a tight agenda keep the group focused on tasks and can reduce disruptive behaviors.

However, even with careful preparation, some disruptive behaviors may be exhibited. It often may be possible to help difficult group members to channel their energies toward more positive effects. The following rules can help to improve the leader's ability to deal with difficult members (see also Jones, 1980).

1. *Listen, but Do Not Debate.* Troublesome members cannot simply be turned off or tuned out. Although it is difficult, it is best to work at bringing troublesome members into the mainstream of the discussion. When they feel that their views are respected, such members often begin to accept responsibility for controlling their own behaviors.

2. *Talk Privately with Members Who Continually Exhibit Disruptive Behaviors.* Publicly chastising difficult members can have detrimental effects. They may increase their negative behaviors or withdraw entirely from participation in the group. Public confrontations are best reserved as a last resort. Private conferences in which the leader's concerns are presented and the disruptive members' views are solicited provide confidential opportunities for members as well as leaders to explain their feelings and needs and promote the potential for agreements to be reached. This strategy preserves the members' sense of dignity, spares the rest of the group from witnessing embarrassing confrontations, and conserves precious meeting time. It is important to remember, during such conferences, that the focus is to be on the members' disruptive behaviors, not on the members' overall personalities or past histories.

3. *Turn Negative Behaviors into Positive Contributions.* It should not be assumed that all difficult members want to subvert meetings. Some may want to make positive contributions but have not found the appropriate means to do so. Leaders can help disruptive members to find more productive ways of harnessing their energies to the group's needs. For example, leaders can encourage disruptive members to participate in planning sessions, ask for their suggestions during meetings, and give them the responsibility to perform tasks that result from decisions made in the meetings. Although some may not be responsive to such initiatives, many disruptive individuals, when so approached, become active and productive members.

4. *Encourage the Group to Share the Responsibility for Handling Difficult Members.* If the group members share maintenance activities with the leader, it is more likely that negative behaviors will decrease. Group censure puts pressure on disruptive members to modify their behaviors. It is one thing to risk the wrath of the leader and quite another to risk censure by the entire group.

FOLLOW-UP

Following up is as important as conducting the meeting. It translates decisions made at meetings into tangible results, including, for example, the development of policy statements, the design of new procedures, and the collection of information. If the follow-up is adequate, subsequent meetings will be viewed positively. If the follow-up is not sufficient, subsequent meetings may be anticipated unenthusiastically. Following three specific rules can help to make this critical stage more effective.

1. *Edit and Distribute the Minutes Promptly.* Soon after a meeting, the leader, along with the recorder, should go over the minutes to check them for accuracy, completeness, and clarity. The minutes, once approved by the group at its next meeting, become a definitive record that can help to resolve differing interpretations and to remind the leader and others of commitments made to pursue certain activities. Therefore, it is a good idea to distribute the minutes to group members while the meeting is still fresh in their memories. The minutes also help to remind group members of the relationship of any given meeting to the purposes of the group or organization.

2. *Encourage the Completion of Tasks.* Nothing promotes belief that meetings are relevant as much as task completion. Leaders should not hesitate to remind members of their commitments and, periodically, to check on the progress being made. It also is a good strategy to publicize the progress of work that is being carried out. This gives recognition to those doing the work and encourages them to complete their tasks as expeditiously as possible.

3. *Put Unfinished Business on the Agenda for the Next Meeting.* Each agenda item is of interest to at least one group member or it would not have appeared in the first place. Those who requested discussion of a topic that is not treated at one meeting will watch closely to see whether it appears on the next meeting's agenda. Be sure to include such items on the agenda that is sent to group members for review before the next meeting.

SUMMARY

The full cycle of meeting-related activities includes preparation, conducting the meeting, and follow-up. Completion of the follow-up phase flows into the preparation phase for the next meeting.

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■ VIDEO-ENHANCED HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING: SELF-MODELING AND BEHAVIOR REHEARSAL IN GROUPS

Jerry L. Fryrear and Stephen A. Schneider

The use of video technology in human relations training involves the learners in passive viewing of programmed material, interactive procedures with videotaped programs, and active procedures in which the video serves as an integral part of a structured program. The purpose of this paper is to present a human relations training program that combines elements of modeling, video playback, self-confrontation, behavior rehearsal, and group discussion and interaction. This model is adaptable to virtually any training need.

VIDEOTAPED MODELING

The concept of learning by observing models and imitating their behavior is central to using video in human relations training. Videotaped modeling in human-growth settings, which requires participants to act both as learners and models, is a logical outgrowth of the documented effects of live modeling (Thelen, Fry, Fehrenbach, & Frautschi, 1981). Much social learning is fostered by exposure to models who engage, intentionally or unintentionally, in patterns of behavior that are emulated by others. Performances of modeled behavior provide cues that are clearer and substantially more relevant than those that can be conveyed with a simple verbal description. In fact, the establishment of complex social repertoires is generally achieved through a gradual process in which people pass through an orderly, progressive learning sequence toward the final form of the desired behavior.

Modeling, in general, has been used to effect change in three broad and important areas of psychological functioning (Dawley & Wenrich, 1976):

- To transmit new behavior patterns;
- To eliminate unwarranted behavior patterns; and
- To facilitate the expression of preexisting response modes.

By observing a model, people learn to overcome the behavioral anxieties and inhibitions that are connected with a specific behavior as well as to perform that behavior themselves. This type of modeling is overt and is governed by four interrelated processes:

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- *Attention.* The learner attends to what he or she observes and recognizes and differentiates the model's behavior.
- *Retention.* The learner retains the original observations in some symbolic form, either imaginal or verbal.
- *Motoric Reproduction.* The learner uses symbolic representation to guide his or her own performance.
- *Reinforcement/Motivation.* The learner determines the consequences of the observed behavior.

Bandura (1969) states that a combination of verbal and demonstrational modeling procedures is the most effective means of transmitting new patterns of behavior to those who are found to have behavior deficits. In addition, behavior is more likely to be learned from observing a model when the following conditions are met:

- The learners are given specific instructions on what to look for.
- Conflicting, competing, or irrelevant stimuli are minimized.
- The learners give full, discriminative attention to the modeled behaviors.
- In a succession of scenarios, different models are used, and the behavior they perform is vivid and novel.
- The model is attractive in an interpersonal sense.
- The model is seen as having expertise and as being similar to the observer.
- The model is visibly rewarded for engaging in the depicted behavior.
- The learners are given positive feedback and otherwise rewarded for their own modeling.

For the following reasons, video-enhanced human relations training with a group is well suited to meet these important modeling conditions.

- Through group discussion and guidance from the trainer, the group members are given specific guidelines for evaluating the effectiveness of their behaviors.
- Because the models work from a script, conflicting and irrelevant stimuli are minimized.
- Because the learners watch themselves, they are likely to give full, discriminative attention to the videotape. Furthermore, they actively evaluate their own performances with a view toward improvement.
- The group format, in which each member acts as a protagonist, automatically provides different models, each of whom acts out vivid and novel behavior from a script that is developed by the group.

- Inasmuch as social skills contribute to interpersonal attractiveness, the participant models who act out such skills are seen as having that attribute.
- Because the script is designed to demonstrate maximally effective behavior, the model is perceived as having expertise. During the script-writing process, the group members contribute their own concerns, which tend to be similar to one another; consequently, when these concerns are presented on a screen, the learner perceives the model as similar to himself or herself.
- The script is designed to ensure positive social responses from others.
- The group, the trainers, and the other actors in the scenarios all give positive feedback to the participant model.

An additional variable that has been shown to be crucial to the effective modeling of social behavior is the portrayal of a model who copes rather than one who has mastered the behavior involved. The model who copes performs in a progressively improving manner, while a model as behavioral master consistently performs a desired behavior in an ideal way. In the context of interpersonal problems, most studies have reported more positive effects from using a “coping model” than from using a “mastery model” (Thelen et al., 1981). Meichenbaum (1971) proposed that these effects might stem from the coping model’s presentation of techniques that are an inherent feature of the coping condition, rather than from the perceived similarity between the learner and the model per se. The self-as-model procedure is a coping-model program that involves the repeated practice of a behavior by an initially unskilled protagonist.

SELF-CONFRONTATION: THE SPECIAL CASE OF SELF AS MODEL

Pfeiffer, Heslin, and Jones (1976) have stated the case for self-confrontation succinctly:

It is our contention that more growth can occur for a group participant if he is provided with a method for specifically focusing on his own behavior. This is in addition to the feedback he receives from fellow group members, which can be growthful on a different and equally important level.

It is not enough that an individual leave a laboratory learning situation feeling exhilarated, more open, charged, and so on. He must have been given the opportunity to understand himself and his behaviors in highly specific ways and be able to make decisions concerning behavior change based on this learning. (p. 7)

The self-as-model procedure is an excellent method for promoting self-understanding and growth; it depends on covert and overt imitation of one’s own videotaped behavior. The imitation is followed by changes in self-perception and, subsequently, changes in social behavior outside the training setting.

Two theories of behavioral change following self-observation in training situations tend to support the use of self as model. The first is a cognitive-mediation theory of social learning (Bandura, 1969, 1971, 1973, 1977). Hosford (1980) describes the process as follows:

In self-modeling, one learns from observing *exemplars of one's own behavior*, that is, a client observes only those instances of his/her own behavior in which he/she is performing in the way desired. Instances of inappropriate behavior (understand verbal/nonverbal response patterns) are deleted from the model. This, of course, differs considerably from self-observation per se in which clients are confronted with instances of an actual behavior which may include more undesired than desired examples of behavior. Self-modeling is also distinguished from standard modeling advocated in social learning theory in that the client, rather than someone else, models the new behavior to be learned. (p. 52)

It is important that the self-as-model procedure provide positive feedback so that the protagonists are not forced to focus only on their perceived mistakes. An exclusive focus on negative behaviors can lead to a failure to strengthen the positive behaviors being modeled; can provide a participant with evidence to support his or her own self-fulfilling, negative hypotheses; and can cause the participant to associate feelings of unpleasantness with the self-observation process itself (Hosford, 1980; Salomon & McDonald, 1970).

A second theoretical rationale for the self-as-model approach is that the self-image evokes strong arousal in the learner, "priming" him or her for positive change. From a psychoanalytic point of view, anxiety aroused by viewing oneself on video may eventually result in replacing immature or narcissistic ego functions with heightened, more adaptive, and more mature ones. Certainly, visual or auditory self-confrontation can result in sensory arousal (Fuller & Manning, 1973; Ho & Hosford, 1979; Holzman, Berger, & Rousey, 1967). It is unlikely, however, that the increased arousal automatically results in positive gain; what is more likely is that this state of arousal makes the learner more open to intervention and suggestion.

The "arousal" rationale for positive behavioral change based on visual self-confrontation is supported by the theory of objective self-awareness developed by Duval and Wicklund (1972). In essence, this theory claims that a state of objective self-awareness occurs whenever one is confronted with oneself as an object, such as when one views one's own televised image. That state of objective self-awareness leads to a comparison of one's objective self with an internalized standard. If the comparison reveals a negative discrepancy between the standard and the objective self, a state of aversive arousal will exist, resulting in the person's attempting to escape the state of objective self-awareness. If escape is not possible, then he or she will eventually attempt to change the objective self by changing either behavior or appearance.

Of course, the trainer would have to keep the client in a state of objective self-awareness for the amount of time necessary for change to occur. This time requirement undoubtedly varies, but Wicklund (1975) has reported behavioral changes in relatively short periods. Furthermore, the group program proposed by the authors is likely to encourage learners to complete the training because of the mutually supportive atmosphere developed as well as the emphasis on action.

BEHAVIOR REHEARSAL

Behavior rehearsal has been shown to be effective in human relations training, largely because the learners are allowed to practice in a safe environment. Lazarus (1966), for example, conducted a study in which the efficacy of four thirty-minute sessions each of behavior rehearsal, direct advice, and nondirective therapy were compared with respect to the subjects' resulting improvement in the management of interpersonal difficulties. Behavior rehearsal led to the greatest change.

In addition, behavior rehearsal to video simulations, called simulation interaction training (SIT), was developed by Doyle (1981) and found to be effective in developing social skills. The technique basically consists of having a person interact with video scenarios and rehearse appropriate behavior responses. Doyle has successfully applied SIT to many human relations problems, including police-cadet training, foreman training, assertiveness training, confrontation management, job interviewing, and management training. Doyle's work is especially germane to the program proposed by the authors because of his extensive use of video technology. He has found that "hardware-supported" training has numerous advantages, the most important being the opportunity for abundant rehearsal.

THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Modeling, self-confrontation, and behavior rehearsal have all been shown to enhance human relations training. In addition, the advantages of group training are well documented. The video-enhanced group-training procedure combines what the authors believe are the best supported elements of modeling, self-confrontation, and behavior rehearsal. By using a group structure, several positive elements are added: peer support, group problem solving, multiple models, a sense of universality, and group cohesiveness.

The authors' training program is diagramed in Figure 1. It assumes that a small group of people with human relations concerns has been assembled, that some measure of rapport has been established, and that the program has been outlined and explained to the group members during an orientation session. Furthermore, the authors recommend that activities designed to provide a warm-up and to build cohesiveness be conducted prior to implementation.

At the outset of this program, one group member serves as the focal protagonist of a behavioral sequence or scenario and, with the support and assistance of the other members, progresses through a procedure of preparation, execution, and evaluation. The entire procedure consists of nine steps, but Steps 6 through 9 may need to be repeated at least once and perhaps several times. Subsequently, beginning with Step 2, the procedure is completed with a different protagonist and then repeated until each learner has played this role. A session of one and one-half to two hours (minimum) is required to accommodate each protagonist. In addition, a separate session should be conducted at the end of the program for summary purposes. Consequently, with an ideal group size of

five to eight members, the program requires seven to ten sessions, including orientation and summary.

The nine-step procedure is as follows:

1. The first step is a general group discussion. The trainer begins this discussion by asking each learner to state a problem situation that he or she is currently faced with or has recently experienced. This process initiates a discussion of similarities and differences in the reported situations; it is likely that the learners will automatically begin to offer one another advice, share supportive experiences, or state that they are at a loss and have no suggestions to offer. An important benefit of openly sharing is the creation of a greater sense of group cohesiveness.

2. The second step involves the selection of a focal protagonist. At this point the trainer can ask for a volunteer, ask the group to vote or reach consensus regarding who should go first, or choose someone on the basis of a perceived interest level as well as a perceived ability to provide a productive first experience.

3. The third step is to help the protagonist to clarify and specify his or her problem situation. This procedure involves the entire group. The protagonist is asked to state the situation as clearly and simply as possible; subsequently, each learner is instructed to ask questions and request additional information as necessary until the situation is clearly understood. In this way the situation is ultimately reduced to a specific, manageable example that can be transformed into an action-oriented script.

4. In the fourth step, the group selects effective behaviors for the protagonist. The trainer starts this process by asking the protagonist to relax for a moment, to think about his or her situation, and to imagine himself or herself acting as effectively as possible. The protagonist then shares this fantasy with the group, and the learners respond with thoughts as to why the protagonist's approach would or would not be the most effective way to handle the situation. The learners also offer their own suggestions, providing new ideas for the protagonist to consider. Step 4 continues until the trainer and the entire group are satisfied that the most suitable alternatives have been explored and the best approach and behaviors have been chosen.

5. Step 5 involves developing and writing an actual script for the protagonist. At the top of the script sheet, the protagonist writes a brief, concise statement of the specific problem. Next he or she lists the names of the characters in the order in which they appear in the situation. Then, with the trainer's help, the protagonist writes the script, creating lines for each actor that are consistent with that actor's character and ensuring that his or her own statements accurately reflect the newly determined effective behaviors. Once the script has been devised, the protagonist reads it aloud to the learners and elicits their comments and ultimate approval.

6. In Step 6 the protagonist selects learners to play the various parts. The chosen actors then learn their lines, determine appropriate nonverbal behaviors for their assigned characters, and participate with the protagonist in one or two rehearsals. When the protagonist and the other actors feel that they are ready, they act out the script as the proceedings are videotaped with full sound.

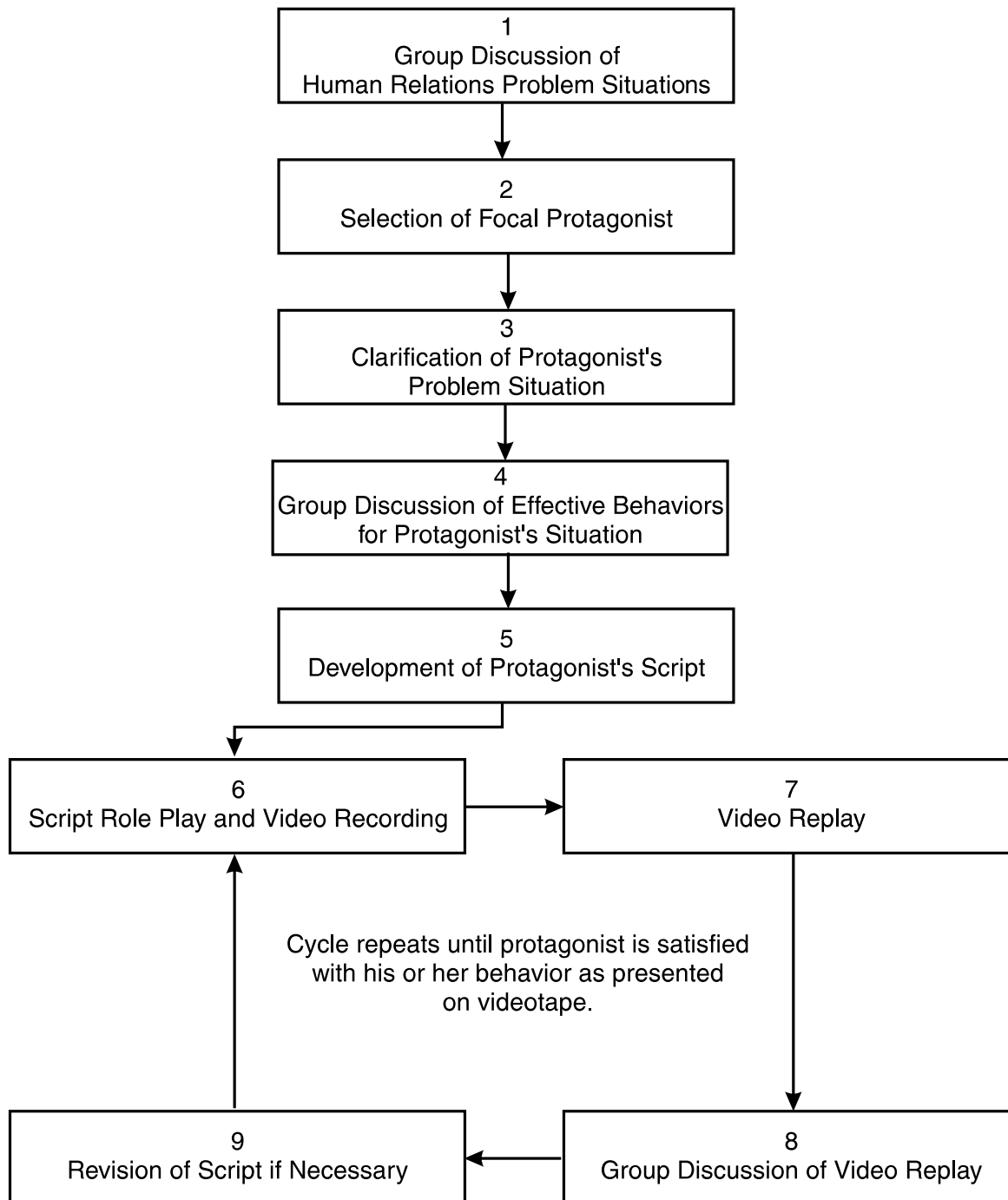


Figure 1. Diagram of Program for Video-Enhanced Human Relations Training

7. In Step 7 the tape is rewound and played for the entire group. It is important during this step that the trainer help the learners to focus on nonverbal cues as well as verbal content. The tape may be stopped and replayed at any point so that certain behaviors or sequences can be emphasized, or it may be run without interruptions.

8. In the eighth step, the group is asked to respond to the video reproduction of the scripted situation. The protagonist shares his or her feelings about having performed the “most effective” behaviors; the other actors describe how they felt in the roles that they played; and the learners who observed offer critiques and/or share experiences and feelings from their own lives that might be appropriate and useful. In general, the discussion focuses on whether the videotaped playback did, in fact, represent the ideal behaviors called for in the script. If this was not the case, the reasons should be explored, and the behaviors needed for improvement should be identified.

9. A ninth step is used if the discussion in Step 8 uncovers weaknesses in the script or produces new ideas about behaviors that might be more effective than those written into the script. In this event, the script is revised, and Steps 6 through 9 are repeated as many times as necessary to ensure that the new behaviors are learned and the protagonist is satisfied.

When the group is ready to begin the process again with a new protagonist, the first protagonist joins the learners and participates in this capacity. Throughout the program, protagonists who have already enacted their problem situations are encouraged to try out their new behaviors between sessions and to report their experiences to the group.

EXAMPLES OF THE PROGRAM IN PROCESS

The following paragraphs present two examples from an assertiveness-training group that was designed according to the program just described. Eight participants and two trainers were involved.

Example 1

Jim, one of the participants, worked as a foreman in a large manufacturing plant. During Step 1, the group discussion, he identified a problem situation. Subsequently, when it was Jim’s turn to serve as the focal protagonist, his problem was clarified; a script was developed; and Jim and Dave, another group member chosen to play the role of his boss, played out the scenario. The group then discussed the performance. The script was deemed adequate; but, because Jim was not satisfied with his performance, he and Dave repeated the scenario three times until he was satisfied with his behavior. The total elapsed time for that session was approximately one and one-half hours.

After input from the learners was incorporated, the statement of Jim’s problem situation read as follows: *I refused a request from a subordinate to change to a straight evening shift; after this refusal, the president of the subordinate’s union intervened, and my boss was asked to reverse my decision.* The following script was developed from this statement.

Dave: Jim, I have a request from Sam that due to medical difficulties with his older son, he needs to work a straight evening shift. I understand that you turned down his request yesterday, and I’d like to hear why.

Jim: Dave, I know that Sam's son's medical problems are extreme, but allowing Sam to work this way could set a bad precedent. There are a number of employees who would love to work straight shifts. Also, I'm against his being on my shift for half of the month because of his inexperience with the machine that he'd be helping to operate. It would certainly affect productivity.

Dave: I realize that we may lose production initially, but I feel that I must overrule your decision and show the union that management does have compassion for employees' problems. I'd like you to keep track of production and see if Sam does cause a decrease in productivity.

Jim: I don't agree with your decision. I feel that we could be setting ourselves up for a rash of special requests, and the loss of production on my shift could hurt the attitude of the machine's regular operator. Of course, you're the boss: if you want me to grant Sam's request, I'll do it.

It is important to remember that this script is imagined dialogue. The actual incident was completely different; Jim simply complied with his boss's request without saying anything and felt anxious and resentful for not having stated his opinion.

After the first video replay of the scenario, Jim and the learners agreed that he had been gritting his teeth and glaring as well as fidgeting and swiveling in his chair. During the second taping, he attempted to change these nonverbal behaviors; this time it was agreed after the replay that Jim had better eye contact with Dave, his voice sounded less angry, his facial expression was softer, and he did not fidget in his chair. In order to practice these new behaviors, Jim requested another taping. Finally, after the third replay, he was satisfied with his performance and felt that he had acted in an appropriately assertive manner.

Example 2

Joyce, another participant in the same group, was a volunteer assistant in a community agency. The final statement of her problem situation was as follows: *I was unable to say no when my supervisor asked me to work with an adolescent in a counseling situation.* Joyce chose Karen, a fellow group member, to play her supervisor, and together they enacted the following script of a phone conversation.

Karen: I really need your help. I've got this serious case, and I feel that you're the only volunteer who is qualified to deal with it. It involves a fourteen-year-old boy who's an alcoholic. Do you think you can find time to assist the case worker?

Joyce: Karen, I really would like to help, but, as you know, my schedule at school is very full this semester. I feel that I couldn't devote the time that's necessary for a case like that, at least not right now.

Karen: Yes, I understand. Could you hold? I've got another call. . . . Sorry I had to keep you waiting. Now, where were we? By the way, how have you been doing?

Joyce: I've been fine, but, as I said, I'm really busy right now. I can't afford the time to assist with the case you mentioned.

Karen: This is really a tough case. I certainly wish you had time to work on it—I think you'd learn a lot.

Joyce: I'm sure I would learn a lot; I usually do. But at this point I believe I'd be doing a disservice to myself, the client, and the agency.

Karen: Well, if you change your mind, let me know.

Joyce: I will. Good-bye.

Karen: Good-bye.

After the first replay, Joyce had reservations about the verbal content of the script and made some minor revisions with the help of the learners. She also felt that her tone of voice showed too much frustration and that she was not positive enough. Two more tapings were required before she was finally satisfied with the replay results.

APPLICATIONS

As stated previously, the authors' program is adaptable to most training needs. To illustrate its versatility, four applications are described in the following paragraphs.

Training in Business and Industry

The key to the strategy of any training action in business or industry is the selection of the most appropriate method to be used in the instructional design. In order to bring about cost-effective behavioral changes and improved on-the-job performance, the training method selected should meet the following criteria (Bass & Vaughan, 1966):

- Each learner participates actively.
- The learners are given feedback about their attempts to improve.
- A meaningful transfer of learning from the training setting to the job setting is promoted.
- Appropriate behavior is reinforced.
- Practice and repetition are accommodated when needed.
- Motivation is provided for the learners to improve their performance.
- The learners are assisted in their efforts to change.

The training program presented in this paper meets these criteria. It can be used in any business situation in which the development of human relations skills is the goal; for example, such an application might involve the development of cooperation among

employees, the development of effective work teams, or leadership training. Furthermore, the authors believe that the program improves on many other training methods used in business by emphasizing participant reenactment of actual situations rather than lectures or predetermined simulations.

Parenting-Skills Training

In 1981 the authors used their program to teach parenting skills to parents of difficult teenagers (Schneider, 1981). The parents involved contributed actual situations in which they felt that they had not been maximally effective in dealing with their children. With each parent protagonist, the selected incident was stated and clarified, and the group offered suggestions for more productive handling of the event. Subsequently, a script was written; the scenario was enacted; and the protagonist and the other parents discussed and tried to improve on the enactment, as portrayed on the video. The real children were not present; their parts were played by other parents or the authors, who served as the trainers.

The parents found the procedure to be both enlightening and helpful in developing more effective ways of relating to their children, and the authors were impressed with the rapidity with which the parents learned new skills.

Assertiveness Training

The authors' training program is particularly appropriate for assertiveness training for the following reasons:

- Many people who participate in such training know how to be assertive but cannot or will not act in accordance with their knowledge; therefore, it is a small step from discussion to the development of an ideal script.
- It is easy for most participants to pinpoint incidents during which they wish they had acted more assertively.
- Asking the participants to write a script and then to alter it and improvise as necessary meets the needs of most people who are learning to become more assertive.

Training of Trainers and Therapists

Currently the authors are applying their program to the training of students in a therapy practicum. The students identify particular problems that they face with clients; then each protagonist completes the procedure, thereby practicing ideal therapeutic interventions. The clients' roles are played by other students, and the students learn from one another.

An interesting variation is to employ pairs, within each of which the partners take turns being the protagonist as they work on a variety of client-related therapy strategies.

If the two students have acted as a team previously during the practicum, they are familiar with each other's clients and can play these roles realistically.

CONCLUSION

The authors have presented a human relations training paradigm in which video recording and playback are an integral part. With many other group training programs, video usage is adjunctive rather than integrated into the procedures. However, because video can play an important role in self-modeling and behavior rehearsal, it becomes central to any theoretical model that incorporates those concepts. Video has enormous potential in human relations training, and adjunctive uses do not allow trainers to take full advantage of this potential.

It is important that trainers incorporate any training tool—video, photography, instruments, and so forth—into a coherent theoretical framework. The authors have tried to provide such a framework, and it is hoped that others can use it productively.

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■ FROM VISION TO REALITY: THE INNOVATION PROCESS

Michael Stanleigh

Abstract: Innovation is a collaborative process by which organizations abandon old paradigms and make significant advances. Innovative ideas come from several sources, including “unreasonable” demands or goals and time pressures. However, there are many blocks to innovation. An innovative idea is not helpful to an organization unless it is tested and implemented. This article presents the six steps in the innovation process and tells how a team can implement each of the steps.

The perfect solution is sometimes there: as a vision, a thought, a dream, or just a wish. But it is often far too complex for an individual to take it into reality.

An example of this is found in the story of Mary Peter, who is in charge of the inventory department of the Steel Plate Company. Mary had a thought: What if it were possible to put all her company’s inventories into a system? Then it would be easier to match inventories with orders, immediately confirm stock availability, and take back-order requests. It would add a new level of customer service and generate time savings.

Perhaps this was not a brilliant idea by some standards. However, at the Steel Plate Company, order entry, work in progress, inventory, accounts, credit, etc., were all separate functions with their own, largely unrelated systems. Therefore, integration of the separate functions into one system had many benefits to offer. It was an innovation for both Mary and her organization. Unfortunately, the idea died; it died because Mary killed it! She soon realized that her job would be eliminated if her idea were implemented. Furthermore, she rationalized that no one would ever agree on how to structure such a system or pay for it.

This example illustrates how many innovative ideas go nowhere because they do not link to an overall business-improvement strategy. In order to protect innovative ideas, organizations need to create a forum for the innovation process.

WHAT IS INNOVATION?

Innovation is not the following:

- The result of a lone genius inventor.
- Just about ideas. (The problem is that people often do not know where to go with ideas or how to implement them, which is sometimes a problem with suggestion-box systems.)

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- About individuality in thinking (which is what suggestion-box systems tend to focus on).

Rather, innovation is:

- A collaborative process in which people in many fields contribute to implementing new ideas. (Teams are very important to the process.)
- About products and reengineering and processes—both future processes and present processes.
- Involving of people who will challenge the status quo. The person who moans and complains may be the source of the next great innovation.

WHERE DOES INNOVATION BEGIN?

Innovation begins with an idea. Ideas come from the following:

- Nowhere: Such ideas usually die unless a fertile ground exists to develop them.
- A goal: An outlandish or unreasonable demand or goal, one that a continuous improvement process will not reach, often may spark innovation.

For example, the City of San Diego, California, held a team competition among its construction trades to build a house in eight hours and still meet strict building codes. For some, this seemed to be an impossible task, but not to a team of innovative construction workers, who rose to the challenge. They decided to completely rethink the entire process of building a house; they challenged the status quo. As a result, they managed to complete the task at lightning speed—in just under three hours. This was an unprecedented achievement! When the City of San Diego examined the winning effort, it learned that the team applied a combination of sensible strategies and creative techniques to achieve its goal. These included minute-to-minute planning, simultaneous construction, training and practice, reengineered processes, teamwork, and new technology.

All these elements are at the core of reengineering the ways in which we do our work. When we “think outside the box” about our own work processes and retool them, who knows what we can accomplish? That is innovation.

Innovation often springs from pressure. Being “under the gun,” with a deadline, adds a sense of consequence to the task and a purpose to spur it. Facing a challenge—even a seemingly unreasonable one (like building a house in three hours)—spurs innovation. Studies show that positive thinkers rise to a challenge. The more they are likely to face defeat, the more they want to beat it.

Innovation is a result of abandoning old paradigms, the status quo, such as rules, policies, and set procedures. Only when you leave the rules behind can you be free to create. This is critical to successful innovation. An organization that is innovative, creative, and willing to take risks has a higher likelihood of creating organizational effectiveness.

BLOCKS TO INNOVATION

The following are blocks to or killers of innovation:

- We can't do that.
- That's stupid.
- That's not in the rules.
- It's against our policy.
- We don't have the budget.
- We don't have the time.
- We'll never get it approved.
- That's not what they're looking for.
- You've got to be kidding.

Even innovators themselves sometimes block innovation. Consider these historic examples:

- In 1880, Thomas Edison said that the phonograph was of no commercial value.
- In 1920, Robert Milliken, Nobel prize winner in physics, said, "There is no likelihood man can ever tap into the power of the atom."
- In 1927, Harry Warner, of Warner Brothers Pictures, said (in reference to the desirability of adding a sound track to silent movies), "Who the hell wants to hear actors talk?"
- In 1943, Thomas Watson, chairman of IBM, said, "I think there is a world market for about five computers."
- In December of 1977, Ken Olsen, president of Digital Equipment Company, said, "There is no reason for individuals to have computers in their homes."

THE INNOVATION PROCESS: SIX STAGES

There are six stages in the process of innovation: generating ideas, capturing ideas, beginning innovation, developing a business-effectiveness strategy, applying business improvement, and decline.

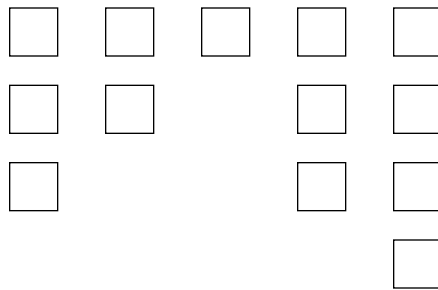
1. Generating Ideas

Generating ideas is the exhilarating part of the process. It is best to do this in teams, rather than individually—which is what suggestion-box systems tend to promote. Innovative ideas generally come from a vision, an unreasonable demand, or a goal.

To get innovation going in an organization, ask, “What is impossible to do in your business now, but, if it could be done, would fundamentally change what your business does?” The answers to this question will help you to see the boundaries of a new organization. That is where innovation begins.

2. Capturing Ideas

Capturing the ideas from the first stage is done by means of team discussion or discussion among peers. It is important to record the ideas. A great brainstorming technique is to ask each team member to silently brainstorm individually. Have each team member write each idea he or she comes up with on a separate sticky note. Then have the team create an “affinity diagram” on the wall or whiteboard by collectively organizing all ideas into columns of similar ideas.



3. Beginning Innovation

Review the entire list of ideas and develop them into a series of statements of ideas. The team members then need to agree on which ones to explore further. Next, quantify the benefits of each idea to be pursued. Do this in reference to the department, the organization, and/or the customer. Describe how the statement fits with the organization’s strategy, mission, and objectives. Finally, estimate the business potential—the expected outcomes of implementing the idea. These steps are designed to capture the idea and have the team members agree on a statement of feasibility before presenting the suggested innovation to management.

4. Developing a Business-Effectiveness Strategy

Innovation implementation begins here. It usually means rethinking an existing process, product, or service. This is not the same as looking at an existing process and improving it. It is describing what a future process (such as building a house in three hours) will look like.

The team first develops this “picture of the future.” This usually is where the innovation resides. The easiest way to start is to have the team members list their basic assumptions about the way things are now done (which the innovation is intended to overcome). Then they brainstorm, record, and discuss every idea that arises about a

possible future process. It helps to use yellow self-stick notes to record ideas individually and then to consolidate them all. The team concludes by writing a paragraph that describes the innovation and illustrating it on a flowchart. This provides the team with a look at the entire future process.

Essentially the team will have detailed how to go about the process without concern for current thinking or typical procedure. This is similar to what Mary Peter did with her inventory system in the example at the beginning of this article.

5. Applying Business Improvement

Once the innovation is applied, it is necessary to continuously examine it for possible improvements (to the process or product or service). In the example of building a house in three hours, how could the team improve the process by using fewer people or less money?

The team starts this process by identifying the business-process gaps between what is done in the present and what is done in the innovation. This is followed by identifying the blockages and barriers to implementing the innovation. Estimating the difficulties, benefits, costs, support required, and risks is necessary before the team can refine the innovation process. Then it will be ready to apply the improvements identified.

6. Decline

In time, it often becomes obvious that what was once an innovation no longer fits. Continuous improvement of the existing process, product, or service is no longer of value; the former innovation has become outdated or outmoded. It is time to let it go, abandon the existing thinking, and set a new goal to start the innovation process once again. It is time for new innovations in response to external pressure.

INNOVATION AND ORGANIZATIONS

Every organization undergoes innovation, or else it is not successful. It is just a matter of degree. The essence of innovation is discovering what your organization is uniquely good at, what special capabilities it possesses, and how it can take advantage of these capabilities to build products or deliver services that are better than anyone else's. Every organization has unique strengths. Success comes from leveraging these strengths in the organization's service or product market place.

Today, many organizations operate globally. They find that innovation can occur anywhere, in any country or culture. Traditionally, innovation has been a local issue, not transferred to other corporate locations. But today, innovation teams, similar to improvement teams, work on innovation in regard to a product or service and then develop a centrally planned roll out. For process innovations, the local organization implements them and then, because of enhanced communication, the innovation moves

from location to location. This is accomplished by using the technology available today, including teleconferencing, videoconferencing, and the World Wide Web.

Innovation is an action. To encourage yourself to take action, consider the words of George Bernard Shaw: “You see things and you say, why? But I dream things and I say, why not?”