

UNIT-5

GROUP DYNAMICS

SYLLABUS: Group Dynamics: Types of Groups, Stages of Group Development, Group Behaviour and Group Performance Factors, Organizational conflicts: Reasons for Conflicts, Consequences of Conflicts in Organization, Types of Conflicts, Strategies for Managing Conflicts, Organizational Climate and Culture, Stress, Causes and effects, coping strategies of stress

Group: Definition, Functions, Types of Groups

A group is a collection of individuals who interact with each other such that one person's actions have an impact on the others. In other words, a group is defined as two or more individuals, interacting and interdependent, who have come together to achieve particular objectives. In organizations, most work is done within groups.

What is a Group?

Groups where people get along, feel the desire to contribute to the team, and are capable of coordinating their efforts may have high-performance levels. Group can be defined as a collection of individuals who have regular contact and frequent interaction, mutual influence, the common feeling of camaraderie, and who work together to achieve a common set of goals.

The definition of a group can be given by some other simple ways like:

- Several people or things that are together or in the same place.
- Several people who are connected by some shared activity, interest, or quality.
- Several individuals assembled or having some unifying relationship.
- A set of people who meet or do something together because they share the same purpose or ideas.

The term group can be defined in several different ways, depending on the perspective that is taken.

A comprehensive definition would say that a group exists in an organization, its members:

- Are motivated to join.
- Perceive the group as a unified unit of interacting with people.
- Contribute in various amounts to the group processes (that is, some people contribute more time or energy to the group than do Others).
- Reach agreements and have disagreements through various forms of interaction.

Functions of Groups

The organizational functions of groups help to realize an organization's goals.

Such functions include the following:

- Working on a complex and independent task that is too complex for an individual to perform and that cannot be easily broken down into independent tasks.
- Generating new ideas or creative solutions to solve problems that require inputs from several people.
- Serving liaison or coordinating functions among several workgroups whose work is to some extent independent.
- Facilitating the implementation of complex decisions. A group composed of representatives from various working groups can coordinate the activities of these interrelated groups.
- Serving as a vehicle for training new employees, groups teach new members methods of operations and group norms.

The list is not comprehensive. The importance of groups in organizations cannot be overemphasized because most of the organizational activities are carried out by groups. Since jobs in organizations are becoming more complex and interdependent, the use of groups in performing task functions will become increasingly important.

One of the most common findings from the research on groups in organizations is that most groups turn out to have both formal and informal functions, they serve the needs of both organizational and individual members.

Psychological groups, therefore, may well be the key unit for facilitating the integration of organizational goals and personal needs.

For example, a formal workgroup in an industrial establishment often evolves into a psychological group that meets a variety of its members' psychological needs.

If this process occurs, the group often becomes the source of much higher levels of loyalty, commitment, and energy in the service of organizational goals that would be possible if the members' psychological needs had to be met elsewhere.

Types of Groups

Groups may be classified according to many dimensions, including function, the degree of personal involvement and degree of organization.

Types of Groups are;

- Formal Group.
- Informal Group.
- Managed Group.
- Process Group.
- Semi-Formal Groups.
- Goal Group.
- Learning Group.
- Problem-Solving Group
- Friendship Group.
- Interest Group.

Formal Groups

Formal groups are created to achieve specific organizational objectives. Usually, they are concerned with the coordination of work activities.

People are brought together based on different roles within the structure of the organization. The nature of the task to be undertaken is a predominant feature of the formal groups.

Goals are identified by management and short and rules relationships and norms of behavior established. Formal groups chain to be related to permanent although there may be changes in actual membership.

However temporary formal groups may also be created by management, for example, the use of project teams in a matrix organization.

Informal Groups

Within the formal structure of the organization, there will always be an informal structure.

The formal structure of the organization and system of role relationship, rule, and procedures, will be augmented by interpretation and development at the informal level.

Informal groups are based more on personal relationships and agreement of group's members than on defined role relationships. They serve to satisfy psychological and social needs not related necessarily to the tasks to be undertaken.

Groups may devise ways of attempting to satisfy members' affiliations and other social motivations that are lacking in the work situation, especially in industrial organizations.

Managed Group

Groups may be formed under a named manager, even though they may not necessarily work together with a great deal. The main thing they have in common, at least the manager and perhaps a similar type of work.

Process Group

The process group acts together to enact a process, going through a relatively fixed set of instructions. The classic environment is a manufacturing production line, where every movement is prescribed.

There may either be little interaction within process groups or else it's largely prescribed, for example where one person hands something over to another.

Semi-Formal Groups

Many groups act with less formality, in particular where power is distributed across the group, forcing a more collaborative approach that includes negotiation rather than command and control.

Families, communities and tribal groups often act as semi-formal ways as they both have nominal leaders yet members can have a high degree of autonomy.

Goal Group

The goal group acts together to achieve a shared objective or desired outcome. Unlike the process groups, there is no clear instruction on how they should achieve this, although they may use some processes and methods along the way.

As there is no detailed instruction, the members of the goal group need to bring more intelligence, knowledge, and experience to the task.

Learning Group

The learning group comes together to increase their net knowledge. They may act collaboratively with discussion and exploration, or they may be a taught class, with a teacher and a syllabus.

Problem-Solving Group

Problem-solving groups come together to address issues that have arisen. They have a common purpose in understanding and resolving their issue, although their different perspectives can lead to particular disagreements.

Problem-solving may range along a spectrum from highly logical and deterministic, to uncertain and dynamic situations where creativity and instinct may be better ways of resolving the situation.

Friendship Group

Groups often develop because individual members have one or more common characteristics. We call these formations of friendship groups.

Social alliances, which frequently extend outside the work situation, can be based on similar age or ethnic heritage, support for Kolkata Knight Riders cricket, or the holding of similar political views, to name just a few such characteristics.

Interest Group

People who may or may not be aligned into a common command or task groups may affiliate to attain a specific objective with which each is concerned. This is an interest group.

Employees who band together to have their vacation schedules altered, to support a peer who has been fired, or to seek improved working conditions represent the formation of a united body to further their common interest.

Differences between Formal Group and Informal Group

Basis for Comparison	Formal Group	Informal Group
Meaning	Groups created by the organization, to accomplish a specific task, are known as Formal Groups.	Groups created by the employees themselves, for their own sake are known as Informal Groups.
Formation	Deliberately.	Voluntarily
Size	Large.	Comparatively small.
Life	It depends on the type of group.	It depends on the members.
Structure	Well Defined.	Not well defined.
The importance is given to	Position.	Person.
Relationship	Professional.	Personal.
Communication	Moves in a defined direction.	Stretches in all the directions.

Skills for a Healthy Group Climate

To work together successfully, group members must demonstrate a sense of cohesion. Cohesion emerges as group members exhibit the following skills:

- Openness.
- Trust and Self-Disclosure.
- Support.
- Respect.
- Individual Responsibility and Accountability.
- Constructive Feedback.

Openness

Group members are willing to get to know one another, particularly those with different interests and backgrounds. They are open to new ideas, diverse viewpoints, and the variety of individuals present within the group.

They listen to others and elicit their ideas. They know how to balance the need for cohesion within a group with the need for individual expression.

Trust and Self-Disclosure

Group members trust one another enough to share their ideas and feelings.

A sense of mutual trust develops only to the extent that everyone is willing to self-disclose and be honest yet respectful. Trust also grows as a group the members demonstrate personal accountability for the tasks they have been assigned.

Support

Group members demonstrate support for one another as they accomplish their goals. They exemplify a sense of team loyalty and both cheer on the group as a whole and help members who are experiencing difficulties.

They view one another not as competitors (which is common within a typically individualistic educational system) but as collaborators.

Respect

Group members communicate their opinions in a way that respects others, focusing on “What can we learn?” rather than “Who is to blame?”

Individual Responsibility and Accountability

All group members agree on what needs to be done and by whom. Each member determines what he or she needs to do and takes responsibility to complete the task(s).

They can be held accountable for their tasks, and they hold others accountable for theirs.

Constructive Feedback

Group members can give and receive feedback about group ideas. Giving constructive feedback requires focusing on ideas and behaviors, instead of

individuals, being as positive as possible and offering suggestions for improvement.

Receiving feedback requires listening well, asking for clarification if the comment is unclear, and being open to change and other ideas.

6 Reasons Why Individuals Join Groups

A small group is a combination of more than two people who are interdependent on one another.

So communication among the members of a group consisting of a small number of members is known as small group communication

Every organization employs small groups to collect, process, and produce information, solve problems and make decisions.

Group communication helps to get a synergistic benefit. Synergy means combined efforts of a group result in greater output than the sum of the individual output.

That is, groups can do more for individuals than individuals can do for themselves. People join groups for many reasons.

Some group members are motivated by working in a group and others are motivated by creating interpersonal relationships with other members of the group.

Great OB scholar K. Aswathappa said there is no single reason why individuals join groups.

Since most people belong to many groups, it is obvious that different groups offer different attractions and benefits to their members.

The most popular reasons for joining a group are related to our needs for security, esteem, affiliation, power, identity, huddling, and task functions.

1. Security.
2. Esteem.
3. Affiliation.
4. Power.
5. Identity.
6. Huddling.

Security

Probably the strongest reason for group formation is the people's need for security. By joining a group we can reduce our insecurity – we feel stronger, have fewer self-doubts, and are more resistant to threats.

Esteem

An individual can increase his self-esteem through group membership.

First, one may gain esteem by becoming a member of a high-status group. Associating with high-status people is reinforcing, and one who belongs to such a group is usually accorded a high status by outsiders.

Second, the close relationship an individual can develop as a group member provides opportunities for recognition and praise that are not available outside of the group.

Affiliation

Another reason why people join groups is that they enjoy the regular company of other people, particularly those who possess common interests. Individuals may seek out others at work who shares common hobbies or common backgrounds.

Power

Membership of groups [offers power to members](#) in at least two ways.

First, there are sayings such as “united we stand, divided we fall” and there is strength in numbers.” These are driving forces behind unionizations. Workers enjoy much greater power collectively than they do as individuals.

Second, the leadership of an informal group enables an individual to exercise power over group members, even if he does not enjoy the formal position of authority in the organization.

Identity

Group membership contributes to the individual's eternal quest for an answer to the question “who am I”. It is common knowledge that' tries to understand ourselves through the behavior of others towards us.

If others praise us, we feel we are great, if others enjoy our jokes, we see ourselves as funny persons, and so on. Groups provide several “others” who will laugh, praise or admire us.

Huddling

One more reason why individuals want to join groups is for huddling.

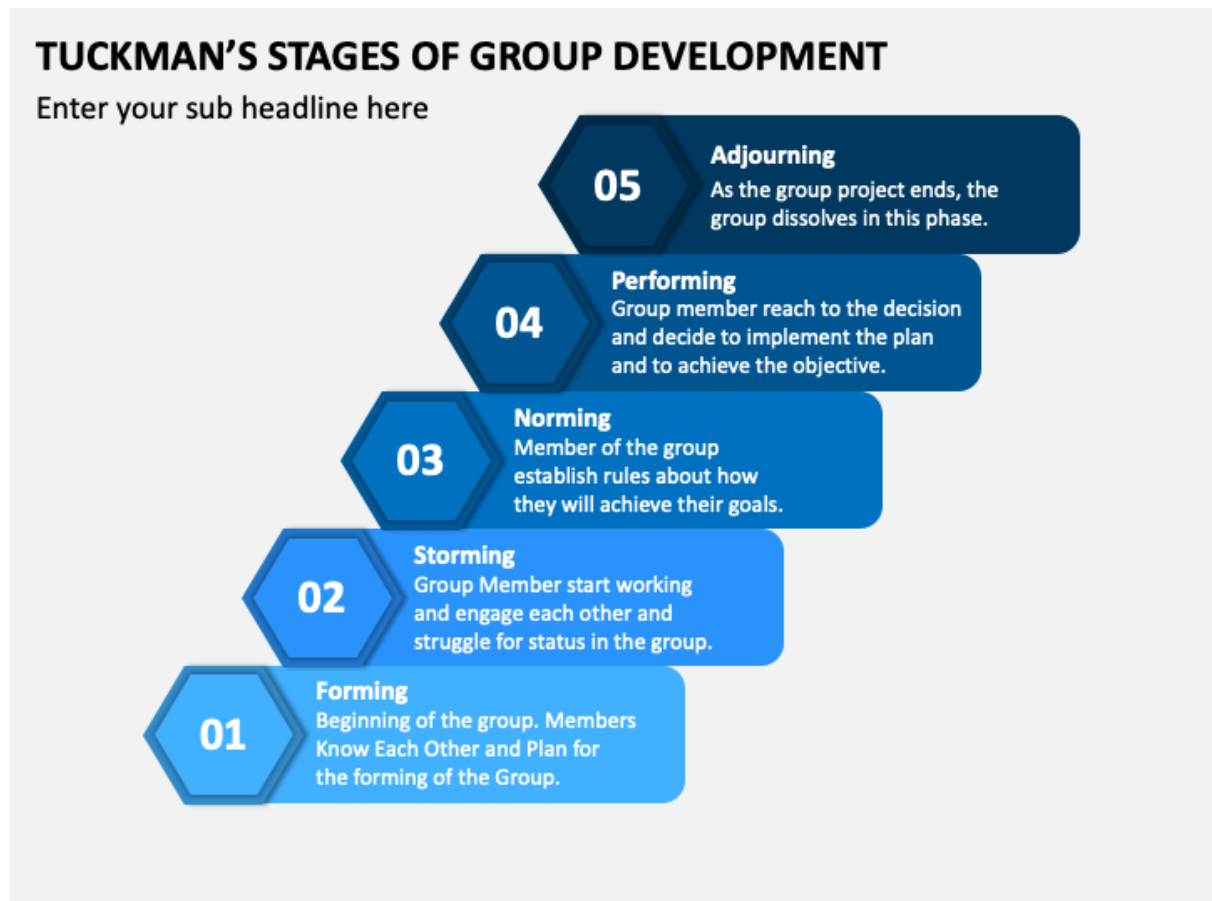
Because of the way bureaucracies work, individuals, particularly executives, make use of informal get-togethers called huddles. There are intimate task-oriented encounters of executives trying to get something done. Huddling enables executives to deal with emerging matters and minimize the amount of surprise.

It also serves to reduce red tape by cutting through hierarchical channels of communication and minimizing misunderstandings.


Because organization charts represent real duties, huddling can compensate for a lack of leadership by taking collective and unofficial responsibility for getting things done.

STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT


Psychologist Bruce Tuckman **developed** his **group development** model in 1965 to explain how healthy teams cohere over time. Tuckman's model identifies the five **stages** through which **groups** progress: forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning.



Forming
 Team acquaints and establishes ground rules. Formalities are preserved and members are treated as strangers.




Storming
 Members start to communicate their feelings but still view themselves as individuals rather than part of the team. They resist control by group leaders and show hostility.



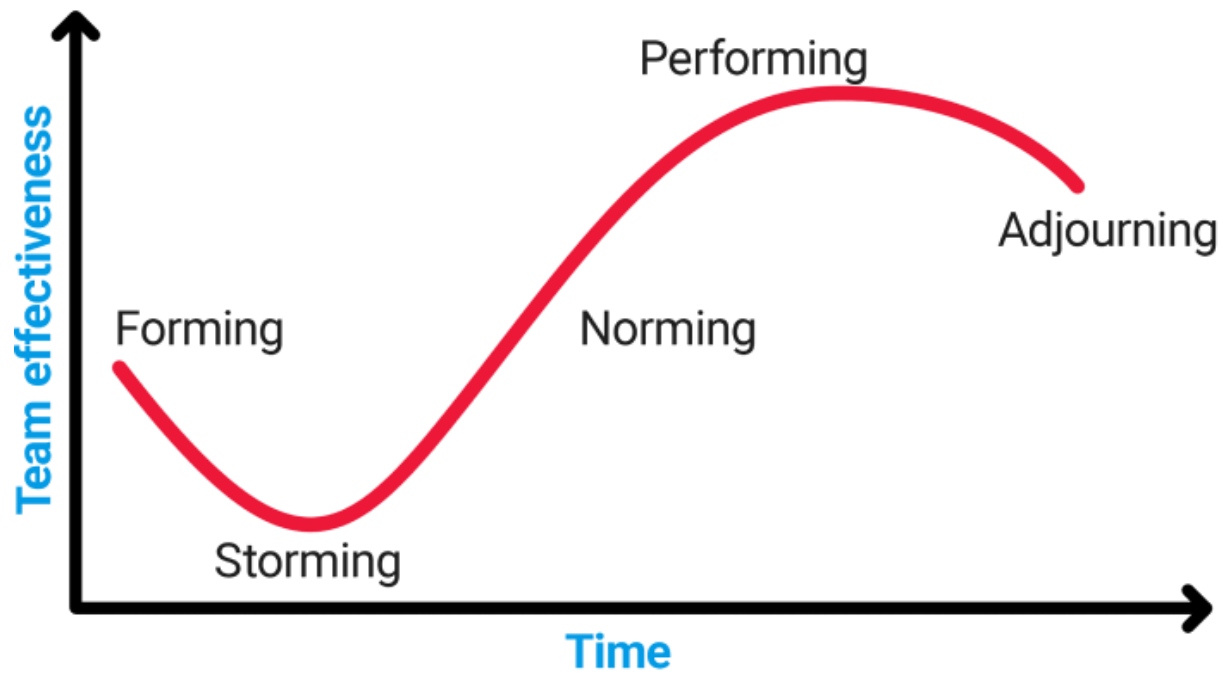
Norming
 People feel part of the team and realize that they can achieve work if they accept other viewpoints.



Performing
 The team works in an open and trusting atmosphere where flexibility is the key and hierarchy is of little importance.



Adjourning
 The team conducts an assessment of the year and implements a plan for transitioning roles and recognizing members' contributions.

FORMING:

The **Forming** represents a time where the group is just starting to come together.



Storming:

- Once established - period of **vying for positions** and roles within the group.
- Some seek out and **compete** for status, **control**, **authority** and influence.
- **Inner conflict**. A period of "testing-out" the leaders.
- Disagreements and **arguments** arise, are fuelled and manufactured.
- In the end, **roles** are eventually **allocated**.
- The initial leaders may not survive this period: it is the most **uncomfortable phase** of the group's life - akin to adolescence.

(3) Norming stage

- A point at which group really begins to come together as a coordinated unit.
- Members concern's include:
 - Holding group together.
 - Dealing with divergent views and criticisms.
 - Dealing with a premature sense of accomplishment.



Performing:

- **Work** and **progress** commences on the basis of a relatively **stable** group **structure**.
- Moving in **unison**, towards goals and completion.
- **Action, Results.**
- **Productivity.**
- Team **cohesion** and identity.

ADJOURNING STAGE

- A stage of task accomplishment and eventual disengagement
- This includes committees, task forces, and projects
- Sense of accomplishment and success within group
- Painful for groups who formed a strong bond



GROUP DEVELOPMENT

What Is Tuckman's Model of Group Development?

Psychologist Bruce Tuckman developed his group development model in 1965 to explain how healthy teams cohere over time. Tuckman's model identifies the five stages through which groups progress: forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. Each of the five stages of team development represents a step on the team-building ladder. As the group members climb the ladder, they morph from a random assembly of strangers into a high-performing team that can work toward a common goal. Here are Tuckman's five stages of group development explained in detail:

1. **The forming stage of group development:** The forming stage is the first stage in Tuckman's stages of group development and is a similar experience to your first day on a new job or at a new school. In this phase, most group members are overly polite and are still extremely excited about what their future may hold. Since the group dynamics and team roles aren't yet established, the team leader will often take charge to direct the individual members. During Tuckman's forming phase, new team members may discuss team goals, ground rules, and individual roles, but since this stage of development prioritizes people over the actual work, it's unlikely the team will be high-performing at this time.
2. **The storming stage of group development:** The storming phase is like when you reach that point with a new roommate where you begin to notice their small idiosyncrasies that get on your nerves. For teams, the conflict often arises due to clashing working styles between team members. Some people may start to even doubt the team's goals discussed in the earlier stage and will stop performing their necessary jobs altogether. This has a negative and stressful effect on those who keep up the hard work since the pre-established group processes no longer function smoothly. Some project teams think they can skip this stage, but it's better to acknowledge conflicts now and work them out rather than avoiding them until they explode.
3. **The norming stage of group development:** The next of Tuckman's stages is the norming phase. This is when the team moves past their previous quarrels and begins to recognize and value their teammates' strengths. During this stage, team members increasingly respect those who are in leadership roles. Now that everyone has begun to bond and familiarize themselves with the team processes, teammates feel comfortable [giving each other constructive feedback](#) as they work toward accomplishing new tasks. Since these new tasks often come with

a high degree of difficulty, it is not uncommon for groups to regress back into the storming phase. Even if a group slides back into old behavior, members' new decision-making skills will make conflicts easier to resolve than they were during the initial storming phase.

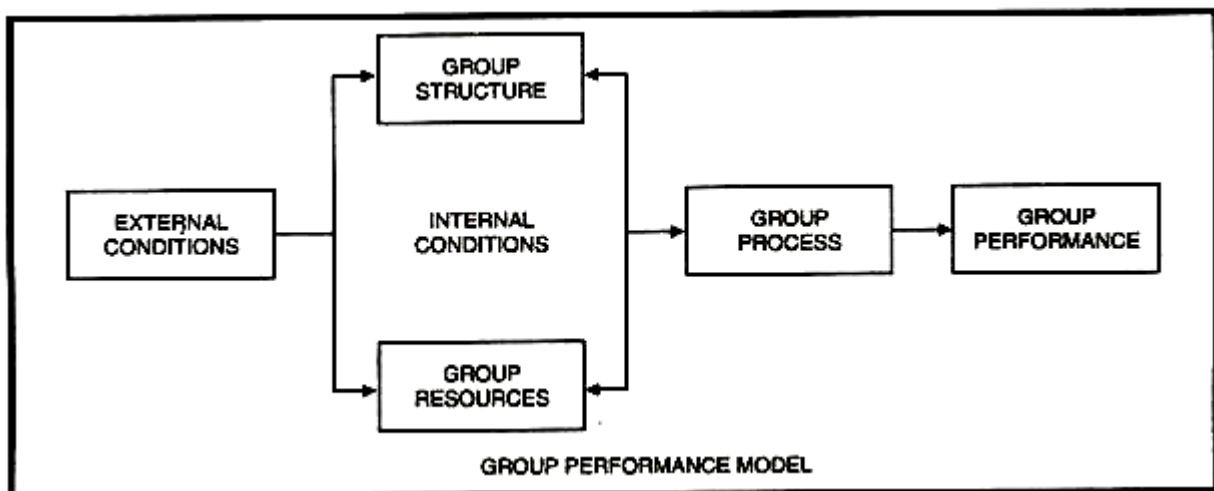
4. **The performing stage of group development:** The performing phase is the happiest of all the stages of development. In this stage, your team performance is at an all-time high. This high-performance level means all team members are self-reliant and confident enough in their own problem-solving skills that they can function without oversight from the leaders. Everyone is working like a well-oiled machine, free of conflict and moving in sync toward the same end goal.
5. **The adjourning stage of group development:** The fifth stage of Tuckman's development sequence is the adjourning phase. This final stage actually wasn't added to the Tuckman model until 1977, and it is the most melancholy of all the stages of team formation. The adjourning phase assumes that project teams only exist for a set period of time; once the team's mission is accomplished, the team itself dissolves. You can equate this stage to a breakup since team members often find it difficult to separate from people with whom they've formed close bonds. In fact, this phase is also sometimes known as the "mourning phase" because it is common for team members to experience a feeling of loss when the group is disbanded.

TOPIC 3: GROUP BEHAVIOUR AND GROUP PERFORMANCE

Some of these processes that effect **group performance** include – the communication patterns, leader **behaviour**, **group** decision making, inter **group behaviour**, **group** cohesiveness etc. The **group** processes may have a positive or at times even a negative impact on the **group performance**.

Introduction:

Once the groups have been formed, it happens that some groups perform well whereas some groups do not perform well. This happens because there are several factors both within and outside the groups, what effect its performance.



1. *External conditions:*

A group is a part of large organisations. They are created by the organisation and as such they do not exist in isolation. A group has to rather work within the framework provided by the organisation. Every group is influenced by a number of external conditions imposed from outside it. These external conditions include: the organization's strategy, its rules, regulations, its culture, physical work setting, employee selection process etc.

2. *Group structure:*

A group comprises of a number of individuals and has a well defined structure. Groups have structures that shape the behaviour of its members and make it possible to predict and explain the individual behaviour within the group as well as the performance of the group as a whole.

Some of the structural components are:

(i) Group Size:

A minimum of two persons as required to form a group, as far as the maximum number is concerned, the group should have as many members as can interact meaningfully amongst one another. However, an ideal group size is said to comprise of 5-7 members over a smaller group in terms of idea generation. The evidence indicates that smaller groups are faster at completing tasks than the larger ones. The group size should be determined by taking in consideration factors such as nature of task to be performed, the maturity of the group members etc.

(ii) Group Composition:

A group comprises of a number of individuals with varied qualities and characteristics. In fact most of the group activities require a variety of skill and knowledge. As far as group composition is concerned, a group may be homogeneous or heterogeneous. Homogeneous groups are those which are composed of similar individuals, similar in terms of personality, age, gender, experience, knowledge etc.

Heterogeneous groups on the other hand are the ones which comprise of dissimilar individuals i.e. the individual who differ from one another in one way or the other. In some types of tasks homogeneous groups could be more appropriate while in other types heterogeneous groups could be more appropriate.

(iii) Group Status:

The term status refers to the relative ranking that a person holds in a group. Status is determined in the context of comparison. Therefore, status defines the rank of an individual relative to others in the organisation and the group. Status is in-fact defined in terms of rights, privileges, duties and obligations the individual holds in an organisation.

It is an important factor in understanding human behaviour. When an individual perceives a disparity between his status with that of other group members, it creates a disequilibrium that results in interpersonal conflicts. So, what is

important for the group members is to believe that the status hierarchy is equitable and just.

(iv) Group Norms:

Group norms are the “The oughts” or “should be” of behaviour. They are prescriptions for acceptable behaviour determined by the group. “Group Norms are a set of beliefs, feelings, and attitudes commonly shared by group members. These are also referred to as rules or standards of behaviour that apply to group members”.

A very comprehensive definition of group norms is given by The Handbook of Industrial and Organisational Psychology. According to this definition, “All groups have established norms, that is, acceptable standards of behaviour that are shared by the group members. Norms tell members what they ought and ought not to do under certain circumstances. From an individual’s stand point, they tell what is expected of them in certain situations. When agreed to and accepted by the group, norms act as a means of influencing the behavior of group members with a minimum of external controls. Norms differ among groups, communities and societies, but they all have them.”

According to D.C. Feldman:

(In the Academy of management Review), “Group norms are the informal guidelines of behaviour and a code of conduct that provides some order and conformity to group activities and operations. These rules are expected to be followed by all the group members. These norms and rules generally develop gradually and informally as group members learn as to what behaviors are necessary for the group to function effectively”.

From the above definitions, we can observe the following characteristics of group norms:

1. Just as an individual’s characteristics are revealed through his personality, the characteristics of a group are revealed or represented through norms.
2. Norms are the basis of behaviour of members in the group. For example it is an unwritten norm that employees do not criticize their bosses in public. Thus,

this norm is related to the behaviour which is considered important by most group members.

3. The norms are the basis for predicting and controlling the behaviour of good members. For example, norms may include behavior in a particular manner both within and outside the group meetings.

4. The norms are applied to all members, though very stringent uniformity is not followed. In certain cases, some deviations may be allowed but not to the extent of jeopardizing group goals. For example, if a code of dress for the meetings or for the work place is there, it is to be followed by all the members.

5. Norms also identify the values and ethics of the group members. They are established on the basis of what is right and decent and expected of professionals.

6. Though formalized norms are written up in organisational manuals setting out rules and procedures for employees to follow, but by far the majority of norms in organisations are informal. For example, you don't have to tell someone that it is unacceptable to gossip while the meeting is going on.

Types of Norms:

Every group has different established norms depending upon the nature of its members and location. For example, the norms of factory workers will be different from the norms of office workers. Moreover, the group norms may be strong or weak depending upon the status of the group, the importance of behaviour to the group and the relative stability of the group

Yet there are some common classes of norms which are common to all groups:

1. Performance Norms:

The most common class of norms which is applicable to all the groups is performance norms. Work groups typically provide their members with explicit clues on how hard they should work, how to get the Job done, their level of output, appropriate level of tardiness and so on. Norms regulate the performance and productivity of the individual members.

Workers who are performing below the lower acceptable level are generally informally reprimanded and encouraged to produce more. On the other hand, an ambitious worker who produces more and performs above the upper acceptable limit set by group are also ostracized for encouraging the management to raise its expectations.

2. Appearance Norms:

The second types of norms are appearance norms. These include things like appropriate dress, loyalty to the work group or organisation etc. Some organisations have formal dress codes. However even in their absence norms frequently dictate the kind of clothing that should be worn to work.

Other appearance norms might involve loyalty or confidentiality on the part of members. Workers are not expected to report about fellow workers to supervisors. Similarly, confidentiality is a powerful group norm so that no matter how much tension may be between workers and management, the workers will not divulge company secrets to competing organisations.

3. Arrangement Norms:

These norms come from informal work groups and primarily regulate social interactions within the group. With whom group members eat lunch, friendship on and off the job, social games and the like are influenced by these norms.

4. Allocation of Resources Norms:

These norms can originate in the group or in the organisation and cover things like pay, assignment of difficult job and allocations of new tools and equipment.

5. Behaviour Norms:

These are rules and guidelines defining the day to day behaviour of people at work. This behaviour pattern may include punctuality as a habit, completing any given assignments within the required time framework, not losing temper, showing respect for other member's opinions and so on. Certain professionalism is expected from all members and this professionalism is predictable form of behaviour.

How do Norms Develop?

Norms usually develop gradually and informally as members learn what behaviours are necessary for the group to function.

Most norms develop in one of the following four ways:

1. Explicit Statements Made by a Group Member:

Explicit statements made by the supervisors or a powerful member may become norms. Norm develops this way to prevent any threats to the status quo. For example, the supervisor may explicitly say that tea breaks are to be kept to ten minutes and this will become a norm.

2. Critical Events in the Group's History:

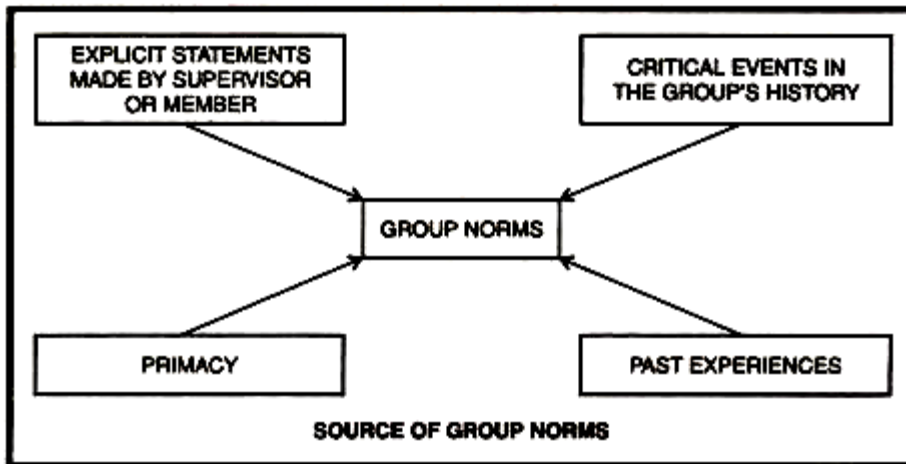
Critical events in the group's history set important precedents. For example, a person who was standing too close to a machine was injured in a work group. It became an established norm in that group that no person other than the operator gets within five feet of any machine.

3. Primacy:

Primacy is another way of forming group norms. Primacy refers to the first behaviour pattern that emerges in a group. This behaviour pattern sets group expectations. For example, if the first group meeting is marked by very formal interaction between supervisors and subordinates then the group expects future meetings to be conducted in the same way.

4. Past Experiences:

Many norms develop because members bring their past experiences from other groups in other organisations. This can explain why work groups typically prefer to add new members who are similar to current ones in background experience.



Why are 'Norms' Enforced?

Once the norms are established, they are enforced on members. But groups don't establish or enforce norms for every conceivable situation. The norms which the group tends to strongly enforce are those which are important to it. Norms which help in achieving the twin aims of performing successfully and keeping morale high are considered to be important.

To be specific, the reasons why norms are enforced are the following:

1. If it facilitates the group's survival:

Groups do not like to fail, so they strongly enforce those norms that increase their chances of success. This means that they will try to protect themselves from interference from other groups or individuals.

2. If it increases the predictability of group member's behavior:

Norms that increase predictability enable group members to anticipate each other's actions and to prepare appropriate responses.

3. If it reduces embarrassing interpersonal problems:

Norms are likely to be strongly enforced if they help the group in avoiding embarrassing interpersonal problems. Norms will be important if they ensure satisfaction to their members and prevent as much interpersonal discomfort as possible.

4. If it allows members to express the central value of the group and clarify what is distinctive about the group's identity:

Norms that encourage expression of the group's values and distinctive identity help to solidify and maintain the group.

5. If it reflects the preferences of the supervisor:

Norms are likely to be strongly enforced if these reflect the preferences of supervisor or other powerful group members.

(v) Group Roles:

All members of group are expected to play specific roles. By this term, we mean a set of expected behaviour patterns attributed to someone occupying a given position in a social unit. Quite often, this role is a function of the individual's job description. A role consists of a pattern of norms, it is a position that can be acted out by an individual. The content of a given role is prescribed by the prevailing norms. Role can best be defined as a position that has expectations evolving from established norms.

The main issue is that a person is required to play a number of roles and the behaviour varies with the role he is playing. Different groups impose different role requirements on individuals. When we examine the concept of role in depth, it becomes obvious that there are different types of roles.

Role Requirements of the Members:

1. Role Identity:

Role identity is created by certain attitudes and actual behaviours which are consistent with a role. When people change a job, the situation and job demands also change. It has been observed that in such circumstances, people have the ability to shift their roles rapidly. For example, in a particular work place when some workers were promoted to supervisory jobs, their attitudes changed from pro-union to pro-management within a few months of their promotion. It means there was a rapid change in their role identities.

2. Role Perception;

Every person has his own perception of as to how he should act in a given situation. Role perception is the view of a person, which consists of those activities or behaviours the individual believes are supposed to be fulfilled in the given situation. The individual gets this perception from stimuli all around

us—friends, books, movies, television etc. In India, for example, every female police officer will certainly be influenced by Mrs. Kiran Bedi. Because of role perception, apprenticeship programmes exist in many trade and professions, which allow beginners to watch an ‘expert’, so that they can learn to act as they are supposed to.

3. Role Expectations:

Role expectations are defined as how others believe or expect, you should act in a given situation. How you behave is determined to a large extent in which way you are acting? The Advertising manager of a company, for example, is expected to review the proposals and plans of the subordinates, rejecting those that will not promote company products and approving those that will contribute to increased sales.

Another example is that the role of a university professor is viewed as having dignity and propriety, whereas a football coach is seen as aggressive, dynamic and inspiring to his players. When role expectations are concentrated into a generalized category, we have role stereotypes. In the work place, it can be helpful to look at the topic of role expectations through the perspective of the psychological contract. According to an unwritten agreement which exists between employees and the employer, the psychological contract sets out mutual expectations, what management expects from workers and vice versa.

Management is expected to treat the employees justly, provide good and acceptable working conditions, proper communication and giving a feedback on how well the employee is doing. Employees are expected to respond by demonstrating a positive attitude following directions and showing loyalty to the organisation. When role expectations as implied in psychological contract are not met, there will be negative repercussions from both sides. The psychological contract is regarded as a powerful determinant of behaviour in organisations.

4. Role Enactment:

From the perceived and expected role, comes the enacted role. Role enactment is the way the person actually behaves. Many of the things a manager says and

does during a meeting will be determined by his or her interpretation of the proper way to carry out the perceived role.

5. Role Conflict:

When an individual is confronted by divergent role expectations, the result is role conflict. It exists in a situation, where an individual finds that compliance with one role requirement may make compliance with another more difficult. At the extreme, it would include situations in which two or more role expectations are mutually contradictions. All of us are faced with and will continue to face role conflicts.

The most critical question is how conflicts imposed by divergent expectations within the organisations affect the behaviour. Certainly they increase internal tension and frustration. There are number of behavioural responses a person may engage in.

(vi) Conformity:

Conformity means adjusting one's behaviour to align with the norms of the group. There is considerable evidence that groups can place strong pressures on individuals to change their attitudes and behaviours to conform to the group's standards. Sometimes, people belong to many groups at the same time and their norms vary in some cases, there may be even contradictory norms. The people, in such situations, conform to the norms of the important group to which they belong or hope to belong. The important groups have been referred to as Reference Groups.

These groups are those where the person is aware of the others, the person defines himself or herself as the member or would like to be a member and the person feels that the group members are significant to him or her. All this implies that all groups do not impose equal conformity pressures on their members.

The groups enforce conformity with norms in many ways. They can reward people who comply group norms by appreciating them, by listening to them in a respectful manner and by making them leaders of the group. Also, they can take negative action against those persons who deviate from group norms in the form

of ridicule, or silent 'treatment' or by withdrawing privileges or by ultimate action of expelling them from the group. This explains why individuals generally conform to their group norms. They will not like to separate from the group which satisfies their social needs and helps in achieving their personal goals.

(vii) Group resources:

By the term group resources, we mean the resources that an individual member brings to the group. The Groups performance to a large extent depends upon the resources of its members.

These resources may be categorized into two types:

(i) Knowledge, skills, efficiency, capabilities and

(ii) Personality characteristics (such as openness, honesty, dominance, extrovertness etc.)

Both these resources strongly affect the group performance by influencing how an individual will interact with other group members.

(viii) Group Process:

Another component in our group performance model is the group process. A process can be simply defined as a systematic method of handling activities. Some of these processes that effect group performance include – the communication patterns, leader behaviour, group decision making, inter group behaviour, group cohesiveness etc. The group processes may have a positive or at times even a negative impact on the group performance.

The group process may at times lead to synergy whereby the groups can create output much greater than the sum of their inputs. The negative aspect is best depicted by social loafing, which represents negative synergy i.e. the output is much less than the sum of inputs. The impact of group process on the group's performance to a great deal depends upon the tasks that the group is doing.

(ix) Group Performance:

Group performance is contingent upon a number of factors. For instance, the external conditions which include the rules, regulations, selection procedure of the organisation etc. highly affect groups performance. Similarly the group is more likely to be productive when its members have requisite skills and personality characteristics. The group size, composition, norms, cohesiveness etc.

4 Main Factors that Influence Group Performance within Organisations

There are several factors influencing performance of groups. The prominent among these are as follows:

(1) Composition of the Group:

It refers to the extent of homogeneity in members of the group. If members of the group are similar in one or more ways such as their age, teaching experience, qualifications, expertise, cultural background and several other such variables which are important for work performance, then the group is said to be homogeneous. In a command group it is essential that the members are homogeneous in terms of expertise though they may be differing in terms of age or teaching experience.

It has been empirically found that a group, heterogeneous in terms of age or experience, exhibits frequent turnover in terms of changes in membership. Other researchers have found conflicting results with reference to the age of employees.

In some studies it was found that managers in business establishments found older employees to be rigid, difficult to re-train and very expensive in terms of salaries.

On the other hand, some studies have found older employees to be more regular in attendance, less frequently changing their jobs, have a stronger work ethics compared to younger employees and once trained, perform equally well as younger employees.

Moreover, if the work group is heterogeneous in terms of opinions, there could be positive benefits in that the group is forced to pay complete attention to the activity, and proceedings and sometimes leads to creative solutions to problems.

A homogeneous group is likely to be more beneficial when:

- (i) The tasks are simple
- (ii) The tasks are arranged in a sequential order;
- (iii) Co-operation is necessary in task performance; and
- (iv) The task is to be completed in short time span.

A heterogeneous group is likely to be more beneficial when:

- (i) The tasks are complex;
- (ii) The tasks require a collective effort;
- (iii) The tasks require new and creative alternatives/solutions; and
- (iv) There is ample time to perform the tasks;

homogeneous group could have fewer differences of opinions and conflicts, more interaction and better communication as compared to a heterogeneous group.

The foregoing discussion suggests that the extent of homogeneity of a group, i.e., its composition and the nature of the task have an interactive influence on work performance.

If a group is culturally heterogeneous, the principal could expect mutual distrust among the members of the group, stereotyped labeling of each other as well as communication problems. Thus, initially, such a group may not function effectively but as the group matures, its functioning may improve.

2) Size of the Group:

It refers to the number of members in the group. The size of the group influences group performance. If, on account of its size, the group has more resources at its disposal, it may be able to perform many independent tasks. It may be able to generate more ideas and solutions.

However, if a group is very large, the interactions among the members become complex and communication may become more difficult thereby leading to disagreements. But if such a large group has prepared a formal procedure or agenda discussions can be controlled and work may proceed smoothly. Besides

in a large group, some People may dominate the proceedings whereas the shy ones may remain in the background. There are possibilities that in a group some people may not contribute at all to the tasks and while away their time purely social interactions.

The effectiveness of work in a very large group, therefore, depends on the nature of the task, characteristics of members of the group and the ability of the leader to understand the problem and take action to make the group function effectively.

The optimum and effective group size depends on:

- (a) Members' interactions and mutual influence;
- (b) Maturity of individual members of the group;
- (c) Task-it nature
- d) Maturity of the group;
- (e) Ability of the manager in handling the group, managing communications, handling conflicts and handling procedures,

There is no specified group size for effective task performance. It depends of the situation and can vary between three and fifteen or more.

(3) Norms:

According to Davis (1964), a norm refers to a standard against which the appropriateness of behaviour is judged. Thus, a norm determines expected behaviour in a particular circumstance. A group determines its norms during the second stage of its formation and continues it till the fourth stage. Norms help in predicting other people's behaviours and enable people to behave in an acceptable manner. Norms prevent chaos.

A norm is developed through an interaction of factors such as the traditions of the group, the nature of tasks, the situation and the personality characteristics members. If a norm is not conformed to by an individual, he/she may receive verbal abuse or physical threat, boycott or removal from group.

For example, if the institutional norm for women employees is to wear a sari to convey a traditional image to students and parents, then a teacher wearing a salwar kameez or a western outfit will be viewed as violating the group norm and will immediately face the consequences.

Functions of Norms:

There are four major functions fulfilled by norms:

(a) Norms enable group members avoid embarrassing situations. They help individuals in preserving their self-image and help members in not hurting each other.

(b) Norms help in a group's survival by rejecting deviant behaviour that do not help in accomplishing the group's goals. Following a norm implies that a group's survival is not threatened but ensured. An effective group is one which is more tolerant towards deviant behaviour.

(c) Norms signify the values that are important to the institution and provide the group with a unique identity. This identity could be expressed in the form of clothes, behaviour, mannerisms and so on.

(d) Norms help group members in expecting other people's behaviour. This saves them from analyzing other people's behaviour, attitudes or response. Members can anticipate each other's actions based on group norms which ultimately enhances performance and goal accomplishment.

However, norms can only regulate behaviour of its members. It has no control on their thoughts, beliefs, feelings or personal emphasis on values.

(4) Cohesiveness:

It refers to a group's commitment towards staying together resulting from the forces operating on members to do so. The forces responsible for cohesiveness are attraction to the group, motivation to stay in the group and resistance to leave the group.

If the group is composed of homogeneous individuals, has reached maturity in its development, its size is not vary large, interactions among its members are frequent, its goals are clear, there is competition with outsiders or threats from external factors and is concerned about effectiveness with regard to reaching the

goals enhance cohesiveness of groups. High levels of cohesiveness lead to goal accomplishment, job satisfaction, improved interactions and synergy.

As opposed to this, group cohesiveness will be low if the group is heterogeneous in composition, newly formed, large in size, its members are dispersed physically, its goals are ambiguous or have failed in reaching its goals.

Low levels of group cohesiveness leads to problems and difficulties in attaining goals, more chances of the group getting broken down, decrease in interactions, orientation towards self rather than the group and reduced commitment to group goals.

Factors affecting group behavior

A group is defined as two or more individuals, interacting and independent, who have come together to achieve particular objectives. Group behaviors are affected or influenced by some significant variables or factors. The major variables are:

1. **Formal leadership:** Almost every work group has a formal leader. The common titles of those leaders are superior, foreman, project leader, department manager, general manager, chairman or managing director etc. These leaders can play an important role in group's success. They are also liable for the failure of group.
2. **Roles:** The world is a stage and all men and women are merely players. All group members are actors; they are playing different types of roles. A role is an expected behavior in a given position in a social unit. Different groups impose different roles on different individual. We can have different concepts about role in a group.
 1. **Role identity:** there are certain attitudes and behaviors consistent with a role. This is called role identity.
 3.
 1. **Role perception:** Group's members need role perception. Role perception in an individual's view of how he or she is supposed to act in a given situation.
 2. **Role expectations:** Role expectations are defined as how others behave the one should act in a given situation.
 3. **Role conflict:** Role conflict is a situation in which an individual is confronted by divergent role expectation.
 4. **Norms:** All groups have some establish norms. Norms refer to the acceptable standards of behaviors that are shared by the group's members. Formalized norms are written up in organizational manuals, and all the people in an organization are bound to follow that rules and regulations. But the majority of norms in organizations are informal.
 5. **Group status:** Status may be defined as a social rank or position given in a group by others. We live in a class structured society. Status is important for group members.
 6. **Group size:** The size of a group affects the group's overall performance or behavior. Small groups are faster at completing task than are larger ones. If the group is encouraged in problem solving, large groups are

perfect to small group. So if the goal of hand, smaller group is better in achieving productivity.

7. **Composition of the group:** Since group is association of different types of people with variety of skills and knowledge. When a group is heterogeneous rather than homogeneous in terms of age, gender, race, educational background, personalities, opinions, abilities skills and knowledge, it can be effective to complete a work.
8. **Group cohesiveness:** The degree in which members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the group are called group cohesiveness. Group behavior are significantly
9. affected by group are cohesiveness. The following suggestions can increase group cohesiveness:

- i. the group smaller
- ii. Make Increase the members spend together
- iii. Encourage agreement about group goals
- iv. Increase the status of the group
- v. Stimulate competition with other group
- vi. Give reward to the group rather than the members
- vii. Physically isolate the group



Organizational Conflict

Definition: Organizational Conflict or otherwise known as workplace conflict, is described as the state of disagreement or misunderstanding, resulting from the actual or perceived dissent of needs, beliefs, resources and relationship between the members of the organization. At the workplace, whenever, two or more persons interact, conflict occurs when opinions with respect to any task or decision are in contradiction.

In simple terms, organizational conflict alludes to the result of human interaction, that starts when one member of the organization discerns that his/her goals, values or attitude are incompatible, with those of other members of the organization. The incompatibility in opinions can come into being, within a member, between two members, or between groups of the organization.



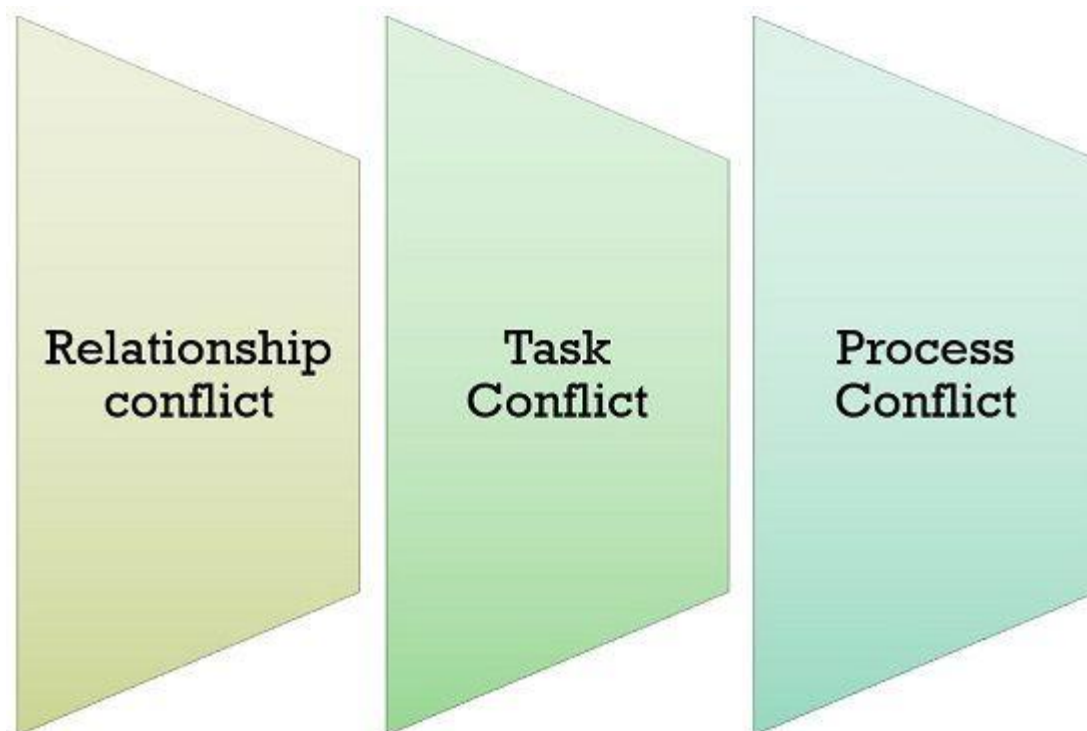
Factors Influencing Organizational Conflict

1. **Unclear Responsibility:** If there is lack of clarity, regarding who is responsible for which section of a task or project, conflict takes place. And, to avoid this situation, the roles and responsibility of the team members should be stated clearly and also agreed upon by all.

2. **Interpersonal Relationship:** Every member of an organization, possesses different personality, which plays a crucial role in resolving conflict in an organization. Conflicts at the workplace, are often caused by interpersonal issues between the members of the organization.
3. **Scarcity of Resources:** One of the main reason for occurrence of conflict in an organization is the inadequacy of resources like time, money, materials etc. due to which members of the organization compete with each other, leading to conflict between them.
 4. **Conflict of Interest:** When there is a disorientation between the personal goals of the individual and the goals of the organization, conflict of interest arises, as the individual may fight for his personal goals, which hinders the overall success of the project.

Conflicts alleviate at the workplace due to individual and inter-individual factors. Individual related causes entails attitudes, beliefs, personality orientation and human-frailties. Inter-individual conflicts arises when a manager breaches norms of the organization.

Types of Organizational Conflict



- **Relationship Conflict:** The conflict arising out of interpersonal tension among employees, which is concerned with the relationship intrinsically, not the project at hand.

- **Task Conflict:** When there is a discord, among members regarding nature of work to be performed is task conflict
- **Process Conflict:** Clashes among the team members due to the difference in opinions, on how work should be completed, is called process conflict.

Organizational conflict can also be personal conflict (one that exist between two people because of mutual dislike), intragroup conflict (one arising out of lack of liberty, resource, etc. in a group) and intergroup conflict (one that exist between two groups).

Causes of Organizational Conflict

- **Managerial Expectations:** Every employee is expected to meet the targets, imposed by his/her superior and when these expectations are misunderstood or not fulfilled within the stipulated time, conflicts arises.
- **Communication Disruption:** One of the major cause of conflict at the workplace is disruption in the communication, i.e. if one employee requires certain information from another, who does not respond properly, conflict sparks in the organization.
- **Misunderstanding:** Misunderstanding of information, can also alleviate dispute in organization, in the sense that if one person misinterpret some information, it can lead to series of conflicts.
- **Lack of accountability:** If in a project, responsibilities are not clear and some mistake has arisen, of which no member of the team wants to take responsibility can also become a cause of conflict in the organization.

The causes of organizational conflict are to be known, to resolve them as early as possible, because it hinders the efficiency, effectiveness and productivity of the employees and the organization as well, which ultimately hampers its success.

Ways to Manage Conflicts in Organization

1. Handle the conflict positively.
2. Formation of official grievance procedure for all members.
3. Concentrate on the causes rather than their effect, to assess conflicts.
4. Parties to conflicts should be given an equal voice, irrespective of their position, term or political influence.
5. Active participation of all the parties to conflict can also help to counter it.

In an organization, conflict is inevitable and so various means are to be discovered to resolve them or use them in a way that can help the organization to increase its productivity.

Reasons for conflicts



In a distributed, virtual team, your team members are working in different locations, sometimes even different time zones, speaking different languages, and coming from different cultures.

They don't have the same personal rapport as in-office teams; they only collaborate using digital tools, and they might feel isolated and alone. All of this means you must take even more care to manage conflict when it arises. The most important step is to identify the cause of the conflict, so you can choose your role.

Broadly, there are five causes of conflict:

1. **Information:** Something was missing, incomplete or ambiguous.
2. **Environment:** Something in the environment leads to the conflict.
3. **Skills:** People lack the appropriate skills for doing their work.
4. **Values:** A clash of personal values leads to conflict.

5. **Identity:** The participants' sense of identity puts them at odds with each other.

Information

Suppose Janine sends Chris a simple email request: “Chris, I need this document by 2pm Friday.” Janine understands exactly what she wants, but there are some potential information gaps:

- If they work in different time zones, whose 2pm is she referring to?
- Which Friday does she mean? She might mean, say, tomorrow, but she can't assume Chris will read the email in time.
- What format does “this document” need? It could be an editable Word document, a finalised PDF document, or something else.

Most information issues are easy to resolve, and your role is to **advise**. Point out the problem and guide them towards finding their own solution. In a distributed team, you can handle this by email or some other written communication, or talking directly.

Environment

Even with the right information, something in the environment could act as an obstacle. For example:

- In an online meeting, some people are bright and alert at the start of their working day while others are tired and ready to end their day.
- “Office politics” exists even in a distributed team, and some people may be jostling for influence.
- “Head office” staff might resent the freedom of people working from home, and people working from home might resent “taking orders” from head office.

In these cases, your role is to **manage**. Again, ask the people involved for their suggestions, but the solution might be outside their authority or responsibility.

If it's within your control, take control. For example, if conflicts arise because of people working in different time zones, you might be able to adjust work days or meeting times to suit everybody. For issues beyond your control, enlist the help of IT, HR, or other parties. But it's still your responsibility to resolve the issue. This is especially important for your remote team members, who are relying on you to act on their behalf.

Skills

Some conflicts occur simply because people don't have the skills to work in a distributed team. They might not know how to manage their email inbox, start online meetings, use virtual workspaces, or choose the right communication channels. This can lead to misunderstandings, confusion, and perhaps even to the person being subtly excluded in the future.

In this situation, take on the role of **trainer** or **coach**. Provide your team members with the professional development they need to build their skills and avoid potential future conflicts.

Values

A clash of values can cause unintended conflicts. For example, people from different cultures might have different expectations about punctuality, gender roles, standards of living, and appropriate professional behaviour.

Here, your role is **mediator**. Ideally, you want to help guide the conflicting parties to resolve the issue themselves, so mediate the discussion to keep it civil, professional, and ultimately working to a fair and positive resolution.

Keep all communication clear and unambiguous. It's difficult to resolve these issues by email or other written means. Bring the parties together by teleconference, video conference call, or even in person. If these conflicts fall outside your area of responsibility, they might need HR support.

Identity

Finally, conflicts can arise when people clash because of their deep personal beliefs about their identity.

For example:

- One person feels a piece of work is beneath them and passes it on to someone they consider "inferior".
- Two people refuse to back down from conflicting positions because they think "losing" the argument would be humiliating.

When conflict is based on somebody's identity, your role is that of **counsellor**. But keep in mind that most of these issues should be handled by your HR team.

Managing conflict: a skill all of us need

Conflict is a normal part of humans working together, and part of your role as a leader is to steer your team members through it when it inevitably arises. Don't

be afraid of it, and don't shy away from it. Be open to it, be alert to it, and address it as quickly as possible.

There's no doubt our workplaces will become increasingly distributed, so the conflict resolution skills you learn and apply today will prepare you for being a leader tomorrow.

6 Common Causes of Workplace Conflict and How to Avoid Them

Conflicts happen in every workplace. They can start with a simple disagreement and often escalate into an argument that impedes the productivity of a team.

Although conflicts *themselves* are common – effective resolution *of those conflicts* tends not to be. Even though it may not always be possible to avoid conflict completely, It's important to be able to recognize common causes of workplace conflict to help stifle them early on.

Here are some common causes of workplace conflict and some tips on how to avoid them

1. Resistance to Change

People get stuck in their habits because they are familiar and easy to follow. With change comes fear of the unknown that not everyone is ready to embrace. Change can be stressful and often results in conflict between a team member and management.

It's helpful to remember that some employees will naturally go through denial, anger, and confusion on their way to embracing change. It's a common human reaction to resist the unknown and it's not uncommon for this resistance to turn to hostility.

Considering these factors and guiding team members through [the process of change](#) will result in an easier and healthier transition:

- Communicate the reasons behind change
- Involve your team members in the process so they know that they are a part of it
- Train the team members in their new job responsibilities

When your team is calm, relaxed, and open to change and growth, they are less likely to get involved in a change-related conflict.

2. Unclear Job Expectations

A job description with an overview of responsibilities always comes with a new position. But it's extremely difficult for team members to become top performer without training and coaching. Every position has a learning curve that plays a big role in the future success of the employee.

Some people stay at their jobs for years trying to guess what their manager's expectations are. Others quit and move on. If someone is unsure of how they need to perform, they might lose confidence and get defensive. Wouldn't it be easier to state what you expect of the team member from the get-go and avoid frustration that oftentimes turns into a conflict?

- Communicate the “non-negotiable activities” - direct responsibilities that your team member has to perform in order to be successful at their job.
- Describe the company culture so the team member knows what kind of work environment they will be a part of.
- Clarify the reporting procedure that the team member will have to follow.
 - Avoid conflicts by making your team members aware of what's expected of them, so they can perform with confidence.

3. Poor Communication

- Communicating is involved in almost every activity that we do in the workplace. Everyone *thinks* they're a great communicator, yet so many conflicts happen because of poor communication

Let's look at the process of communicating:

- “Sender” decides to convey a message
- “Sender” codes the message
- “Receiver” decodes the message
- “Receiver” interprets the message and makes assumptions

There is so much room for misunderstanding at every stage of this process, which makes for many opportunities for a conflict to arise.

Here are some quick communication tips to help avoid miscommunication-stemmed conflict:

- Be clear and concise; don't leave your team members assuming or guessing.
- Listen to hear your team members' new ideas or learn about their concerns.

- Deliver messages designed for your team members; if they understand what you expect of them, they are set for success.
- Manage your nonverbal behaviors and learn to read others’.

4. Toxic Work Environment

The way people feel about themselves and others in the workplace greatly affects their productivity. Loving your job doesn’t just mean enjoying your everyday tasks, but also involves being a part of a happy work community. Some companies go the extra mile and [design their offices](#) to have ping pong tables, bowling alleys, dog friendly areas, libraries, beer stations, etc. to ensure that their employees feel at home and can perform at their best.

Adding bells and whistles to the office space is not always in the budget, nor is it the only way to create a healthy work environment. Here are some of the things you can do to ensure your team is thriving, and avoid a toxic work environment

- Encourage communication. Don’t let conflicts escalate, let your team members know that you are open to hearing them out.
- Focus only on facts in assessing you team members’ behavior and never take sides.
- Implement procedures. Everyone should know what responsibilities they have, how to perform them, and what they are accountable for.
- Organize team building events where people can spend time together out of work.
- Offer training to teach team members essential skills of communicating.

5. Differences in Personality

Any workplace unites people with different backgrounds, temperaments, experiences, and preferences. We don’t become friends with everyone we meet – so we shouldn’t expect all team members to get along perfectly either. Although it’s not necessary for all coworkers to be friends, a level of mutual respect is crucial for a healthy workplace culture.

It’s a manager’s responsibility to set the tone for healthy relationships within a team. If you, as a manager, are always unbiased, your team members will more likely seek your help in resolving conflicts.

Try to be proactive as well by recognizing disagreements between team members and addressing them immediately:

- Consider both points of view in a conflict.
- Focus on factual information, avoid commenting on people's attitudes and characters.
- Ask for team members' ideas on how to best resolve the conflict.
- Follow up with a meeting to check on employees' progress.

6. Poor Work Habits

Many habits that people demonstrate at work are harmless and even helpful for their personal work performance. Even seemingly unusual ones like getting up few times a day to do sit ups or drinking 3 cups of coffee before lunch can hardly be disruptive to others.

However, certain habits can affect the whole team, cause irritation, and spark conflict. These are some of the poor work habits that a manager needs to address:

- A team member is often late to work or distracted at work. Some other team members might fall into similar patterns thinking that this is a norm.
 - A team member expresses negativity, anger or gossips about others. This behavior might spread among other employees and undermine the team morale.
 - A team member is disorganized and misses deadlines, which can result in the work not being accomplished and reflect on the team's image.
 - Once you've identified the poor work habit, talk to the team member privately, ask them for reasons why the habit occurs, and guide them to come up with a solution.
 - Once you've identified the causes of conflicts in your team, be prepared for action. Deal with conflicts quickly, always follow up to track progress of your team members, and express confidence in their success. After all, a united harmonious team is key to the growth of your organization!

STRATEGIES FOR MANAGING CONFLICTS

What Are the Five Conflict Resolution Strategies?

Different people use different methods to resolve conflict, and most people have one or more natural, preferred conflict resolution strategies that they use regularly. It is possible to scientifically measure an individual's inclinations toward specific conflict resolution strategies. In this article, we will discuss the five different categories of conflict resolution from the Thomas-Kilmann model, as well as their advantages and disadvantages.

The Thomas-Kilmann Model identifies five different approaches to resolving conflict. These approaches include:

Avoiding

Someone who uses a strategy of "avoiding" mostly tries to ignore or sidestep the conflict, hoping it will resolve itself or dissipate.

2. Accommodating

Using the strategy of "accommodating" to resolve conflict essentially involves taking steps to satisfy the other party's concerns or demands at the expense of your own needs or desires.

3. Compromising

The strategy of "compromising" involves finding an acceptable resolution that will partly, but not entirely, satisfy the concerns of all parties involved.

4. Competing

Someone who uses the conflict resolution strategy of "competing" tries to satisfy their own desires at the expense of the other parties involved.

5. Collaborating

Using "collaborating" involves finding a solution that entirely satisfies the concerns of all involved parties.

The Thomas-Kilmann model identifies two dimensions people fall into when choosing a conflict resolution strategy: assertiveness and cooperativeness. Assertiveness involves taking action to satisfy your own needs, while cooperativeness involves taking action to satisfy the other's needs.

Each of the conflict resolution strategies above involves different degrees of assertiveness and cooperativeness. For example, while accommodating includes a high degree of cooperativeness and a low degree of assertiveness, competing consists of a low degree of cooperativeness and a high degree of assertiveness.

Choosing the Right Conflict Resolution Method

Even though you may prefer one of the conflict resolution strategies discussed above over the others, all of these strategies can be used effectively in certain situations.

For example, if the issue is minor and won't have lasting consequences, it may be in your best interest to accommodate the other party rather than to try to serve your own needs. However, if the issue is more severe and will impact multiple people, it may make sense to choose a strategy with more assertiveness.

To choose the best conflict resolution method in any given situation, you need to consider several factors, such as:

- How important your desires are.
- The impact on you or others if your desires are not served.
- The consequences of choosing to be more assertive.
- Whether a collaborative or cooperative solution exists

Improving Your Ability to Resolve Conflict

Being able to choose and apply the best conflict resolution strategy effectively is made possible by developing better [conflict resolution skills](#). Examples of conflict resolution skills that can help you include the ability to:

- Listen effectively.
- Identify specific points of disagreement.
- Express your own needs clearly.
- View conflict as an opportunity for growth.
- Focus on specific issues without generalizing or escalating the situation.

Although you may have a proclivity towards a specific type of conflict resolution, you are not required to use this strategy in every situation. With time and effort, you can learn new conflict resolution skills that improve your ability to negotiate and resolve issues with others. Eventually, you will be able to select and use the [conflict resolution strategy](#) that is best for the situation, as opposed to the one that is most comfortable or familiar.

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND CULTURE

Organizational climate is briefly defined as the meanings people attach to interrelated bundles of experiences they have at work. **Organizational culture** is briefly defined as the basic assumptions about the world and the values that guide life in organizations.

Climate and Culture

The culture and climate of an organization are the natural forces, which leave and imprint on the organization.

Culture

1. Behavior... what is valued
2. Structure and Artifacts
3. How we get results

Climate

- Messaging
- Presence/ Gemba
- Style

Leaders who introduce transformational change into an organization easily can become discouraged if they focus too much attention on culture alone. What is required is a more manageable task but one which will affect cultural variables.

The concept of organizational climate offers a more definable and measureable vehicle for implementing change.

Organizational culture is tied to organizational purpose. Why do your business? What do you hope to achieve? How will your employees help to get you there in a way they can believe in, too? Creating a sustainable work environment where employees feel engaged, loyal, and satisfied should be the goal of every organization. Good company culture breeds employees who enjoy their workplace, the work they do, and those they work with. Without it, employees may be inclined to take their skills and knowledge elsewhere.

But the culture of your organization doesn't always reflect the climate of your organization. The company's mission, diversity initiatives, incentives, and perks all make for good culture on paper, but does the climate in your workplace reflect the culture you hope to have? Do your promises live up to your reality?

The terms organizational culture and organizational climate get thrown around a lot, often interchangeably. But they're not the same thing — and the distinction is important.

What is Organizational Culture?

Simply put, organizational culture is your company identity. It's your values and the norms that have arisen organically over time.

Common Values Include:

- Curiosity – Embracing the desire to be continually learning and growing
- Quality – Assessing accuracy and logically thinking over situations and problems
- Innovation – Risk-taking and introducing new ideas
- Outcome Orientation – Focusing on overall results and achievements
- Diversity and Inclusion — creating space for minorities, women, those with disabilities, and other underrepresented groups.

For example, a bank might have, what would be considered, a more traditional company culture. A corporate bank is a structured environment, as the banking industry is heavily regulated by well-established laws. Banking is an old industry, which suggests the culture has had a long time to develop and is firmly ensconced.

At a bank, you'll likely find a culture where people are expected to follow proper channels and defer to the chain of command — where being experimental in your methods and practices would be less favorable and where staff members present a calm, courteous face to the customer so as to convey trust and reliability.

On the other hand, a company like a tech start-up is likely to be more collaborative and unstructured — where disruption, innovation, and entrepreneurship is not only welcome, but also encouraged. Disruptive conflict, wild ideas, and challenging traditions might even be a key value in their culture. Everyone from the company president to the newest intern may be able to communicate laterally and casually.

How the Pandemic May Change Company Culture

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, many workplace conventions have been upended. A lot of people are working from home indefinitely, changing the way

we interact with our coworkers, managers, leadership, and how we structure our work. Our idea of work/life balance has been recalibrated.

And born out of the pandemic comes another re-focus on values: The Black Lives Matter movement has challenged employers to take a closer look at diversity, equity, and inclusion programs and examine how they actually work with employees. Your company may say they value diversity — but do your underrepresented groups feel included? Is every seat at the table equitable? It's an important place to review whether your organizational climate reflects the culture you aim to foster.

Defining Organizational Climate

Organizational climate is the way people experience the work environment. What is it like to work there? How do individuals feel when operating in that culture? How do business conditions, management decisions, and the actions leadership affect the general mood? When you consider the collective experience of all the talent in the organization, you're evaluating climate.

Revenue swings, for example, can affect climate without changing the culture. If you work for a company built around a culture of process and efficiency, and then revenue drops, the solution would likely be to double down on improving processes and efficiencies — this might mean cutbacks in other areas, consolidation of responsibilities, or increased workloads. As a result, employees may start to feel resentful or despondent that their bonuses were canceled, coworkers were laid off, or they've lost certain perks or benefits. In this scenario, the culture stayed the same, but the climate changed.

If your company has a diversity and inclusion initiative, how many people from underrepresented groups have you actually hired? What positions do they hold? How many of those individuals are in managerial positions or within leadership? It's one thing to have a diverse staff, but if every group isn't represented through every department and at all levels, does the climate really reflect the value your organization claims as part of their culture? Your organization may have the diversity, but you can't leave out the inclusion.

How Coaching Impacts Climate

An important part of fostering an organizational climate that is representative of your organizational culture is through leaders who embody those values and exhibit them throughout their work. A shift in mindset — [from manager to coach](#) — helps leaders not only demonstrate organizational values, but also listen to what's happening throughout the workplace and help promote and

build a climate where employees feel seen, heard, and supported on their way to achieve the desired culture.

Issues That Arise With Organizational Culture

Problems of organizational culture arise when the existing culture is detrimental to achieving business goals or realizing the organization's ideal state. For example, a tech company where the culture is collegial, collaborative, and academic — and where behaviors that are brash, autonomous, or cut-throat are discouraged — may be an engaging place for easygoing managers and low-key product engineers to work. However, the tech world is highly competitive and disruptive, and while internally, a tech company such as this may flourish, they may find themselves unequipped to deal with the characteristically more aggressive and venturesome competitors within the industry.

Other drawbacks to organizational culture include:

- It can become too entrenched, making it difficult to adapt or change
- It may ostracize employees who don't feel like they fit in, or cause people to isolate themselves from coworkers they can't relate to
- May form cliques or biases
- May make it difficult for employees to present opportunities for improvement or express concerns

Problems of Organizational Climate

Problems of organizational climate arise when you're not paying attention. At companies that seem relatively healthy, management tends to chug along and maintain the status quo. However, many organizations are vulnerable to slowly escalating problems because they aren't tuned in to the daily experience. It may be a problem with communication and messaging, general dissatisfaction with leadership and business decisions, or deeper structural and procedural flaws that are fomenting [frustration and harming engagement](#) and satisfaction.

It's a good idea for business leaders to keep a finger on the pulse of the organization, so to speak, and not allow themselves to be blindsided. [Employee surveys](#) are a good way to get a broad sense of staff members' prevailing thoughts, and survey results can serve as a springboard for programs around improved transparency, greater collaboration, better alignment of talent, or greater potential to address business concerns.

Employee surveys can address a number of different areas, all answers/results providing a clearer picture of how motivated employees are. Areas the survey may cover are:

- Individual feelings and beliefs
- Whether employees feel properly represented and seen
- How well leadership demonstrates and promotes company values
- Whether employees have the resources and support they need
- How employees fit in with their managers and team members
- Any additional open-ended concerns, suggestions, or ideas
 - By taking steps to ensure a positive culture and a healthy climate, management can both move the company forward and perform the preventative maintenance needed to maximize business results.
 - Caliper has the tools and expertise to identify and correct problems of culture and climate within your organization. [Contact us today](#) and tell us about your ideal future state. We'll help you get there.

OR

Organizational culture is the mix of traditions, attitudes, values and expeditions that shapes life for its staff. Does everyone work late or do they strive for work-life balance? Are acceptable work clothes traditional, casual or cutting-edge hip? In some cases, such as a company that tolerates bullying and abuse, there can be a big **negative impact of organizational culture**

Creating Corporate Culture

Good leaders take an interest in the **positive and negative effects of organizational culture**. Effective leaders have a vision for the culture they want and work to develop it in the organization:

- They **encourage staff to believe in their vision** and empower them to help make it a reality.
- They **encourage employees to respect and care** about each other.
- They **build trust** between themselves and their team.
- When employees act in ways that exhibit the desired culture, **leaders celebrate** them. For instance, to develop a culture where employees act

independently, management should **acknowledge staffers who do great independent work**

- They **eliminate negative behaviors**. If the CEO wants a workplace culture that celebrates diversity, they have to discourage bigotry and discrimination.
- They **walk the walk**. No amount of vision statements and speeches will be as effective as staff seeing the leader lives by the values they talk about.

What Makes Culture Toxic?

Promoting the values you want in your organization doesn't guarantee they'll be adopted. In any organization, there are multiple influences on people's behavior. In some organizations, those influences push culture to the dark side.

- **Poor communication**. If managers don't talk openly to their staff, or if employees can't share their thoughts with management, that leads to a breakdown in trust.
- **A toxic employee** who backstabs or bullies colleagues can erode organizational culture. If management doesn't rein the employee in, other employees may assume the company will tolerate them behaving the same way.
- **Prioritizing profit** above everything else encourages employees to cut ethical corners to suit the bottom line.
- **Setting employees competing** against each other works against building a cooperative culture.
 - **Micromanagement**. If employees feel they're under constant scrutiny, they stress out.
 - Resistance to change makes it harder to fight the **negative impact of organizational culture**.
 - If managers or other workers **don't perform to the company's standards**, employees will realize how much they can get away with.
 - **Lack of engagement**. If the company shows no interest in employees, that makes it harder for them to care.

Effects on Management

The positive and negative effects of organizational culture influence managers as well as lower-ranked employees. For example, a small company may expect managers to help out employees when they need it. That's a positive culture, fostering a spirit of teamwork.

The effects of organizational culture on managers also shape how decisions get made. The culture can emphasize data-driven decisions dominated by analytics and statistics, or favor going with your gut. Does it prioritize results, even if managers have to compromise on their ethics? Culture shapes decisions as much as the facts in the case.

Negative Impact of Organizational Culture

In a healthy organization, the effects of organizational culture on employee performance will be positive. Employees know they're valued and enjoy the work environment, so they're ready to give their best.

A negative culture has the opposite effect:

- An organizational culture that doesn't value quality work gives the employees **no reason to strive** for quality.
- A culture that tolerates bad behavior **gives other employees license to behave** the same way.
- Unhealthy organizational culture leaves employees **feeling miserable**, with decreased motivation to commit to their job.
- An unpleasant culture can **increase employee turnover** because nobody wants to stick around where they're miserable. If the culture becomes known outside the company, it may become harder to attract new recruits too.

ORGANIZATIONAL CLIMATE AND STRESS

Organizational Climate and Stress- The **organizational climate** factors are closely associated with the level of **stress** experienced by the employees in the **organization**. **Organizational climate** serves as a measure of individual perceptions or feelings about an **organization**.

Definition of Stress

“An adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological and/or behavioural deviations for an organisational participants.” (Fred Luthans)



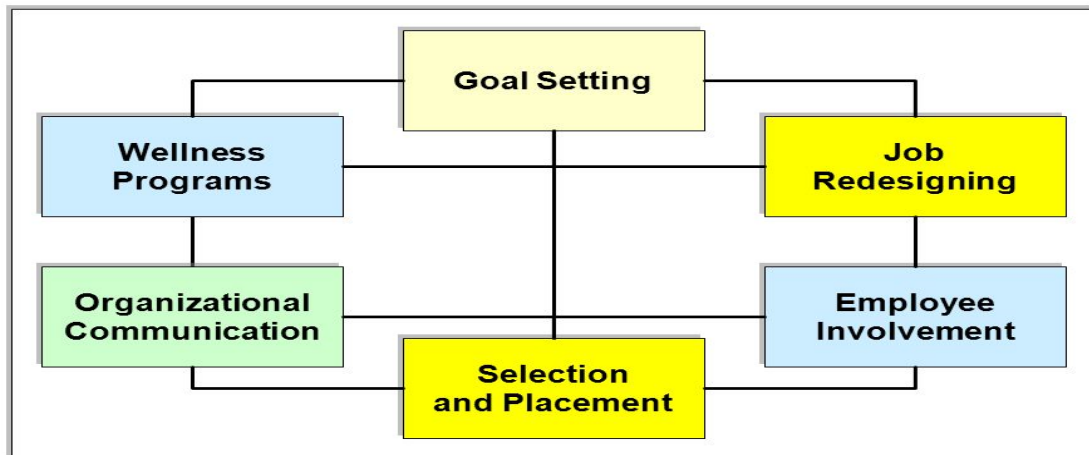
Organizational Stress Management

- Increase individuals' autonomy and control
- Ensure that individuals are compensated properly
- Maintain job demands/requirements at healthy levels
- Ensure that associates have adequate skills to keep up-to-date with technical changes in the workplace
- Increase associate involvement in important decision making
- Improve physical working conditions
- Provide for job security and career development
- Provide healthy work schedules
- Improve communication to help avoid uncertainty and ambiguity

Causes of Work Stress



Organizational Stress Management



Dr. Sikalieh

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Overall Effects of Organizational Stress

Organizational stress can have a profound effect on production and motivation in the workplace. Worries about job security or the demands of a heavy workload increase stress levels and cause a variety of emotional and physical ailments. When stress factors, or stressors, are coupled with ineffective or uncaring management, stress can become a problem that extends to the entire department or company. Identifying signs of organizational stress is the first step in designing a strategy to address problems.

Health Effects

Stress causes a variety of health problems, including high blood pressure, upset stomach, ulcers, headaches, palpitations, fatigue, sweating, weight changes, diarrhea, nausea, dizziness, dry mouth, appetite changes, sexual problems, stiff neck, muscle aches and back pain. If you are stressed, you might feel tired all the time, no matter how much you sleep, or you might have trouble sleeping at night. Poor emotional health can weaken your body's

immune system, making you more likely to contract colds and other infections. These health problems can increase work absenteeism, usage of health insurance and work-related accidents.

Poor Performance

Stress also can affect your ability to perform your job well. Stress can make it difficult to concentrate on complex problems or issues, and it might affect memory. You might neglect to complete certain important tasks or forget to perform a key part of a procedure. If you don't feel as if management supports or empowers you, you might feel that no reason exists to do your best work. Stress can lead to feelings of negativity, lack of enthusiasm and apathy. When you experience these feelings, you might no longer care about doing a good job.

Unmet Expectations and Deadlines

If you feel overwhelmed and exhausted, then meeting expectations or deadlines can be difficult. The effects of stress on your cognitive abilities can affect your ability to prioritize, and it can be difficult to decide which project should take priority. Feeling that you have no control or input into your work also can affect your ability to complete tasks in a timely manner. Workers are less likely to experience work stress when they have more control over their work, have more control over the way they do their work and participate more in decisions that concern their jobs.

Turnover

When stress makes working for a company an unpleasant experience, employees begin to look for new jobs or consider retirement. The loss of experienced employees can cause decreases in production and increases in costs associated with recruiting, hiring and training new workers. A high turnover rate also can make replacing stressed employees difficult for a company. Recruiting new employees can be challenging if prospective employees hear that the company's working environment is stressful.

Organizational stressors such as work overload, role conflict, under-promotion and level of participation interact with individual factors such as personality and family problems to create mental and physical ill health in employees.

COPING STRATEGIES OF STRESS

The following are important coping strategies to address the physical symptoms of stress.

- Practice good sleep hygiene. ...
- Give yourself regular breaks. ...
- Regularly practice self-soothing techniques. ...
- Exercise regularly. ...
- Maintain a healthy diet.

The five emotion-focused coping strategies identified by Folkman and Lazarus are: disclaiming. escape-avoidance.

...

Emotion-focused coping strategies

- releasing pent-up emotions.
- distracting oneself.
- managing hostile feelings.
- meditating.
- mindfulness practices.
- using systematic relaxation procedures.



COPING STRATEGIES FOR WHEN YOU ARE STRESSED



1

Get support.

Talk to a friend or a trusted adult; such as a parent, a relative, a school counselor, or a coach.

2

Don't freak out!

Notice your feelings. Think about why you feel that way. Then, find a way to calm down. Take deep breaths, listen to music, write in a journal, play with a pet, or do whatever helps be in a better mood.

3

Don't take it out on yourself.

Remember that there are always people to help you. Be kind to yourself.

4

Try to solve the problem.

After you're calm and you have support from adults and friends, it's time to figure out what the problem is. Maybe you can begin by solving a piece of it.

5

Be positive.

Most stress is temporary. It may not seem like it when you are in the middle a stressful situation, but things get better.

Coping: How People Deal With Stress

- Emotion-focused coping strategies:
 1. The escape-avoidance strategy involves shifting your attention away from the stressor and toward other activities
 2. Seeking social support involves turning to friends, relatives, or other people for emotional, tangible, or informational support
 3. In distancing, you acknowledge the stressor but attempt to minimize or eliminate its emotional impact
 4. Denial is a refusal to acknowledge that the problem even exists
 5. Positive reappraisal occurs when you not only try to minimize the negative emotional aspects of the situation, but also try to create positive meaning by focusing on personal growth
- People usually rely on multiple coping strategies in stressful situations

Strategies for coping with stress

