

# Management Leadership

Specific information about this course and its requirements can be found below. For more general information about taking Saylor Academy courses, including information about Community and Academic Codes of Conduct, please read the Student Handbook.

## Course Description

Learn effective management and leadership techniques, with topics including leadership theory, change management, decision making, and the distinction between leadership and management.

## Course Introduction

All managers are leaders. All leaders are managers. Which of these statements is true? Neither. The words are often confused, even in academic settings, because we think that both leaders and managers are in charge of a specific task or group of people. However, there are many differences between the two. One such distinction is that a manager may not be in charge of people at all. For example, a manager may be in charge of data, including its acquisition, analysis, and dissemination. Or consider the fact that a leader may have no formal power; many of history's greatest leaders only had power "earned" from their peers instead of power granted by another individual or group. Think of our country's founding fathers, like Thomas Jefferson, who went against the British government to draft the Declaration of Independence – the situation created the "team", and from that, the recognized leaders emerged. All of these distinctions will be explored in this course.

Not only will this course distinguish between managers and leaders, but it will provide you with some of the resources to be both a competent manager and a good leader. Whether you want to run a doctor's office or a company with thousands of employees, management, and leadership skills are the keys that open those doors. Many believe that the highest positions are given to those that know the most about the business, but in reality, those positions are reserved for leaders whose leadership skills transcend business acumen. These skills are difficult to teach in any setting, so it is important to study them carefully and look for real-world situations in which to practice them.

The structure of this course focuses mostly on leadership because a good portion of management skills are reserved for technical knowledge in a position. This course will begin with an introduction that will help further the distinction between leadership and management, and then you will be introduced to major theories and models of leadership and leadership development from a variety of perspectives. Next, you will be introduced to the process of decision-making in a variety of leadership settings. You will then study the processes of leading independently, or without direct authority. The final unit will focus on managing groups and teams. You may not be a leader after concluding this course, but you certainly will have a better understanding of the qualities of leadership. Perhaps you will discover there is a leader right at your fingertips.

## This course includes the following units:

Unit 1: Introduction

Unit 2: Leadership Theory

Unit 3: Change Management and Decision-Making

Unit 4: Leading Without Formal Authority

Unit 5: Managing Groups and Teams

## Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

- distinguish the concept of leadership from the concept of management;
- compare and contrast the major theories of leadership;
- analyze the decision-making process and change management;
- assess the skills necessary to exert power and influence in a non-authoritative leadership role; and
- evaluate the qualities necessary to effectively manage or lead in a team/group environment.

Throughout this course, you will also see learning outcomes in each unit. You can use those learning outcomes to help organize your studies and gauge your progress.

# Unit 1: Introduction

## *Boundless Management*: "Chapter 9, Section 1: Defining Leadership"

One way that people become better leaders is to engage in critical self-reflection, particularly reflection about their experiences with leadership and their own practice of leadership. It will benefit you to keep a journal in this course to record these opportunities for self-reflection. Based on what you read in this article, explain whether or not you believe you are a leader or a manager and why. Write a few lines in your journal.

### Leadership

Leadership is the process by which an individual mobilizes people and resources to achieve a goal.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Describe the relationship between leaders and followers

#### KEY POINTS

- Leadership is the process by which an individual motivates others and mobilizes resources to achieve a goal.
- Leadership is both a set of behaviors that can be learned and a set of traits that can be nurtured.
- Leadership is a relationship between followers and those who inspire and provide direction for them. It involves emotional ties and commitments.

#### TERM

- Transformational Leadership

A theory of leading that enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms.

#### Defining Leadership

Leadership is the process by which an individual mobilizes people and resources to achieve a goal. It requires both a set of skills that can be learned as well as certain attributes that can be nurtured. Leaders inspire, challenge, and encourage others. They can persuade and influence, and they show resilience and persistence. All aspects of society have leaders. The concept of leader may call to mind a CEO, a prime minister, a general, a sports team captain, or a school principal; examples of leadership exist across a variety of organizations.

Leaders motivate others to aspire to achieve and help them to do so. They focus on the big picture with a vision of what could be and help others to see that future and believe it is possible. In this way, leaders seek to bring about substantive changes in their teams, organizations, and societies.

Leadership is a relationship between followers and those who inspire them and provide direction for their efforts and commitments. It affects how people think and feel about their work and how it contributes to a larger whole. Effective leaders can mean the difference between increasing a team's ability to perform or diminishing its performance, between keeping efforts on track or encountering disaster, and even between success or failure.

### Leadership and Management

Leadership is one of the most important concepts in management, and many researchers have proposed theories and frameworks for understanding it. Some have distinguished among types of leadership such as charismatic, heroic, and transformational leadership. Other experts discuss the distinctions between managers and leaders, while others address the personality and cognitive factors most likely to predict a successful leader. The many dimensions of leadership indicate how complex a notion it is and how difficult effective leadership can be.

### **Abraham Lincoln, 1860**

**Abraham Lincoln is considered a model of leadership. He fought to preserve national unity amid the United States' greatest trial, the Civil War, and successfully worked to end slavery .**

### Management versus Leadership

Though they have traits in common, leadership and management both have unique responsibilities that do not necessarily overlap.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Distinguish between managerial roles and responsibilities and leadership roles and responsibilities

#### KEY POINTS

- Many view leaders as those who direct the organization through vision and inspiration; managers are results-oriented and more focused on task organization and efficiency.
- Managers sustain current systems and processes for accomplishing work, while leaders challenge the status quo and make change happen.
- Such distinctions may create a negative concept of managers. "Leader" brings to mind heroic figures rallying people together for a cause, while "manager" suggests less charismatic individuals focusing solely on efficiency.

## TERMS

- management

The act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives using available resources efficiently and effectively.

- leadership

A process of social influence in which one person enlists the aid and support of others in accomplishing a common task.

## Leaders vs. Managers

The terms "management" and "leadership" have been used interchangeably, yet there are clear similarities and differences between them. Both terms suggest directing the activities of others. In one definition, managers do so by focusing on the organization and performance of tasks and by aiming at efficiency, while leaders engage others by inspiring a shared vision and effectiveness. Managerial work tends to be more transactional, emphasizing processes, coordination, and motivation, while leadership has an emotional appeal, is based on relationships with followers, and seeks to transform.

One traditional way of understanding differences between managers and leaders is that people manage things but lead other people. More concretely, managers administrate and maintain the systems and processes by which work gets done. Their work includes planning, organizing, staffing, leading, directing, and controlling the activities of individuals, teams, or whole organizations for the purpose of accomplishing a goal. Basically, managers are results-oriented problem-solvers with responsibility for day-to-day functions who focus on the immediate, shorter-term needs of an organization.

In contrast, leaders take the long-term view and have responsibility for where a team or organization is heading and what it achieves. They challenge the status quo, make change happen, and work to develop the capabilities of people to contribute to achieving their shared goals. Additionally, leaders act as figureheads for their teams and organizations by

representing their vision and values to outsiders. This definition of leadership may create a negative bias against managers as less noble or less important: "Leader" suggests a heroic figure, rallying people to unite under a common cause, while "manager" calls to mind less charismatic individuals who are focused solely on getting things done.

## Sources of Power

Power is the ability to influence the behavior of others with or without resistance by using a variety of tactics to push or prompt action.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Identify the six different sources of power available to organizational leaders and how leaders can employ these sources of power and influence in a meaningful and ethical way

### KEY POINTS

- Power is the ability to get things done, sometimes over the resistance of others.
- Leaders have a number of sources of power, including legitimate power, referent power, expert power, reward power, coercive power, and informational power.
- All of these sources of power can be used in combination, and people often have access to more than one of them.
- Power tactics fall along three dimensions: behavioral, rational, and structural.

### TERMS

- power  
The ability to influence the behavior of others, with or without resistance.
- Upward Power  
When subordinates influence the decisions of the leader.
- Downward Power  
When a superior influences subordinates.

Power in Business

Power is the ability to get things done. Those with power are able to influence the behavior of others to achieve some goal or objective. Sometimes people resist attempts to make them do certain things, but an effective leader is able to overcome that resistance. Although people sometimes regard power as evil or corrupt, power is a fact of organizational life and in itself is neither good nor bad. Leaders can use power to benefit others or to constrain them, to serve the organization's goals or to undermine them.

Another way to view power is as a resource that people use in relationships. When a leader influences subordinates, it is called downward power. We can also think of this as someone having power over someone else. On the other hand, subordinates can also exercise upward power by trying to influence the decisions of their leader. Indeed, leaders depend on their teams to get things done and in that way are subject to the power of team members.

### The Six Sources of Power

Power comes from several sources, each of which has different effects on the targets of that power. Some derive from individual characteristics; others draw on aspects of an organization's structure. Six types of power are *legitimate*, *referent*, *expert*, *reward*, *coercive*, and *informational*.

#### Legitimate Power

Also called "positional power," this is the power individuals have from their role and status within an organization. Legitimate power usually involves formal authority delegated to the holder of the position.

#### Referent Power

Referent power comes from the ability of individuals to attract others and build their loyalty. It is based on the personality and interpersonal skills of the power holder. A person may be admired because of a specific personal trait, such as charisma or likability, and these positive feelings become the basis for interpersonal influence.

#### Expert Power

Expert power draws from a person's skills and knowledge and is especially potent when an organization has a high need for them. Narrower than most sources of power, the power of an expert typically applies only in the specific area of the person's expertise and credibility.

#### Reward Power

Reward power comes from the ability to confer valued material rewards or create other positive incentives. It refers to the degree to which the individual can provide

external motivation to others through benefits or gifts. In an organization, this motivation may include promotions, increases in pay, or extra time off.

## **Cash reward**

**The ability to reward employees with cash and other incentives is a source of organizational power.**

### Coercive Power

Coercive power is the threat and application of sanctions and other negative consequences. These can include direct punishment or the withholding of desired resources or rewards. Coercive power relies on fear to induce compliance.

### Informational Power

Informational power comes from access to facts and knowledge that others find useful or valuable. That access can indicate relationships with other power holders and convey status that creates a positive impression. Informational power offers advantages in building credibility and rational persuasion. It may also serve as the basis for beneficial exchanges with others who seek that information.

All of these sources and uses of power can be combined to achieve a single aim, and individuals can often draw on more than one of them. In fact, the more sources of power to which a person has access, the greater the individual's overall power and ability to get things done.

### Power Tactics

People use a variety of power tactics to push or prompt others into action. We can group these tactics into three categories: behavioral, rational, and structural.

Behavioral tactics can be soft or hard. Soft tactics take advantage of the relationship between person and the target. These tactics are more direct and interpersonal and can involve collaboration or other social interaction. Conversely, hard tactics are harsh, forceful, and direct and rely on concrete outcomes. However, they are not necessarily more powerful than soft tactics. In many circumstances, fear of social exclusion can be a much stronger motivator than some kind of physical punishment.

Rational tactics of influence make use of reasoning, logic, and objective judgment, whereas nonrational tactics rely on emotionalism and subjectivity. Examples of each include bargaining and persuasion (rational) and evasion and put downs (nonrational).

Structural tactics exploit aspects of the relationship between individual roles and positions. Bilateral tactics, such as collaboration and negotiation, involve reciprocity on the parts of both the person influencing and the target. Unilateral tactics, on the other hand, are enacted without any participation on the part of the target. These tactics include disengagement and *fait accompli*. Political approaches, such as playing two against one, take yet another approach to exert influence.

People tend to vary in their use of power tactics, with different types of people opting for different tactics. For instance, interpersonally-oriented people tend to use soft tactics, while extroverts employ a greater variety of power tactics than do introverts. Studies have shown that men tend to use bilateral and direct tactics, whereas women tend to use unilateral and indirect tactics. People will also choose different tactics based on the group situation and according to whom they are trying to influence. In the face of resistance, people are more likely to shift from soft to hard tactics to achieve their aims.

## A Leader's Influence

Leaders use social influence to maintain support and order with their subordinates.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Differentiate between various methods of influencing others and their role in effective leadership

### KEY POINTS

- Influence occurs when other people affect an individual's emotions, opinions, or behaviors. Leaders use influence to create the behaviors needed to achieve their goal and vision.
- Harvard psychologist Herbert Kelman identified three broad varieties of social influence: compliance, identification, and internalization.
- Compliance is people behaving as others expect.
- Identification happens when people are influenced by someone who is well-liked and respected, such as a celebrity.
- Internalization of values leads to those beliefs being reflected in behavior.

### TERMS

- social influence

When an individual's emotions, opinions, or behaviors are affected by others.

- socialization

The process of inheriting and disseminating norms and customs of behavior along with ideologies and other beliefs.

## The Role of Influence in Leadership

Influence occurs when a person's emotions, opinions, or behaviors are affected by others. It is an important component of a leader's ability to use power and maintain respect in an organization. Influence is apparent in the form of peer pressure, socialization, conformity, obedience, and persuasion. The ability to influence is an important asset for leaders, and it is also an important skill for those in sales, marketing, politics, and law.

In 1958, Harvard psychologist Herbert Kelman identified three broad varieties of social influence: compliance, identification, and internalization. Compliance involves people behaving the way others expect them to whether they agree with doing so or not. Obeying the instructions of a crossing guard or an authority figure is an example of compliance. Identification is when people behave according to what they think is valued by those who are well-liked and respected, such as a celebrity. Status is a key aspect of identification: when people purchase something highly coveted by many others, such as the latest smartphone, they are under the influence of identification. Internalization is when people accept, either explicitly or privately, a belief or set of values that leads to behavior that reflects those values. An example is following the tenets of one's religion.

## Politics as an Example of Social Influence

**Leaders, such as politicians, often use identification to gain support for their beliefs on certain issues.**

### How Leaders Use Influence

In an organization, a leader can use these three types of influence to motivate people and achieve objectives. For example, compliance is a means of maintaining order in the workplace, such as when employees are expected to follow the rules set by their supervisors. Similarly, identification happens when people seek to imitate and follow the actions of people they look up to and respect, for example a more experienced co-worker or trusted

supervisor. Internalization results when employees embrace the vision and values of a leader and develop a commitment to fulfilling them.

Leaders use these different types of influence to motivate the behaviors and actions needed to accomplish tasks and achieve goals. Individuals differ in how susceptible they are to each type of influence. Some workers may care a great deal about what others think of them and thus be more amenable to identifying the cues for how to behave. Other individuals may want to believe strongly in what they do and so seek to internalize a set of values to guide them. In organizations and in most parts of life, sources of influence are all around us. As a result, our behavior can be shaped by how others communicate with us and how we see them.

## A Leader's Vision

A clear and well-communicated vision is essential for a leader to gain support and for followers to understand a leader's goals.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Explain the relationship among vision, mission, and strategy as it pertains to leadership

### KEY POINTS

- Vision is defined as a clear, distinctive, and specific view of the future that is usually connected with strategic decisions for the organization.
- A thriving organization will have a vision that is succinct, understandable, and indicative of the direction that the company wants to head in the future.
- Leaders are essential for communicating the vision of the organization and promoting the vision through the decisions they make and the strategies they pursue.

### TERM

- vision

A clear, distinctive, and specific view of the future that is usually connected with a leader's strategic advances for the organization.

A vision is defined as a clear, distinctive, and specific view of the future; it is usually connected with strategic advances for the organization. Effective leaders define a vision and

build followers' commitment to it. The ability to express a vision and use it to inspire others differentiates a leader from a manager.

Many researchers argue that vision is an essential quality of effective leaders, along with the abilities to communicate and to build trust. Effective leaders communicate their vision of the organization. Their decisions and strategies reflect their view of what an enterprise can be rather than what it currently is. A strong leader builds trust in the vision by acting in ways that are consistent with it and by demonstrating to others what it takes to make the vision a reality.

Vision is an essential component of an organization's success. A thriving organization will have a vision that is succinct, understandable, and indicative of the direction that the company wants to head in the future. The more employees are aware of, understand, and accept the vision, the more useful it is in directing their behavior toward the desired end.

Vision and mission are sometimes used interchangeably, but there is a useful distinction between the two. A vision describes an organization's direction, while its mission defines its purpose. By focusing on the value an organization creates, the mission helps prioritize activities and narrow alternatives for decisions.

Vision also plays a significant role in a leader's strategy for the organization. By setting the direction, a vision underscores the necessity of all the areas of a business working toward the same goal. This unity of purpose often involves changing what is done and how, and aligning the activities and behavior of people is critical to fulfilling a leader's vision. A vision reduces ambiguity and provides focus—two benefits that are especially valuable in turbulent or rapidly changing times.

### **Vision connects to strategy**

### **A concise and clear vision is essential to drive and communicate an organization's strategy**

## Leadership Traits

Traits of effective leaders are conditionally dependent and have been debated for years, but researchers have identified some commonalities.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Summarize the key characteristics and traits that are predictive of strong leadership capacity

## KEY POINTS

- Early findings regarding trait theory show that relationships exist between leadership and individual traits such as intelligence, adjustment, extroversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and general self-efficacy.
- Stephen Zaccaro, a researcher of trait theories, argues that effective leadership is derived from an integrated set of cognitive abilities, social capabilities, and dispositional tendencies, with each set of traits adding to the influence of the other.
- Zaccaro's model points to extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, neuroticism, honesty/integrity, charisma, intelligence, creativity, achievement motivation, need for power, oral/written communication, interpersonal skills, general problem-solving, and decision making.

## TERMS

- Proximal

Located close to a reference point.

- distal

Located far from a reference point.

Researchers have debated the traits of a leader for many decades. Early trait theory proposed that merely a few personality traits have the ability to determine the success of a leader. Researchers have since distanced themselves from this idea and theorized that the success of a leader requires more than just a few essential traits. Researchers now attest that while trait theory may still apply, individuals can and do emerge as leaders across a variety of situations and tasks. Research findings show that significant relationships exist between leadership and a number of individual traits, among them intelligence, adjustment, extroversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and general self-efficacy.

One prominent researcher in trait theory, Stephen Zaccaro, proposes a number of models that show the interplay of the environmental and personality characteristics that make a good leader. These models rest on two basic premises about leadership traits. First, leadership emerges from the combined influence of multiple traits, as opposed to coming from various independent traits. In other words, Zaccaro argues that effective leadership is derived from an integrated set of cognitive abilities, social capabilities, and personal tendencies, with each set of traits adding to the influence of the other. The second premise

suggests that leadership traits differ in their proximal(direct) influence on leadership. In this multistage model, certain distal or remote attributes (such as personal attributes, cognitive abilities, and motives/values) serve as precursors for the development of personal characteristics that more directly shape a leader.

Some of the inherent leadership traits in Zaccaro's model include extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, neuroticism, honesty/integrity, charisma, intelligence, creativity, achievement motivation, need for power, oral/written communication, interpersonal skills, general problem-solving, decision making, technical knowledge, and management skills. Although these characteristics may resemble a laundry list of traits, Zaccaro and many other researchers have shown that they are all predictors of a successful leader.

### **Trait leadership: Zaccaro's model (2004)**

**This diagram shows one contemporary theory of the essential traits of a leader. Zaccaro's theory emphasizes all of the attributes that make up the traits of a leader, including environmental, internal (personality), and cognitive abilities.**

## **Leadership Styles**

Leaders may adopt several styles according to what is most appropriate in a given situation.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Explain how different leadership styles may be adopted according to the demands of a given circumstance

### KEY POINTS

- There are five primary leadership styles: engaging, authoritative, laissez-faire, participative, and transformational. All five styles can be effectively used in the appropriate circumstances.
- An engaging style of leadership involves reaching out to employees and understanding their concerns and working situations.
- Under the autocratic leadership style, all decision-making powers are centralized in the leader. Leaders do not entertain any suggestions or initiatives from subordinates.
- A person using a laissez-faire style of leadership does not provide direction, instead leaving the group to fend for itself. Subordinates are given a free hand in deciding their own policies and methods.

- A participative or democratic style of leadership involves the leader's sharing decision-making authority with group members while also promoting the interests of group members and practicing social equality.
- Transformational leadership motivates and inspires people to change their behaviors in service of a greater good.

## TERM

- laissez-faire

French term literally meaning "let [them] do, "; it also broadly implies "let it be," "let them do as they will," or "leave it alone."

## Finding the Right Style of Leadership

A leader can take a number of different approaches to leading and managing an organization. A leader's style of providing direction, setting strategy, and motivating people is the result of his or her personality, values, training, and experience. For example, a leader with a laid-back personality may lead with a less formal style that encourages autonomy and creativity.

### Engaging Leadership

Engaging styles of leadership involve reaching out to employees and understanding their concerns and working situations. Dr. Stephen L. Cohen, the senior vice president for Right Management's Leadership Development Center of Excellence, describes the engaging leadership style as communicating relevant information to employees and involving them in important decisions. This leadership style can help retain employees for the long term.

## Engaging leadership

**The engaging style of leadership involves leaders reaching out to their constituents and being involved in their successes and struggles.**

### Autocratic/Authoritarian Leadership

Under the autocratic leadership style, decision-making power is centralized in the leader. Leaders do not entertain any suggestions or initiatives from subordinates. The autocratic management is effective for quick decision making but is generally not successful in fostering employee engagement or maintaining worker satisfaction.

### Laissez-faire/Free-Rein Leadership

A person may be in a leadership position without providing clear direction, leaving the group to choose its own path in achieving aims. Subordinates are given a free hand in deciding their own policies and methods. Laissez-faire is most effective when workers have the skills to work independently, are self-motivated, and will be held accountable for results.

#### Participative or Democratic Leadership

A participative or democratic style of leadership involves the leader's sharing decision-making authority with group members. This approach values the perspectives and interests of individual group members while also contributing to team cohesion. Participative leadership can help employees feel more invested in decision outcomes and more committed to the choices because they have a say in them.

#### Transformational Leadership

The transformational leadership style emphasizes motivation and morale to inspire followers to change their behavior in service of a greater good. The concept was initially introduced by James MacGregor Burns. According to Burns, transformational leadership is when "leaders and followers make each other advance to a higher level of morality and motivation." Researcher Bernard M. Bass used Burns's ideas to develop his own theory of transformational leadership. Bass clarified the definition to emphasize that transformational leadership is distinguished by the effect it has on followers.

#### When to Use Different Styles

Different situations call for particular leadership styles. Under intense time constraints, when there is little room to engage in long discussions that seek consensus, a more directive, top-down style may be appropriate. For a highly motivated and cohesive team with a homogeneous level of expertise, a democratic leadership style may be more effective. Similarly, a participative leadership style may be most appropriate for decisions that will require changes in behavior from a large group of people.

Each style of leadership can be effective if matched with the needs of the situation and used by a skilled leader who can adopt a deft approach. The most effective leaders are adept at several styles and able to choose the one most likely to help the organization achieve its objectives.

### Four Theories of Leadership

Theories of effective leadership include the trait, contingency, behavioral, and full-range theories.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Discuss differing theories and approaches to defining and understanding leadership

## KEY POINTS

- Modern trait theory proposes that individuals emerge as leaders across a variety of situations and tasks; significant individual leadership traits include intelligence, adjustment, extroversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, and general self-efficacy.
- Behavioral theory suggests that leadership requires a strong personality with a well-developed positive ego; self-confidence is essential.
- Contingency theory assumes that different situations call for different characteristics, and no single optimal psychological profile of a leader exists.
- According to full-range theory of leadership, four qualities are essential for leaders: individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence.

## TERM

- Contingency

Likely to happen in connection with or as a consequence of something else.

For a number of years, researchers have examined leadership to discover how successful leaders are created. Experts have proposed several theories, including the trait, behavioral, contingency, and full-range models of leadership.

### The Trait Theory of Leadership

The search for the characteristics or traits of effective leaders has been central to the study of leadership. Underlying this research is the assumption that leadership capabilities are rooted in characteristics possessed by individuals. Research in the field of trait theory has shown significant positive relationships between effective leadership and personality traits such as intelligence, extroversion, conscientiousness, self-efficacy, and openness to experience. These findings also show that individuals emerge as leaders across a variety of situations and tasks.

### The Contingency Theory of Leadership

Stogdill and Mann found that while some traits were common across a number of studies, the overall evidence suggested that persons who are leaders in one situation may not necessarily be leaders in other situations. According to this approach, called contingency

theory, no single psychological profile or set of enduring traits links directly to effective leadership. Instead, the interaction between those individual traits and the prevailing conditions is what creates effective leadership. In other words, contingency theory proposes that effective leadership is contingent on factors independent of an individual leader. As such, the theory predicts that effective leaders are those whose personal traits match the needs of the situation in which they find themselves. Fiedler's contingency model of leadership focuses on the interaction of leadership style and the situation (later called situational control). He identified three relevant aspects of the situation: the quality of the leader's relationships with others, how well structured their tasks were, and the leader's amount of formal authority.

### The Behavioral Theory of Leadership

In response to the early criticisms of the trait approach, theorists began to research leadership as a set of behaviors. They evaluated what successful leaders did, developed a taxonomy of actions, and identified broad patterns that indicated different leadership styles. Behavioral theory also incorporates B.F. Skinner's theory of behavior modification, which takes into account the effect of reward and punishment on changing behavior. An example of this theory in action is a manager or leader who motivates desired behavior by scolding employees who arrive late to meetings and showing appreciation when they are early or on time.

### **B.F. Skinner**

**The father of behavioral theory showed the connection between behaviors and reward and punishment. Today, management often incorporates his findings.**

### The Full-Range Theory of Leadership

The full-range theory of leadership is a component of transformational leadership, which enhances motivation and morale by connecting the employee's sense of identity to a project and the collective identity of the organization. The four major components of the theory, which cover the full range of essential qualities of a good leader, are:

- Individualized consideration: the degree to which the leader attends to each follower's concerns and needs and acts as a mentor or coach
- Intellectual stimulation: the degree to which the leader challenges assumptions, takes risks, and solicits followers' ideas
- Inspirational motivation: the degree to which the leader articulates a vision that is appealing and inspiring to followers

- Idealized influence: the degree to which the leader provides a role model for highethical behavior, instills pride, and gains respect and trust

## Julian Birkinshaw's "The M-word"

In this article, Julian Birkinshaw further defines management and leadership for us. Is the difference becoming clear to you? If not, jot a few questions that would help you clarify this important difference in your journal. Then, be on the lookout for answers to those questions in the remaining resources in this subunit.

## The M-word

When you ask children what they want to be when they are older, how many of them say they want to be a manager? I've certainly never met one who had such aspirations. In part this is because management is a pretty amorphous concept to a ten-year-old. But it's also because we adults aren't exactly singing the praises of the management profession either. For example, in a 2008 Gallup poll on honesty and ethics among workers in 21 different professions, a mere 12 percent of respondents felt business executives had high/very high integrity--an all-time low. With a 37 percent low/very low rating, the executives came in *behind* lawyers, union leaders, real estate agents, building contractors, and bankers.

Moreover, there are no positive role models out there either - the reason why Dilbert is the best-selling business book series of all time, and why Ricky Gervais' sitcom "The Office" was a big hit, is because they ring true. The Pointy-Haired Boss in Dilbert is a self-centered halfwit; David Brent is entirely lacking in self-awareness. If these are the figures that come into people's minds when the word "manager" is used, then we have a serious problem on our hands.

What should we do about this? Some observers would like us to get rid of the word manager altogether, favouring terms like leader, coach, and entrepreneur. But I believe a more useful approach is to *reinvent* management--to go back to first principles, and recapture the spirit of what management is all about. We need to help executives figure out the best way to manage, and we need to help employees to get the managers they deserve.

## Management versus leadership

Let's start with a definition: *Management is the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals and objectives.* There is a lot of stuff missing from this definition: no mention of planning, organization, staffing, controlling, or budgeting; no mention of companies or corporations; and absolutely nothing about hierarchy or bureaucracy. And that is precisely the point--management is a social endeavor, which simply involves getting people to come together to achieve goals that they could not achieve on their own. A soccer coach is a manager, as is an orchestra conductor and a Cub Scout leader.

But over the last century, the term management has metamorphosed into something narrower, and more pejorative, than Webster's Dictionary might suggest. Managers are often seen as low-level bureaucrats who are internally focused, absorbed in operational details, and controlling and coordinating the work of their subordinates.

Why has this change in meaning taken place? One reason is that our way of thinking and talking about management is based on the century-old form of management practiced in large industrial firms. This approach to management was all about improving efficiency, standardisation, and quality control, and it was built on such principles as hierarchy, bureaucracy, and extrinsic rewards. The trouble is, these objectives are not what drives success in most sectors today--we are much more likely to be concerned about innovation, agility, and engagement. And yet we are still for the most part using these industrial-era concepts to shape the way we get work done.

The other reason was that leadership, as a field of study, took off in the 1960s and has continued to rise since then. To make room for leadership, gurus felt compelled to diminish the role of management. For example, John Kotter saw managers as being the ones who plan, budget, organize, and control, while leaders set direction, manage change, and motivate people; and Warren Bennis viewed managers as those who promote efficiency, follow the rules, and accept the status quo, while leaders focus on challenging the rules and promoting effectiveness. By dichotomising the work of executives in this way, Kotter, Bennis, and others squeezed out the essence of what managers do and basically left them with the boring work that "leaders" don't want.

Here is my view on the management versus leadership debate. Leadership is a process of social influence: it is concerned with the traits, styles, and behaviors of individuals that causes others to follow them. Management is the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals. Or to put it really simply, we all need to be leaders *and* managers. We need to be able to influence others through our ideas, words, and actions. We also need to be able to get work done through others on a day-to-day basis.

## The Future of Management?

So what is the future of management? In the face of all these challenges, can management be reinvented to make it more effective as an agent of economic progress and more responsive to the needs of employees?

One school of thought says management cannot be reinvented. For example, Henry Mintzberg argues in his most recent book, *Managing*, that the nature of managerial work has not changed noticeably in the 40 years he has been studying it. Management is fundamentally about how individuals work together, and the basic laws of social interaction are not susceptible to dramatic change. Indeed, it is interesting to note that most of the major innovations in management--the industrialization of R&D, mass production, decentralization, brand management, discounted cash flow--occurred before 1930. If we extend this logic, we could conclude that the evolution of management has more or less run its course, that, to use Francis Fukuyama's famous expression, we've reached "the end of history" with regard to management progress.

But we haven't. Of course there is some validity in arguing that the basic laws of human behavior are not going to change. But the practice of management is enormously context-dependent, and as the nature of business organizations evolves, so too will management.

Another school of thought says we are on the cusp of inventing an entirely new model of management, largely because of changes made possible by the information technology revolution. For example, Tom Malone has argued that "We are in the early stages of another revolution... that promises to lead to a further transformation in our thinking about control. For the first time in history, technologies allow us to gain the economic benefits of large organizations, without giving up the human benefits of small ones. This revolution has begun."

The only trouble with this argument is that we have been here before. All the arguments around decentralization and empowerment have been debated for a very long time. Every generation of management writers, including such luminaries as Peter Drucker, Gary Hamel, Rosabeth Moss Kanter, and Sumantra Ghoshal, has argued for its own version of revolutionary change in the years ahead. And they cannot all be right.

Is there a third way here? Can we identify a useful way forward that avoids the extreme positions of these other two schools of thought? I believe there is. We don't need to throw up our hands and say management has gone as far as it can, because that would accept the failures of management as something we must just live with. And we don't need to create a whole new model of management--we have plenty of ideas from the world of theory and insights from the world of practice to guide us.

*We simply need to develop a more comprehensive understanding of what management is really about to make better choices.* By going back to a basic definition of management--the act of getting people together to accomplish desired goals--we can frame our discussion of the activities and principles of management much more explicitly. And armed with this new understanding, we can help managers make better choices within the universe of known possibilities, rather than suggest they invent something that has never been thought of before.

Here is an example. Why should we assume that all important decisions get made by the people at the top of the organizational hierarchy? Traditionally this was certainly the case, but is it possible that important decisions might be made in less-hierarchical or non-hierarchical ways? Yes it is. In fact, entire books have been written on the "wisdom of crowds" and "crowdsourcing" techniques for aggregating the views of large numbers of people to make better decisions. So it would be wrong to assume that all decisions made in the future will be made exclusively by those at the top of the hierarchy, and it would be equally wrong to assume that crowdsourcing will entirely replace traditional decision making structures.

The prosaic truth is that *it depends*--the right model depends on a host of contingencies, including the nature of the decision being made, the company's size and background, the interests and capabilities of the employees, and so on. *The right Management Model for your company is the one based on the most appropriate choices you make within known boundaries;* between for example the principle of hierarchy on one hand, and the wisdom of crowds on the other.

Your Management Model is simply the choices you make about how you work - the way you set objectives, motivate your employees, coordinate activities, and make decisions. Most companies have an implicit approach to defining their management model, by simply working with what

they have inherited, or what they have seen in other companies. My view is that you should take a more critical look at those implicit choices. Conceptually, this involves four steps:

1. **Understanding:** You need to be explicit about the management principles you are using to run your company. These principles are invisible, and often understood only at a subconscious level, but they drive the day-to-day processes and practices through which management work gets done.
2. **Evaluating:** You need to assess whether your company's management principles are suited to the business environment in which you are working. There are risks associated with whatever principles you employ, so you need to understand the pros and cons of each one so that you can choose wisely.
3. **Envisioning:** You need to seek out new ways of working, by looking at examples from different industries and from entirely new contexts.
4. **Experimenting:** You need to be prepared to try out these new practices in a low-risk way to see how they work.

Alas, there is no recipe book for reinventing management. While these steps suggest a process for evaluating and rethinking your management principles, there is only so much you can learn from the mistakes made by troubled companies or from the latest Dilbert cartoon. The right choices depend entirely on the specific circumstances and opportunities facing your company, and on your willingness to experiment with unproven practices.

# Gary Hamel's "Nine Ways to Identify Natural Leaders"

After reading, list at least five people who you would consider to be natural leaders based on Hamel's identifiers. Be sure to indicate why you believe these people to be natural leaders in your journal.

## Nine Ways to Identify Natural Leaders

The need to empower natural leaders isn't an HR pipedream, it's a competitive imperative. But before you can empower them, you have to find them.

In most companies, the formal hierarchy is a matter of public record—it's easy to discover who's in charge of what. By contrast, natural leaders don't appear on any organization chart. To hunt them down, you need to know . . .

Whose advice is sought most often on any particular topic? Who responds most promptly to requests from peers? Whose responses are judged most helpful? Who is most likely to reach across organizational boundaries to aid a colleague? Whose opinions are most valued, internally and externally? Who gets the most kudos from customers? Who's the most densely connected to other employees? Who's generating the most buzz outside the company? Who consistently demonstrates real thought leadership? Who seems truly critical to key decisions?

A lot of the data you need to answer these questions is lurking in the weeds of your company's email system, or can be found on the Web. Nevertheless, it will take some creative effort and software tweaks to ferret it out.

A few suggestions . . .

1. Establish a directory of key words corresponding to critical skills and competencies within your company, and then see who generates or receives the most emails on any particular topic.
2. Add a small box at the end of every incoming email that lets the recipient grade the sender's response: was it timely, was it helpful?
3. Analyze internal email flows to see which folks are most likely to respond positively to emails from colleagues in other divisions—who's collaborating across unit boundaries?
4. Create a system for ranking the frequency and value of each employee's contributions to internal wikis or communities of practice.

5. Encourage employees to write internal blogs, and to rank posts and comments.
6. Using key words, analyze company emails to see who's had the most to say about important corporate decisions, and to see how widely those views have been disseminated and discussed.
7. Identify emails relating to key projects and then identify the individuals who were the most critical "nodes" in the project team—the folks who seemed to be in the middle of every email exchange.
8. Review incoming emails from customers to determine who's getting the most requests for help, who's been most responsive and who's receiving the most praise. Or, give customers the ability to immediately score the email responses they get from company personnel.
9. Use Google Alert and news tracking to find out which employees are getting quoted most often online, and who's showing up most often in the press.

There are other types of data that might also be useful—but you get the idea.

Sure, there are some practical challenges in collecting and analyzing this sorts of data. But ultimately, it should be possible for a company to create a multivariate leadership score for every employee.

Obviously, the old top-down hierarchy isn't going to disappear any time soon. What would happen, though, if every employee had the chance to compete for leadership "points," whether or not they had a management job? What would happen if everyone's leadership score showed up in their online profile—so everyone knew how their colleagues ranked on expertise, helpfulness, collaboration and thought leadership? What would happen if anyone could attach a public comment to a colleague's leadership score? What about including highly rated "natural" leaders in every important decision meeting? And finally, what would happen if leadership points were considered in compensation and promotion decisions? I'm not sure, but I bet it would do more good than harm.

One thing's certain, though: we can't invent Management 2.0 without inventing some new ways for people to accumulate and exercise authority. In the tempestuous seas of today's creative economy, top-down leadership structures are fast becoming a liability. We need a new currency of power—one based not on titles, but on every individual's capacity to lead, every day. We need fewer zero-sum battles for plum positions, in which Machiavellian maneuvering wins the day, and more positive-sum competition to increase one's personal leadership score—by delivering real value to colleagues and customers. We need a system that forces titled leaders to justify their positional power by competing in an open market for leadership esteem. And finally, we need organizations that aren't built around a single,

dominant hierarchy, but are comprised of many soft hierarchies, each corresponding to a critical skill or issue.

A few years back, two of my colleagues at the London Business School posed a cheeky question in the title of their leadership book: "Why," they wondered, "should anyone be led by you?" If you reflect on this question every morning, *your* leadership score is bound to go up.

**So, readers, here are some questions to ponder: How would *you* find the natural leaders in your company? And once found, how would you help them expand their influence? Can you imagine other alternatives to traditional power structures? If so, what might they be?**

# *Boundless Business: "Chapter 8, Section 5: Characteristics of Good Managers: Styles of Leadership"*

Read this article. Do any of the listed leadership styles seem familiar to you? Maybe you have had a manager in the past who has used an authoritarian leadership style, or maybe another has taken a more laissez-faire approach. Record some observations about the managers you have had in prior jobs or in your current position. What leadership style do you prefer to work with? What leadership style do you aspire to? Record your thoughts in your journal.

## Styles of Leadership

A leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Recognize the differences between different leadership styles and attitudes

### KEY POINTS

- Leadership styles can be categorized as being authoritarian, democratic, laissez-faire, transactional, or narcissistic.
- Authoritarian leaders keep strict control over their subordinates and keep a distinct professional relationship with their followers.
- Leaders who embrace a democratic style of leadership guide and control and make key decisions when necessary, but otherwise share decision making with their followers, promote the interests of the group, and practice social equality.
- Laissez-faire leadership is a "hands off" approach.
- Narcissistic leadership is a common form of leadership and can be either healthy or destructive.
- Transactional leaders motivate their subordinates by using rewards and punishments.

### TERM

- narcissistic

Obsessed with one's own self-image and ego.

## EXAMPLE

- Examples of authoritarian communicative behavior include a police officer directing traffic, a teacher ordering a student to do his or her assignment, and a supervisor instructing a subordinate to clean a work station. All of these positions require a distinct set of characteristics that give the leader the position to get things in order or get a point across.

A leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people. There are many different leadership styles that can be exhibited by leaders in politics, business, or other fields .

### **Leadership**

**A leadership style is the manner and approach of providing direction, implementing plans, and motivating people.**

#### Authoritarian

An authoritarian or autocratic leader keeps strict, close control over followers by closely regulating the policies and procedures given to followers. To maintain emphasis on the distinction between authoritarian leaders and their followers, these types of leaders make sure to only create a distinct professional relationship. They believe direct supervision to be key in maintaining a successful environment and followership. Due to fear of followers being unproductive, authoritarian leaders keep close supervision and feel this is necessary in order for anything to be done.

#### Democratic

The democratic leadership style consists of the leader sharing the decision-making abilities with group members by promoting the interests of the group members and by practicing social equality. This style of leadership encompasses discussion, debate and sharing of ideas, and encouragement of people to feel good about their involvement. The boundaries of democratic participation tend to be circumscribed by the organization or group needs and the instrumental value of people's attributes (skills, attitudes, etc.). The democratic style encompasses the notion that everyone, by virtue of their human status, should play a part in the group's decisions. However, the democratic style of leadership still requires guidance and control by a specific leader. The democratic style demands the leader make decisions

on who should be called upon within the group and who is given the right to participate in, make, and vote on decisions.

### Laissez-Faire

The laissez-faire leadership style was first described by Lewin, Lippitt, and White in 1938, along with the autocratic leadership and the democratic leadership styles. The laissez-faire style is sometimes described as a "hands off" leadership style because the leader delegates the tasks to the followers while providing little or no direction. If the leader withdraws too much, it can sometimes result in a lack of productivity, cohesiveness, and satisfaction. Laissez-faire leaders allow followers to have complete freedom to make decisions concerning the completion of their work. It allows followers a high degree of autonomy and self-rule, while at the same time offering guidance and support when requested. The laissez-faire leader using guided freedom provides the followers with all materials necessary to accomplish their goals, but does not directly participate in decision making unless the followers request the leader's assistance. This is an effective style to use when:

- The followers are highly skilled, experienced, and educated;
- The followers have pride in their work and the drive to do it successfully on their own;
- Outside experts, such as staff specialists or consultants, are being used; and
- Followers are trustworthy and experienced.

This style should *not* be used when:

- Followers feel insecure at the unavailability of a leader.
- The leader cannot or will not provide regular feedback to their followers.

### Transactional

The transactional style of leadership was first described by Max Weber in 1947, and then later described by Bernard Bass in 1981. Mainly used by management, transactional leaders focus their leadership on motivating followers through a system of rewards and punishments. There are two factors which form the basis for this system: contingent reward and management by exception. Contingent reward provides rewards (materialistic or psychological) for effort and recognizes good performance. Management by exception allows the leader to maintain the status quo; the leader intervenes when subordinates do not meet acceptable performance levels and initiates corrective action to improve performance.

### Narcissistic

Narcissistic leadership is a common form of leadership. The narcissism may be healthy or destructive, although there is a continuum between the two. To critics, narcissistic leadership (especially destructive) is driven by unyielding arrogance, self-absorption, and a personal egotistic need for power and admiration. A study published in the journal, *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, suggests that when a group is without a leader, a narcissist often takes charge; researchers found that people who score high in narcissism tend to take control of leaderless groups. Freud considered "the narcissistic type... especially suited to act as a support for others, to take on the role of leaders and to... impress others as being 'personalities'."

# *Boundless Management: "Chapter 9, Section 5: Types of Leaders: Transactional Versus Transformational Leaders"*

Read this article. Have you ever worked with someone who might be considered a transformational leader? Reflect on the following question: What can transformational leaders accomplish with their teams that transactional leaders cannot?

## Transactional Versus Transformational Leaders

Transactional leaders are concerned about the status quo, while transformational leaders are more change-oriented.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Differentiate between transactional leaders and transformational leaders in a full-range approach, particularly from a behavioral perspective

### KEY POINTS

- Transactional leadership works within set established goals and organizational boundaries, while a transformational approach challenges the status quo and is more future-oriented.
- Transactional leadership emphasizes organization, performance evaluation and rewards, and is task- and outcome-oriented.
- Transformational leadership focuses on motivating and engaging followers with a vision of the future.

### TERM

- Buy-in

In management and decision making, the commitment of interested or affected parties (often called stakeholders) to agree to support a decision, often by having been involved in its formulation.

Leadership can be described as transactional or transformational. Transactional leaders focus on the role of supervision, organization, and group performance. They are concerned about the status quo and day-to-day progress toward goals. Transformational leaders work to enhance the motivation and engagement of followers by directing their

behavior toward a shared vision. While transactional leadership operates within existing boundaries of processes, structures, and goals, transformational leadership challenges the current state and is change-oriented.

### Transactional Leadership

Transactional leadership promotes compliance with existing organizational goals and performance expectations through supervision and the use of rewards and punishments. Transactional leaders are task- and outcome-oriented. Especially effective under strict time and resource constraints and in highly-specified projects, this approach adheres to the status quo and employs a form of management that pays close attention to how employees perform their tasks.

### Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership focuses on increasing employee motivation and engagement and attempts to link employees' sense of self with organizational values. This leadership style emphasizes leading by example, so followers can identify with the leader's vision and values. A transformational approach focuses on individual strengths and weaknesses of employees and on enhancing their capabilities and their commitment to organizational goals, often by seeking their buy-in for decisions.

### Comparing Leadership Types

Transactional and transformational leadership exhibit five key differences:

1. Transactional leadership reacts to problems as they arise, whereas transformational leadership is more likely to address issues before they become problematic.
2. Transactional leaders work within existing an organizational culture, while transformational leaders emphasize new ideas and thereby "transform" organizational culture.
3. Transactional leaders reward and punish in traditional ways according to organizational standards; transformational leaders attempt to achieve positive results from employees by keeping them invested in projects, leading to an internal, high-order reward system.
4. Transactional leaders appeal to the self-interest of employees who seek out rewards for themselves, in contrast to transformational leaders, who appeal to group interests and notions of organizational success.
5. Transactional leadership is more akin to the common notions of management, whereas transformational leadership adheres more closely to what is colloquially referred to as leadership.

# Chapter 13

## Power and Politics

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

1. Understand the meaning of power.
2. Recognize the positive and negative aspects of power and influence.
3. Recognize the sources of power.
4. Understand and recognize influence tactics and impression management.
5. Learn the definition of a social network and how to analyze your own network.
6. Understand the antecedents and consequences of organizational politics.
7. Understand how ethics affect power.
8. Understand cross-cultural influences on power use.

### Video Connection

If you are interested in learning more about Steve Jobs as he describes pivotal moments in his life, view Steve Jobs's commencement speech at Stanford in 2005, available at the following Web site: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UF8uR6Z6KLc>

## 13.1 Focus on Power: The Case of Steve Jobs

Figure 13.1



Source: [http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Steve Jobs with the Apple iPad no log o.jpg](http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Steve_Jobs_with_the_Apple_iPad_no_log_o.jpg) by Matt Buchanan.

In 2007, *Fortune* named Steve Jobs the “Most Powerful Person in Business.” In 2009, the magazine named him “CEO of the Decade.” Jobs, CEO of Apple Inc. (NASDAQ: AAPL), has transformed no fewer than five different industries: computers, Hollywood movies, music, retailing, and wireless phones. His Apple II ushered in the personal computer era in 1977, and the graphical interface of the Macintosh in 1984 set the standard that all other PCs emulated. His company Pixar defined the computer-animated feature film. The iPod, iTunes, and iPhone revolutionized how we listen to

music, how we pay for and receive all types of digital content, and what we expect of a mobile phone.

How has Jobs done it? Jobs draws on all six types of power: legitimate, expert, reward, information, coercive, and referent. His vision and sheer force of will helped him succeed as a young unknown. But the same determination that helps him succeed has a darker side—an autocracy and drive for perfection that can make him tyrannical. Let's take each of these in turn.

1. *Legitimate power.* As CEO of Apple, Jobs enjoys unquestioned legitimate power.
2. *Expert power.* His success has built a tremendous amount of expert power. Jobs is renowned for being able to think of markets and products for needs that people didn't even know they had.
3. *Reward power.* As one of the richest individuals in the United States, Jobs has reward power both within and outside Apple. He also can reward individuals with his time and attention.
4. *Information power.* Jobs has been able to leverage information in each industry he has transformed.
5. *Coercive power.* Forcefulness is helpful when tackling large, intractable problems, says Stanford social psychologist Roderick Kramer, who calls Jobs one of the "great intimidators." Robert Sutton notes that "the degree to which people in Silicon Valley are afraid of Jobs is unbelievable." Jobs is known to berate people to the point of tears.
6. *Referent power.* But at the same time, "He inspires astounding effort and creativity from his people." Employee Andy Herzfeld, the lead designer of the original Mac operating system, says Jobs imbues employees with a "messianic zeal" and can make them feel that they're working on the greatest product in the world.

Those who work with him say Jobs is very hard to please. However, they also say that this means that Apple employees work hard to win his approval. “He has the ability to pull the best out of people,” says Cordell Ratzlaff, who worked closely with Jobs on OS X for 18 months. “I learned a tremendous amount from him.” Jobs’s ability to persuade and influence has come to be called a “reality distortion field.” As Bud Tribble put it, “In his presence, reality is malleable. He can convince anyone of practically anything.” Hertzfeld describes his style as “a confounding mélange of a charismatic rhetorical style, an indomitable will, and an eagerness to bend any fact to fit the purpose at hand.” The influence works even when you’re aware of it, and it works even on “enemies”: “No other high-tech impresario could walk into the annual sales meeting of one of his fiercest rivals and get a standing ovation,” which is what Jobs got in 2002 from Intel Corporation (the ally of Apple archrival Microsoft in the partnership known as Wintel: Windows + Intel).

Jobs’s power is not infallible—he was ousted from his own company in 1987 by the man he hired to help him run it. But he returned in 1997 and brought the company back from the brink of failure. The only years that Apple was unprofitable were the years during Jobs’s absence. Many are watching to see how Apple and Jobs succeed with the iPad in 2010.

Case written by [citation redacted per publisher request]. Based on information from Schlender, B. (2007, November 27). The power of Steve Jobs. *Fortune*, 117–118; Sutton, R. (2007). *The no asshole rule*. New York: Warner Business Books; Kahney, L. (2008, March 18). How Apple got everything right by doing everything wrong. *Wired*. Retrieved January 4, 2008, from [http://www.wired.com/techbiz/it/magazine/16-04/bz\\_apple](http://www.wired.com/techbiz/it/magazine/16-04/bz_apple); Hertzfeld, A. (1981, February). Reality distortion field. Retrieved January 4, 2008, from [http://folklore.org/StoryView.py?story=Reality\\_Distortion\\_Field.txt](http://folklore.org/StoryView.py?story=Reality_Distortion_Field.txt).



## 13.2 The Basics of Power

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn the meaning of *power*.
2. Understand how power can have both positive and negative consequences.
3. Learn about different sources of power.
4. Understand the relationship between dependency and power.

### What Is Power?

We'll look at the aspects and nuances of power in more detail in this chapter, but simply put, power is the ability to influence the behavior of others to get what you want. Gerald Salancik and Jeffery Pfeffer concur, noting, "Power is simply the ability to get things done the way one wants them to be done." Salancik, G., & Pfeffer, J. (1989). Who gets power. In M. Thushman, C. O'Reilly, & D. Nadler (Eds.), *Management of organizations*. New York: Harper & Row. If you want a larger budget to open a new store in a large city and you get the budget increase, you have used your power to influence the decision.

Power distribution is usually visible within organizations. For example, Salancik and Pfeffer gathered information from a company with 21 department managers and asked 10 of those department heads to rank all the managers according to the influence each person had in the organization. Although ranking 21 managers might seem like a difficult task, all the managers were immediately able to create that list. When Salancik and Pfeffer compared the rankings, they found virtually no disagreement in how the top 5 and bottom 5 managers were ranked. The only slight differences came from individuals ranking themselves higher than their colleagues ranked them. The same findings held true for factories, banks, and universities.

### Positive and Negative Consequences of Power

The fact that we can see and succumb to power means that power has both positive and negative consequences. On one hand, powerful CEOs can align an entire organization to move together to achieve goals. Amazing philanthropists such as Paul Farmer, a doctor who brought hospitals, medicine, and doctors to remote Haiti, and Greg Mortenson, a mountaineer who founded the Central Asia Institute and built schools across Pakistan, draw on their own power to organize others toward lofty goals; they have changed the lives of thousands of individuals in countries around the world for the better. Kidder, T. (2004). *Mountains beyond mountains: The quest of Dr. Paul Farmer, a man who would cure the world*. New York: Random House; Mortenson, G., & Relin, D. O. (2006). *Three cups of tea: One man's mission to promote peace...One school at a time*. New York: Viking. On the other hand, autocracy can destroy companies and countries alike. The phrase, "Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely" was first said by English historian John Emerich Edward Dalberg, who warned that power was inherently evil and its holders were not to be trusted. History shows that power can be intoxicating and can be devastating when abused, as seen in high-profile cases such as those involving Enron Corporation and government leaders such as the impeached Illinois Governor Rod Blagojevich in 2009. One reason that power can be so easily abused is because individuals are often quick to conform. To understand this relationship better, we will examine three famous researchers who studied conformity in a variety of contexts.

## **Conformity**

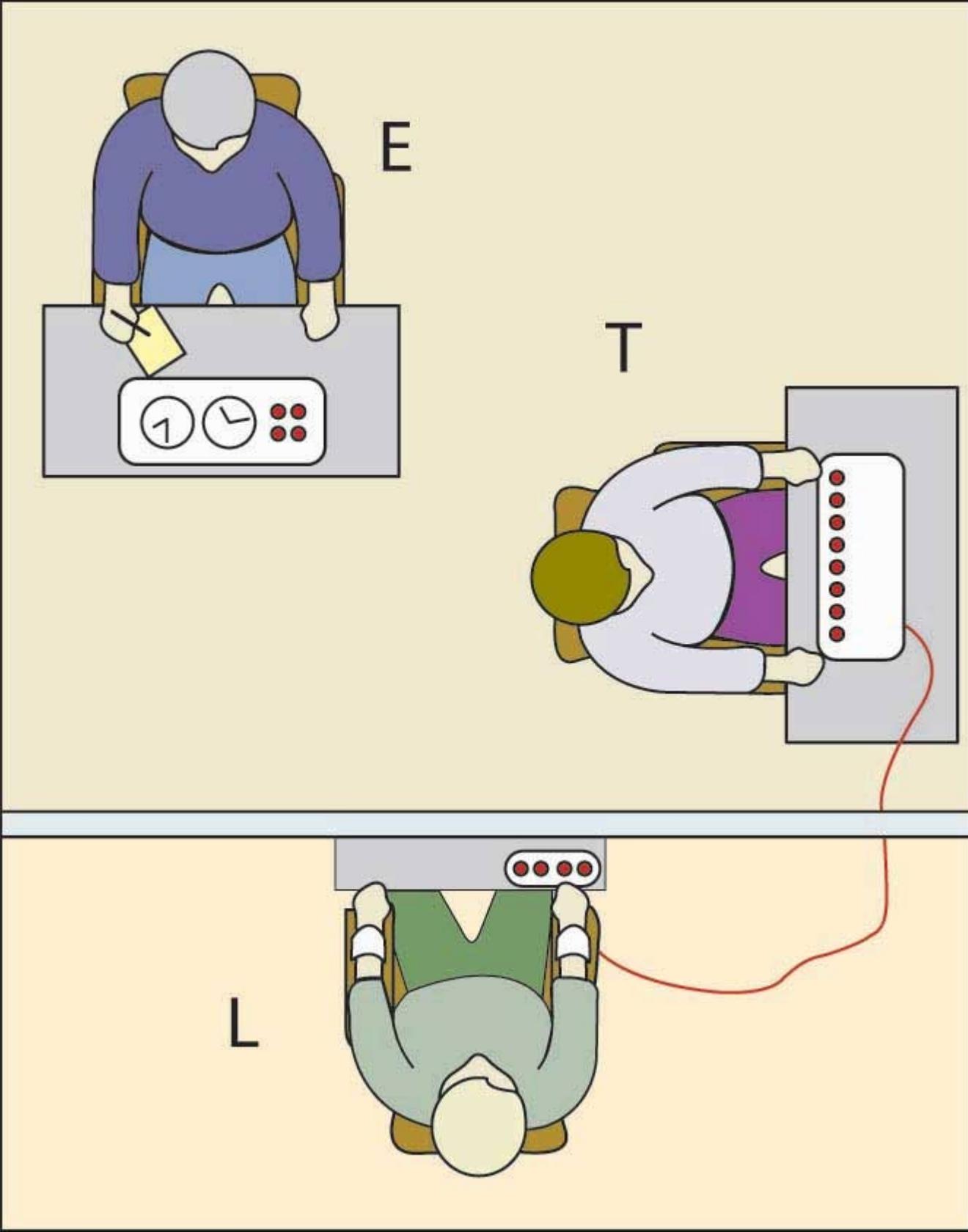
Conformity refers to people's tendencies to behave consistently with social norms. Conformity can refer to small things such as how people tend to face forward in an elevator. There's no rule listed in the elevator saying which way to face, yet it is expected that everyone will face forward. To test this, the next time you're in an elevator with strangers, simply stand facing the back of the elevator without saying anything. You may notice that those around you become uncomfortable. Conformity can result in engaging in unethical behaviors, because you are led by someone you admire and respect who has

power over you. Guards at Abu Ghraib said they were just following orders when they tortured prisoners.CNN.com. (2005, January 15). Graner sentenced to 10 years for abuses. Retrieved November 4, 2008, from <http://www.cnn.com/2005/LAW/01/15/graner.court.martial/>. People conform because they want to fit in with and please those around them. There is also a tendency to look to others in ambiguous situations, which can lead to conformity. The response to “Why did you do that?” being “Because everyone else was doing it” sums up this tendency.

So, does conformity occur only in rare or extreme circumstances? Actually, this is not the case. Three classic sets of studies illustrate how important it is to create checks and balances to help individuals resist the tendency to conform or to abuse authority. To illustrate this, we will examine findings from the Milgram, Asch, and Zimbardo studies.

### **The Milgram Studies**

*Figure 13.2*



*This is an illustration of the setup of a Milgram experiment. The experimenter (E) convinces the subject ("Teacher" T) to give what are believed to be painful electric shocks to another subject, who is actually an actor ("Learner" L). Many subjects continued to give shocks despite pleas of mercy from the actors.*

*Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Milgram\\_Experiment\\_v2.png](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Milgram_Experiment_v2.png).*

Stanley Milgram, a psychologist at Yale in the 1960s, set out to study conformity to authority. His work tested how far individuals would go in hurting another individual when told to do so by a researcher. A key factor in the Milgram study and others that will be discussed is the use of confederates, or people who seem to be participants but are actually paid by the researchers to take on a certain role. Participants believed that they were engaged in an experiment on learning. The participant (teacher) would ask a series of questions to another "participant" (learner). The teachers were instructed to shock the learners whenever an incorrect answer was given. The learner was not a participant at all but actually a confederate who would pretend to be hurt by the shocks and yell out in pain when the button was pushed. Starting at 15 volts of power, the participants were asked to increase the intensity of the shocks over time. Some expressed concern when the voltage was at 135 volts, but few stopped once they were told by the researcher that they would not personally be held responsible for the outcome of the experiment and that their help was needed to complete the experiment. In the end, all the participants were willing to go up to 300 volts, and a shocking 65% were willing to administer the maximum of 450 volts even as they heard screams of pain from the learner. Milgram, S. (1974). *Obedience to authority*. New York: Harper & Row.

## **The Asch Studies**

Another researcher, Solomon Asch, found that individuals could be influenced to say that two lines were the same length when one was clearly shorter than the other. This effect was established using groups of four or more participants who were told they were

in experiments of visual perception. However, only one person in the group was actually in the experiment. The rest were confederates, and the researchers had predetermined whether or not they gave accurate answers. Groups were shown a focal line and a choice of three other lines of varying length, with one being the same length as the focal line. Most of the time the confederates would correctly state which choice matched the focal line, but occasionally they would give an obviously wrong answer. For example, looking at the following lines, the confederates might say that choice C matches the length of the focal line. When this happened, the actual research participant would go along with the wrong answer 37% of the time. When asked why they went along with the group, participants said they assumed that the rest of the group, for whatever reason, had more information regarding the correct choice. It only took three other individuals saying the wrong answer for the participant to routinely agree with the group. However, this effect was decreased by 75% if just one of the insiders gave the correct answer, even if the rest of the group gave the incorrect answer. This finding illustrates the power that even a small dissenting minority can have. Additionally, it holds even if the dissenting confederate gives a different incorrect answer. As long as one confederate gave an answer that was different from the majority, participants were more likely to give the correct answer themselves. Asch, S. E. (1952b). *Social psychology*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall; Asch, S. E. (1956). Studies of independence and conformity. A minority of one against a unanimous majority. *Psychological Monographs*, 70(9), Whole No. 416. A meta-analysis of 133 studies using Asch's research design revealed two interesting patterns. First, within the United States, the level of conformity has been decreasing since the 1950s. Second, studies done in collectivistic countries such as Japan showed more conformity than those done in more individualistic countries such as Great Britain. Bond, R., & Smith, P. B. (1996). Culture and conformity: A meta-analysis of studies using Asch's (1952b, 1956) line judgment task. *Psychological Bulletin*, 119, 111–137.

*Figure 13.3*



*Participants were asked one by one to say which of the lines on the right matched the line on the focal line on the left. While A is an exact match, many participants conformed when others unanimously chose B or C.*

### **The Zimbardo Study**

Philip Zimbardo, a researcher at Stanford University, conducted a famous experiment in the 1970s. Zimbardo, P. G. Stanford prison experiment. Retrieved January 30, 2009, from <http://www.prisonexp.org/>. While this experiment would probably not make it past the human subjects committee of schools today, at the time, he was authorized to place an ad in the paper that asked for male volunteers to help understand prison management. After excluding any volunteers with psychological or medical problems or with any history of crime or drug abuse, he identified 24 volunteers to participate in his study. Researchers randomly assigned 18 individuals to the role of prisoner or guard. Those assigned the role of "prisoners" were surprised when they were picked up by actual police officers and then transferred to a prison that had been created in the basement of the Stanford psychology building. The guards in the experiment were told to keep order but received no training. Zimbardo was shocked with how quickly the expected roles emerged. Prisoners began to feel depressed and helpless. Guards began to be aggressive and abusive. The original experiment was scheduled to last 2 weeks, but Zimbardo ended it after only 6 days upon seeing how deeply entrenched in their roles

everyone, including himself, had become. Next we will examine the relationship between dependency and power.

## **The Relationship Between Dependency and Power**

### **Dependency**

Dependency is directly related to power. The more that a person or unit is dependent on you, the more power you have. The strategic contingencies model provides a good description of how dependency works. According to the model, dependency is power that a person or unit gains from their ability to handle actual or potential problems facing the organization. Saunders, C. (1990, January). The strategic contingencies theory of power: Multiple perspectives. *Journal of Management Studies*, 21(1), 1–18. You know how dependent you are on someone when you answer three key questions that are addressed in the following sections.

### **Scarcity**

In the context of dependency, scarcity refers to the uniqueness of a resource. The more difficult something is to obtain, the more valuable it tends to be. Effective persuaders exploit this reality by making an opportunity or offer seem more attractive because it is limited or exclusive. They might convince you to take on a project because “it’s rare to get a chance to work on a new project like this,” or “You have to sign on today because if you don’t, I have to offer it to someone else.”

### **Importance**

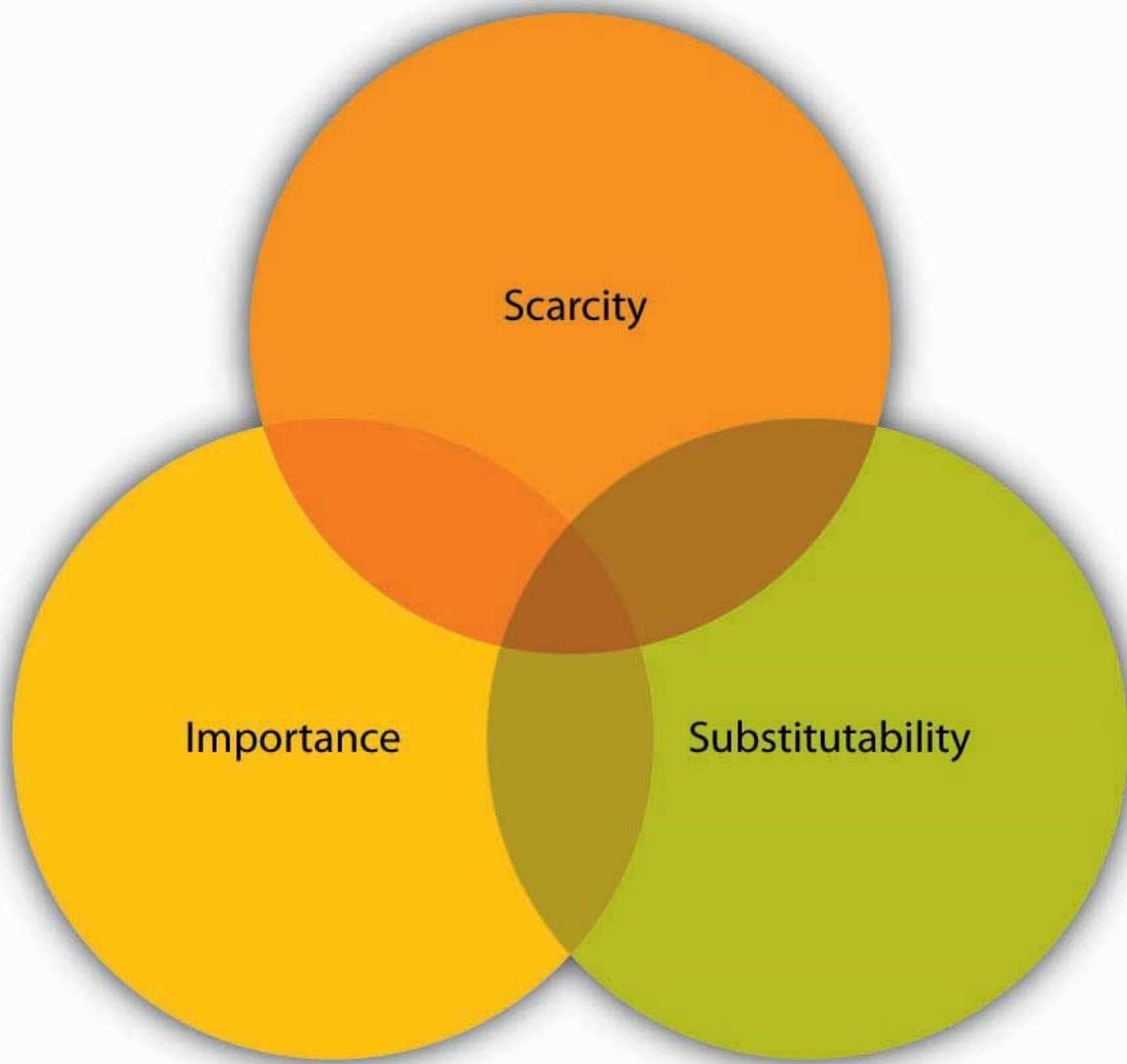
Importance refers to the value of the resource. The key question here is “How important is this?” If the resources or skills you control are vital to the organization, you will gain some power. The more vital the resources that you control are, the more power you will have. For example, if Kecia is the only person who knows how to fill out reimbursement

forms, it is important that you are able to work with her, because getting paid back for business trips and expenses is important to most of us.

## **Substitutability**

Finally, substitutability refers to one's ability to find another option that works as well as the one offered. The question around whether something is substitutable is "How difficult would it be for me to find another way to this?" The harder it is to find a substitute, the more dependent the person becomes and the more power someone else has over them. If you are the only person who knows how to make a piece of equipment work, you will be very powerful in the organization. This is true unless another piece of equipment is brought in to serve the same function. At that point, your power would diminish. Similarly, countries with large supplies of crude oil have traditionally had power to the extent that other countries need oil to function. As the price of oil climbs, alternative energy sources such as wind, solar, and hydropower become more attractive to investors and governments. For example, in response to soaring fuel costs and environmental concerns, in 2009 Japan Airlines successfully tested a blend of aircraft fuel made from a mix of camelina, jatropha, and algae on the engine of a Boeing 747-300 aircraft. Krauss, C. (2009, January 30). Japan Airlines joins the biofuels race. *New York Times*. Retrieved January 30, 2009, from <http://greeninc.blogs.nytimes.com/2009/01/30/japan-airlines-joins-the-biofuels-race/>.

*Figure 13.4*



*Possessing any of the three aspects of a resource could make others depend on you, two would make you extremely needed, and having all three could make you indispensable.*

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Power is the ability to influence the behavior of others to get what you want. It is often visible to others within organizations. Conformity manifests itself in several ways, and research shows that individuals will defer to a group even when they may know that what they are doing is inaccurate or unethical. Having just one person dissent helps to buffer this effect. The more dependent someone is on you, the more power you have

over them. Dependency is increased when you possess something that is considered scarce, important, and nonsubstitutable by others.

## 13.3 The Power to Influence

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Identify the five sources of power.
2. Understand influence tactics.
3. Learn about impression management.
4. Examine the impact of the direction of influence attempts.

### Bases of Power

Having power and using power are two different things. For example, imagine a manager who has the power to reward or punish employees. When the manager makes a request, he or she will probably be obeyed even though the manager does not actually reward the employee. The fact that the manager has the ability to give rewards and punishments will be enough for employees to follow the request. What are the sources of one's power over others? Researchers identified six sources of power, which include legitimate, reward, coercive, expert, information, and referent. French, J. P. R., Jr., & Raven, B. (1960). The bases of social power. In D. Cartwright & A. Zander (Eds.), *Group dynamics* (pp. 607–623). New York: Harper and Row. You might earn power from one source or all six depending on the situation. Let us take a look at each of these in turn, and continue with Steve Jobs from the opening case as our example.

### Legitimate Power

Legitimate power is power that comes from one's organizational role or position. For example, a boss can assign projects, a policeman can arrest a citizen, and a teacher assigns grades. Others comply with the requests these individuals make because they

accept the legitimacy of the position, whether they like or agree with the request or not. Steve Jobs has enjoyed legitimate power as the CEO of Apple. He could set deadlines and employees comply even if they think the deadlines were overly ambitious. Start-up organizations often have founders who use their legitimate power to influence individuals to work long hours week after week in order to help the company survive.

### **Reward Power**

Reward power is the ability to grant a reward, such as an increase in pay, a perk, or an attractive job assignment. Reward power tends to accompany legitimate power and is highest when the reward is scarce. Anyone can wield reward power, however, in the form of public praise or giving someone something in exchange for their compliance. When Steve Jobs ran Apple, he had reward power in the form of raises and promotions. Another example of reward power comes from Bill Gross, founder of Idealab, who has the power to launch new companies or not. He created his company with the idea of launching other new companies as soon as they could develop viable ideas. If members could convince him that their ideas were viable, he gave the company a maximum of \$250,000 in seed money, and gave the management team and employees a 30% stake in the company and the CEO 10% of the company. That way, everyone had a stake in the company. The CEO's salary was capped at \$75,000 to maintain the sense of equity. When one of the companies, Citysearch, went public, all employees benefited from the \$270 million valuation.

### **Coercive Power**

In contrast, coercive power is the ability to take something away or punish someone for noncompliance. Coercive power often works through fear, and it forces people to do something that ordinarily they would not choose to do. The most extreme example of coercion is government dictators who threaten physical harm for noncompliance. Parents may also use coercion such as grounding their child as punishment for

noncompliance. Steve Jobs has been known to use coercion—yelling at employees and threatening to fire them. When John Wiley & Sons Inc. published an unauthorized biography of Jobs, Jobs’s response was to prohibit sales of all books from that publisher in any Apple retail store. Hafner, K. (2005, April 30). Steve Jobs’ review of his biography: Ban it. *New York Times*. Retrieved January 5, 2008, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2005/04/30/technology/30apple.html?ei=5090&en=7ccoad54117bc197&ex=1272513600&partner=rssuserland&emc=rss>. In other examples, John D. Rockefeller was ruthless when running Standard Oil Company. He not only undercut his competitors through pricing, but he used his coercive power to get railroads to refuse to transport his competitor’s products. American presidents have been known to use coercion power. President Lyndon Baines Johnson once told a White House staffer, “Just you remember this. There’s only two kinds at the White house. There’s elephants and there’s ants. And I’m the only elephant.” Hughes, R., Ginnet, R., & Curphy, G. (1995). Power, influence and influence tactics. In J. T. Wren (Ed.), *The leaders companion* (p. 345). New York: Free Press.

### **Expert Power**

Expert power comes from knowledge and skill. Steve Jobs has expert power from his ability to know what customers want—even before they can articulate it. Others who have expert power in an organization include long-time employees, such as a steelworker who knows the temperature combinations and length of time to get the best yields. Technology companies are often characterized by expert, rather than legitimate power. Many of these firms utilize a flat or matrix structure in which clear lines of legitimate power become blurred as everyone communicates with everyone else regardless of position.

### **Information Power**

Information power is similar to expert power but differs in its source. Experts tend to have a vast amount of knowledge or skill, whereas information power is distinguished by *access* to specific information. For example, knowing price information gives a person information power during negotiations. Within organizations, a person's social network can either isolate them from information power or serve to create it. As we will see later in this chapter, those who are able to span boundaries and serve to connect different parts of the organizations often have a great deal of information power. In the TV show *Mad Men*, which is set in the 1960s, it is clear that the switchboard operators have a great deal of information power as they place all calls and are able to listen in on all the phone conversations within the advertising firm.

## Referent Power

*Figure 13.6*



*As the 44th elected president of the United States, Barack Obama has legitimate power. As commander-in-chief of the U.S. Armed Forces, he also has coercive power. His ability to appoint individuals to cabinet positions affords him reward power. Individuals differ on the degree to which they feel he has expert and referent power, as he received 52% of the popular*

*vote in the 2008 election. Shortly after the election, he began to be briefed on national security issues, providing him with substantial information power as well.*

*Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:ObamaSouthCarolina.jpg>.*

Referent power stems from the personal characteristics of the person such as the degree to which we like, respect, and want to be like them. Referent power is often called charisma—the ability to attract others, win their admiration, and hold them spellbound. Steve Jobs’s influence as described in the opening case is an example of this charisma.

## **What Is Influence?**

Starting at infancy, we all try to get others to do what we want. We learn early what works in getting us to our goals. Instead of crying and throwing a tantrum, we may figure out that smiling and using language causes everyone less stress and brings us the rewards we seek.

By the time you hit the workplace, you have had vast experience with influence techniques. You have probably picked out a few that you use most often. To be effective in a wide number of situations, however, it’s best to expand your repertoire of skills and become competent in several techniques, knowing how and when to use them as well as understanding when they are being used on you. If you watch someone who is good at influencing others, you will most probably observe that person switching tactics depending on the context. The more tactics you have at your disposal, the more likely it is that you will achieve your influence goals.

Al Gore and many others have spent years trying to influence us to think about the changes in the environment and the implications of global warming. They speak, write, network, and lobby to get others to pay attention. But Gore, for example, does not stop there. He also works to persuade us with direct, action-based suggestions such as asking

everyone to switch the kind of light bulbs they use, turn off appliances when not in use, drive vehicles with better fuel economy, and even take shorter showers. Ironically, Gore has more influence now as a private citizen regarding these issues than he was able to exert as a congressman, senator, and vice president of the United States.

## **OB Toolbox: Self-Assessment**

Do You Have the Characteristics of Powerful Influencers?

People who are considered to be skilled influencers share the following attributes.

How often do you engage in them? 0 = never, 1= sometimes, 2 = always.

- present information that can be checked for accuracy
- provide a consistent message that does not change from situation to situation
- display authority and enthusiasm (often described as charisma)
- offer something in return for compliance
- act likable
- show empathy through listening
- show you are aware of circumstances, others, and yourself
- plan ahead

If you scored 0–6: You do not engage in much effective influencing behavior. Think of ways to enhance this skill. A great place to start is to recognize the items on the list above and think about ways to enhance them for yourself.

If you scored 7–12: You engage in some influencing behavior. Consider the context of each of these influence attempts to see if you should be using more or less of it depending on your overall goals.

If you scored 13–16: You have a great deal of influence potential. Be careful that you are not manipulating others and that you are using your influence when it is important rather than just to get your own way.

## Commonly Used Influence Tactics

*Figure 13.7 Influence Tactics Use and Outcomes* Kipnis, D., Schmidt, S. M., & Wilkinson, J. (1980). *Interorganizational influence tactics: Explorations in getting one's way. Journal of Applied Psychology, 65, 440–452*; Schriesheim, C. A., & Hinkin, T. R. (1990). *Influence tactics used by subordinates: A theoretical and empirical analysis and refinement of Kipnis, Schmidt, and Wilkinson subscales. Journal of Applied Psychology, 75, 132–140*; Yukl, G., & Falbe, C. M. (1991). *The Importance of different power sources in downward and lateral relations. Journal of Applied Psychology, 76, 416–423.*

	Frequency of Use	Resistance	Compliance	Commitment
Rational persuasion	54%	47%	30%	23%
Legitimizing	13%	44%	56%	0%
Personal appeals	7%	25%	33%	42%
Exchange	7%	24%	41%	35%
Ingratiation	6%	41%	28%	31%
Pressure	6%	56%	41%	3%
Coalitions	3%	53%	44%	3%
Inspirational appeals	2%	0%	10%	90%
Consultation	2%	18%	27%	55%

*Source: Adapted from information in Falbe, C. M., & Yukl, G. (1992). Consequences for managers of using single influence tactics and combinations of tactics. Academy of Management Journal, 35, 638–652.*

Researchers have identified distinct influence tactics and discovered that there are few differences between the way bosses, subordinates, and peers use them, which we will discuss at greater depth later on in this chapter. We will focus on nine influence tactics. Responses to influence attempts include resistance, compliance, or commitment. Resistance occurs when the influence target does not wish to comply with the request and either passively or actively repels the influence attempt. Compliance occurs when the target does not necessarily want to obey, but they do. Commitment occurs when the target not only agrees to the request but also actively supports it as well. Within organizations, commitment helps to get things done, because others can help to keep initiatives alive long after compliant changes have been made or resistance has been overcome.

1. Rational persuasion includes using facts, data, and logical arguments to try to convince others that your point of view is the best alternative. This is the most commonly applied influence tactic. One experiment illustrates the power of reason. People were lined up at a copy machine and another person, after joining the line asked, “May I go to the head of the line?” Amazingly, 63% of the people in the line agreed to let the requester jump ahead. When the line jumper makes a slight change in the request by asking, “May I go to the head of the line because I have copies to make?” the number of people who agreed jumped to over 90%. The word *because* was the only difference. Effective rational persuasion includes the presentation of factual information that is clear and specific, relevant, and timely. Across studies summarized in a meta-analysis, rationality was related to positive work outcomes. Higgins, C. A., Judge, T. A., & Ferris, G. R. (2003). Influence tactics and work outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 24, 89–106.
2. Inspirational appeals seek to tap into our values, emotions, and beliefs to gain support for a request or course of action. When President John F. Kennedy said, “Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your

country,” he appealed to the higher selves of an entire nation. Effective inspirational appeals are authentic, personal, big-thinking, and enthusiastic.

3. Consultation refers to the influence agent’s asking others for help in directly influencing or planning to influence another person or group. Consultation is most effective in organizations and cultures that value democratic decision making.
4. Ingratiation refers to different forms of making others feel good about themselves. Ingratiation includes any form of flattery done either before or during the influence attempt. Research shows that ingratiation can affect individuals. For example, in a study of résumés, those résumés that were accompanied with a cover letter containing ingratiating information were rated higher than résumés without this information. Other than the cover letter accompanying them, the résumés were identical. Varma, A., Toh, S. M., & Pichler, S. (2006). Ingratiation in job applications: Impact on selection decisions. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 21, 200–210. Effective ingratiation is honest, infrequent, and well intended.
5. Personal appeal refers to helping another person because you like them and they asked for your help. We enjoy saying yes to people we know and like. A famous psychological experiment showed that in dorms, the most well-liked people were those who lived by the stairwell—they were the most often seen by others who entered and left the hallway. The repeated contact brought a level of familiarity and comfort. Therefore, personal appeals are most effective with people who know and like you.
6. Exchange refers to give-and-take in which someone does something for you, and you do something for them in return. The rule of reciprocation says that “we should try to repay, in kind, what another person has provided us.” Cialdini, R. (2000). *Influence: Science and practice*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon, p. 20. The application of the rule obliges us and makes us indebted to the giver. One experiment illustrates how a small initial gift can open people to a substantially

larger request at a later time. One group of subjects was given a bottle of Coke. Later, all subjects were asked to buy raffle tickets. On the average, people who had been given the drink bought twice as many raffle tickets as those who had not been given the unsolicited drinks.

7. Coalition tactics refer to a group of individuals working together toward a common goal to influence others. Common examples of coalitions within organizations are unions that may threaten to strike if their demands are not met. Coalitions also take advantage of peer pressure. The influencer tries to build a case by bringing in the unseen as allies to convince someone to think, feel, or do something. A well-known psychology experiment draws upon this tactic. The experimenters stare at the top of a building in the middle of a busy street. Within moments, people who were walking by in a hurry stop and also look at the top of the building, trying to figure out what the others are looking at. When the experimenters leave, the pattern continues, often for hours. This tactic is also extremely popular among advertisers and businesses that use client lists to promote their goods and services. The fact that a client bought from the company is a silent testimonial.
8. Pressure refers to exerting undue influence on someone to do what you want or else something undesirable will occur. This often includes threats and frequent interactions until the target agrees. Research shows that managers with low referent power tend to use pressure tactics more frequently than those with higher referent power. Yukl, G., Kim, H., & Falbe, C. M. (1996). Antecedents of influence outcomes. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 81*, 309–317. Pressure tactics are most effective when used in a crisis situation and when they come from someone who has the other's best interests in mind, such as getting an employee to an employee assistance program to deal with a substance abuse problem.
9. Legitimizing tactics occur when the appeal is based on legitimate or position power. "By the power vested in me...": This tactic relies upon compliance with

rules, laws, and regulations. It is not intended to motivate people but to align them behind a direction. Obedience to authority is filled with both positive and negative images. Position, title, knowledge, experience, and demeanor grant authority, and it is easy to see how it can be abused. If someone hides behind people's rightful authority to assert themselves, it can seem heavy-handed and without choice. You must come across as an authority figure by the way you act, speak, and look. Think about the number of commercials with doctors, lawyers, and other professionals who look and sound the part, even if they are actors. People want to be convinced that the person is an authority worth heeding. Authority is often used as a last resort. If it does not work, you will not have much else to draw from in your goal to persuade someone.

## From the Best-Seller's List: Making OB Connections

*You can make more friends in two months by becoming interested in other people than you can in two years by trying to get other people interested in you.*

*Dale Carnegie*

*Figure 13.8*



Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Picturecarnegie.jpg>.

*How to Make Friends and Influence People* was written by Dale Carnegie in 1936 and has sold millions of copies worldwide. While this book first appeared over 70 years ago,

the recommendations still make a great deal of sense regarding power and influence in modern-day organizations. For example, he recommends that in order to get others to like you, you should remember six things:

1. Become genuinely interested in other people.
2. Smile.
3. Remember that a person's name is to that person the sweetest and most important sound in any language.
4. Be a good listener. Encourage others to talk about themselves.
5. Talk in terms of the other person's interests.
6. Make the other person feel important—and do it sincerely.

This book relates to power and politics in a number of important ways. Carnegie specifically deals with enhancing referent power. Referent power grows if others like, respect, and admire you. Referent power is more effective than formal power bases and is positively related to employees' satisfaction with supervision, organizational commitment, and performance. One of the keys to these recommendations is to engage in them in a genuine manner. This can be the difference between being seen as political versus understanding politics.

## **Impression Management**

Impression management means actively shaping the way you are perceived by others. You can do this through your choice of clothing, the avatars or photos you use to represent yourself online, the descriptions of yourself on a résumé or in an online profile, and so forth. By using impression management strategies, you control information that make others see you in the way you want to be seen. Consider when you are “being yourself” with your friends or with your family—you probably act differently around your best friend than around your mother. Dunn, E., & Forrin, N.

(2005). *Impression management*. Retrieved July 8, 2008, from [http://www.psych.ubc.ca/~dunnlab/publications/Dunn\\_Forrin\\_2005.pdf](http://www.psych.ubc.ca/~dunnlab/publications/Dunn_Forrin_2005.pdf).

On the job, the most effective approach to impression management is to do two things at once—build credibility and maintain authenticity. As Harvard Business School Professor Laura Morgan Roberts puts it, “When you present yourself in a manner that is both true to self and valued and believed by others, impression management can yield a host of favorable outcomes for you, your team, and your organization.” Stark, M. (2005, June 20). Creating a positive professional image. Q&A with Laura Morgan Roberts. Retrieved July 8, 2008, from the Harvard Business School Web site: <http://hbswk.hbs.edu/item/4860.html>.

There may be aspects of your “true self” that you choose not to disclose at work, although you would disclose them to your close friends. That kind of impression management may help to achieve group cohesiveness and meet professional expectations. But if you try to win social approval at work by being too different from your true self—contradicting your personal values—you might feel psychological distress.

It’s important to keep in mind that whether you’re actively managing your professional image or not, your coworkers are forming impressions of you. They watch your behavior and draw conclusions about the kind of person you are, whether you’ll keep your word, whether you’ll stay to finish a task, and how you’ll react in a difficult situation.

Since people are forming these theories about you no matter what, you should take charge of managing their impressions of you. To do this, ask yourself how you want to be seen. What qualities or character traits do you want to convey? Perhaps it’s a can-do attitude, an ability to mediate, an ability to make a decision, or an ability to dig into details to thoroughly understand and solve a problem.

Then, ask yourself what the professional expectations are of you and what aspects of your social identity you want to emphasize or minimize in your interactions with others. If you want to be seen as a leader, you might disclose how you organized an event. If you want to be seen as a caring person in whom people can confide, you might disclose that you're a volunteer on a crisis helpline. You can use a variety of impression management strategies to accomplish the outcomes you want.

Here are the three main categories of strategies and examples of each:

- Nonverbal impression management includes the clothes you choose to wear and your demeanor. An example of a nonverbal signal is body art, including piercings and tattoos. While the number of people in the United States who have body art has risen from 1% in 1976 to 24% in 2006, it can hold you back at work. Vault.com did a survey and found that 58% of the managers they surveyed said they would be less likely to hire someone with visible body art, and over 75% of respondents felt body art was unprofessional. Given these numbers, it should not be surprising that 67% of employees say they conceal body art while they are at work. Society for Industrial and Organizational Psychology Inc. (SIOP). (2008, February 6). Body art on the rise but not so trendy at work. Retrieved February 8, 2008, from the SIOP Web site: <http://www.siop.org>.
- Verbal impression management includes your tone of voice, rate of speech, what you choose to say and how you say it. We know that 38% of the comprehension of verbal communication comes from these cues. Managing how you project yourself in this way can alter the impression that others have of you. For example, if your voice has a high pitch and it is shaky, others may assume that you are nervous or unsure of yourself.
- Behavior impression management includes how you perform on the job and how you interact with others. Complimenting your boss is an example of a behavior that would indicate impression management. Other impression management behaviors include conforming, making excuses, apologizing, promoting your

skills, doing favors, and making desirable associations known. Impression management has been shown to be related to higher performance ratings by increasing liking, perceived similarity, and network centrality. Barsness, Z. I., Diekmann, K. A., & Seidel, M. L. (2005). Motivation and opportunity: The role of remote work, demographic dissimilarity, and social network centrality in impression management. *Academy of Management Journal*, 48, 401–419; Wayne, S. J., & Liden, R. C. (1995). Effects of impression management on performance ratings: A longitudinal study. *Academy of Management Journal*, 38, 232–260.

Research shows that impression management occurs throughout the workplace. It is especially salient when it comes to job interviews and promotional contexts. Research shows that structured interviews suffer from less impression management bias than unstructured interviews, and that longer interviews lead to a lessening of the effects as well. Tsai, W., Chen, C., & Chiu, S. (2005). Exploring boundaries of the effects of applicant impression management tactics in job interviews. *Journal of Management*, 31, 108–125.

## **Direction of Influence**

The type of influence tactic used tends to vary based on the target. For example, you would probably use different influence tactics with your boss than you would with a peer or with employees working under you.

### **Upward Influence**

Upward influence, as its name implies, is the ability to influence your boss and others in positions higher than yours. Upward influence may include appealing to a higher authority or citing the firm's goals as an overarching reason for others to follow your cause. Upward influence can also take the form of an alliance with a higher status person (or with the perception that there is such an alliance). Farmer, S. M., & Maslyn, J.

M. (1999). Why are styles of upward influence neglected? Making the case for a configurational approach to influences. *Journal of Management*, 25, 653–682; Farmer, S. M., Maslyn, J. M., Fedor, D. B., & Goodman, J. S. (1997). Putting upward influence strategies in context. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 18, 17–42. As complexity grows, the need for this upward influence grows as well—the ability of one person at the top to know enough to make all the decisions becomes less likely. Moreover, even if someone did know enough, the sheer ability to make all the needed decisions fast enough is no longer possible. This limitation means that individuals at all levels of the organization need to be able to make and influence decisions. By helping higher-ups be more effective, employees can gain more power for themselves and their unit as well. On the flip side, allowing yourself to be influenced by those reporting to you may build your credibility and power as a leader who listens. Then, during a time when you do need to take unilateral, decisive action, others will be more likely to give you the benefit of the doubt and follow. Both Asian American and Caucasian American managers report using different tactics with superiors than those used with their subordinates. Xin, K. R., & Tsui, A. S. (1996). Different folks for different folks? Influence tactics by Asian-American and Caucasian-American managers. *Leadership Quarterly*, 7, 109–132. Managers reported using coalitions and rationality with managers and assertiveness with subordinates. Other research establishes that subordinates' use of rationality, assertiveness, and reciprocal exchange was related to more favorable outcomes such as promotions and raises, while self-promotion led to more negative outcomes. Orpen, C. (1996). The effects of ingratiation and self promotion tactics on employee career success. *Social Behavior and Personality*, 24, 213–214; Wayne, S. J., Liden, R. C., Graf, I. K., & Ferris, G. R. (1997). The role of upward influence tactics in human resource decisions. *Personnel Psychology*, 50, 979–1006.

Influence takes place even before employees are hired. For example, ingratiation and rationality were used frequently by fire fighters during interviews. McFarland, L. A., Ryan, A. M., & Kriska, S. D. (2002). Field study investigation of applicant use of

influence tactics in a selection interview. *Journal of Psychology*, 136, 383–398. Extraverts tend to engage in a greater use of self-promotion tactics while interviewing, and research shows that extraverts are more likely to use inspirational appeal and ingratiation as influence tactics. Cable, D. M., & Judge, T. A. (2003). Managers' upward influence tactic strategies: The role of manager personality and supervisor leadership style. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 24, 197–214; Kristof-Brown, A., Barrick, M. R., & Franke, M. (2002). Applicant impression management: Dispositional influences and consequences for recruiter perceptions of fit and similarity. *Journal of Management*, 53, 925–954. Research shows that ingratiation was positively related to perceived fit with the organization and recruiters' hiring recommendations. Higgins, C. A., & Judge, T. A. (2004). The effect of applicant influence tactics on recruiter perceptions of fit and hiring recommendations: A field study. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89, 622–632.

## **Downward Influence**

Downward influence is the ability to influence employees lower than you. This is best achieved through an inspiring vision. By articulating a clear vision, you help people see the end goal and move toward it. You often don't need to specify exactly what needs to be done to get there—people will be able to figure it out on their own. An inspiring vision builds buy-in and gets people moving in the same direction. Research conducted within large savings banks shows that managers can learn to be more effective at influence attempts. The experimental group of managers received a feedback report and went through a workshop to help them become more effective in their influence attempts. The control group of managers received no feedback on their prior influence attempts. When subordinates were asked 3 months later to evaluate potential changes in their managers' behavior, the experimental group had much higher ratings of the appropriate use of influence. Seifer, C. F., Yukl, G., & McDonald, R. A. (2003). Effects of multisource feedback and a feedback facilitator on the influence behavior of managers toward subordinates. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88, 561–569. Research also shows that

the better the quality of the relationship between the subordinate and their supervisor, the more positively resistance to influence attempts are seen. Tepper, B. J., Uhl-Bien, M., Kohut, G. F., Rogelberg, S. G., Lockhart, D. E., & Ensley, M. D. (2006). Subordinates' resistance and managers' evaluations of subordinates' performance. *Journal of Management*, 32, 185–208. In other words, bosses who like their employees are less likely to interpret resistance as a problem.

## Peer Influence

Peer influence occurs all the time. But, to be effective within organizations, peers need to be willing to influence each other without being destructively competitive. Cohen, A., & Bradford, D. (2002). Power and influence in the 21st century. In S. Chowdhurt (Ed.), *Organizations of the 21st century*. London: Financial Times-Prentice Hall. There are times to support each other and times to challenge—the end goal is to create better decisions and results for the organization and to hold each other accountable.

Executives spend a great deal of their time working to influence other executives to support their initiatives. Research shows that across all functional groups of executives, finance or human resources as an example, rational persuasion is the most frequently used influence tactic. Enns, H. G., & McFarlin, D. B. (2003). When executives influence peers: Does function matter? *Human Resource Management*, 42, 125–142.

## OB Toolbox: Getting Comfortable With Power

Now that you've learned a great deal about power and influence within organizations, consider asking yourself how comfortable you are with the three statements below:

- Are you comfortable saying, "I want to be powerful" to yourself? Why or why not?
- Are you comfortable saying, "I want to be powerful" to someone else? Why or why not?
- Are you comfortable having someone say, "You are powerful" to you? Why or why not?

Discomfort with power reduces your power. Experts know that leaders need to feel comfortable with power. Those who feel uncomfortable with power send those signals out unconsciously. If you feel uncomfortable with power, consider putting the statement in a shared positive light by saying, “I want to be powerful so that we can accomplish this goal.”

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Individuals have six potential sources of power, including legitimate, reward, coercive, expert, information, and referent power. Influence tactics are the way that individuals attempt to influence one another in organizations. Rational persuasion is the most frequently used influence tactic, although it is frequently met with resistance. Inspirational appeals result in commitment 90% of the time, but the tactic is utilized only 2% of the time. The other tactics include legitimizing, personal appeals, exchanges, ingratiation, pressure, forming coalitions, and consultation. Impression management behaviors include conforming, making excuses, apologizing, promoting your skills, doing favors, and making associations with desirable others known. Influence attempts may be upward, downward, or lateral in nature.

## 13.4 Organizational Politics

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand what organizational politics are.
2. Examine political behavior within organizations.

### Organizational Politics

Organizational politics are informal, unofficial, and sometimes behind-the-scenes efforts to sell ideas, influence an organization, increase power, or achieve other targeted objectives. Brandon, R., & Seldman, M. (2004). *Survival of the savvy: High-integrity political tactics for career and company success*. New York: Free Press; Hochwarter, W.

A., Witt, L. A., & Kacmar, K. M. (2000). Perceptions of organizational politics as a moderator of the relationship between conscientiousness and job performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*, 472–478. Politics has been around for millennia. Aristotle wrote that politics stems from a diversity of interests, and those competing interests must be resolved in some way. “Rational” decision making alone may not work when interests are fundamentally incongruent, so political behaviors and influence tactics arise.

Today, work in organizations requires skill in handling conflicting agendas and shifting power bases. Effective politics isn’t about winning at all costs but about maintaining relationships while achieving results. Although often portrayed negatively, organizational politics are not inherently bad. Instead, it’s important to be aware of the potentially destructive aspects of organizational politics in order to minimize their negative effect. Of course, individuals within organizations can waste time overly engaging in political behavior. Research reported in *HR Magazine* found that managers waste 20% of their time managing politics. However, as John Kotter wrote in *Power and Influence*, “Without political awareness and skill, we face the inevitable prospect of becoming immersed in bureaucratic infighting, parochial politics and destructive power struggles, which greatly retard organizational initiative, innovation, morale, and performance.” Kotter, J. (1985). *Power and influence*. New York: Free Press.

In our discussion about power, we saw that power issues often arise around scarce resources. Organizations typically have limited resources that must be allocated in some way. Individuals and groups within the organization may disagree about how those resources should be allocated, so they may naturally seek to gain those resources for themselves or for their interest groups, which gives rise to organizational politics. Simply put, with organizational politics, individuals ally themselves with like-minded others in an attempt to win the scarce resources. They’ll engage in behavior typically seen in government organizations, such as bargaining, negotiating, alliance building, and resolving conflicting interests.

Politics are a part of organizational life, because organizations are made up of different interests that need to be aligned. In fact, 93% of managers surveyed reported that workplace politics exist in their organization, and 70% felt that in order to be successful, a person has to engage in politics. Gandz, J., & Murray, V. V. (1980). The experience of workplace politics. *Academy of Management Journal*, 23, 237–251. In the negative light, saying that someone is “political” generally stirs up images of back-room dealing, manipulation, or hidden agendas for personal gain. A person engaging in these types of political behaviors is said to be engaging in self-serving behavior that is not sanctioned by the organization. Ferris, G. R., Frink, D. D., Galang, M. C., Zhou, J., Kacmar, K. M., & Howard, J. L. (1996). Perceptions of organizational politics: Prediction, stress-related implications, and outcomes, *Human Relations*, 49, 233–266; Valle, M., & Perrewe, P. L. (2000). Do politics perceptions relate to political behaviors? Tests of an implicit assumption and expanded model. *Human Relations*, 53, 359–386; Harris, K. J., James, M., & Boonthanom, R. (2005). Perceptions of organizational politics and cooperation as moderators of the relationship between job strains and intent to turnover. *Journal of Managerial Issues*, 17, 26–42; Randall, M. L., Cropanzano, R., Bormann, C. A., & Birjulin, A. (1999). Organizational politics and organizational support as predictors of work attitudes, job performance, and organizational citizenship behavior. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 20, 159–174.

Examples of these self-serving behaviors include bypassing the chain of command to get approval for a special project, going through improper channels to obtain special favors, or lobbying high-level managers just before they make a promotion decision. These types of actions undermine fairness in the organization, because not everyone engages in politicking to meet their own objectives. Those who follow proper procedures often feel jealous and resentful because they perceive unfair distributions of the organization's resources, including rewards and recognition. Parker, C. P., Dipboye, R. L., & Jackson, S. L. (1995). Perceptions of organizational politics: An investigation of antecedents and consequences. *Journal of Management*, 21, 891–912.

Researchers have found that if employees think their organization is overly driven by politics, the employees are less committed to the organization, Maslyn, J. M., & Fedor, D. B. (1998). Perceptions of politics: Does measuring different loci matter? *Journal of Applied Psychology, 84*, 645–653; Nye, L. G., & Wit, L. A. (1993). Dimensionality and construct validity of the perceptions of politics scale (POPS). *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 53*, 821–829. have lower job satisfaction, Ferris, G. R., Frink, D. D., Bhawuk, D. P., Zhou, J., & Gilmore, D. C. (1996). Reactions of diverse groups to politics in the workplace. *Journal of Management, 22*, 23–44; Hochwarter, W. A., Ferris, G. R., Laird, M. D., Treadway, D. C., & Gallagher, V. C. (in press). Nonlinear politics perceptions—work outcomes relationships: A three-study, five-sample investigation. *Journal of Management*; Kacmar, K. L., Bozeman, D. P., Carlson, D. S., & Anthony, W. P. (1999). An examination of the perceptions of organizational politics model: Replication and extension. *Human Relations, 52*, 383–416. perform worse on the job, Anderson, T. P. (1994). Creating measures of dysfunctional office and organizational politics: The DOOP and short-form DOOP scales psychology. *Journal of Human Behavior, 31*, 24–34. have higher levels of job anxiety, Ferris, G. R., Frink, D. D., Bhawuk, D. P., Zhou, J., & Gilmore, D. C. (1996). Reactions of diverse groups to politics in the workplace. *Journal of Management, 22*, 23–44; Kacmar, K. M., & Ferris, G. R. (1989). Theoretical and methodological considerations in the age-job satisfaction relationship. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 74*, 201–207. and have a higher incidence of depressed mood. Byrne, Z. S., Kacmar, C., Stoner, J., & Hochwarter, W. A. (2005). The relationship between perceptions of politics and depressed mood at work: Unique moderators across three levels. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 10*(4), 330–343.

The negative side of organizational politics is more likely to flare up in times of organizational change or when there are difficult decisions to be made and a scarcity of resources that breeds competition among organizational groups. To minimize overly political behavior, company leaders can provide equal access to information, model

collaborative behavior, and demonstrate that political maneuvering will not be rewarded or tolerated. Furthermore, leaders should encourage managers throughout the organization to provide high levels of feedback to employees about their performance. High levels of feedback reduce the perception of organizational politics and improve employee morale and work performance. Rosen, C., Levy, P., & Hall, R. (2006, January). Placing perceptions of politics in the context of the feedback environment, employee attitudes, and job performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 91(10), 21. Remember that politics can be a healthy way to get things done within organizations.

## **Antecedents of Political Behavior**

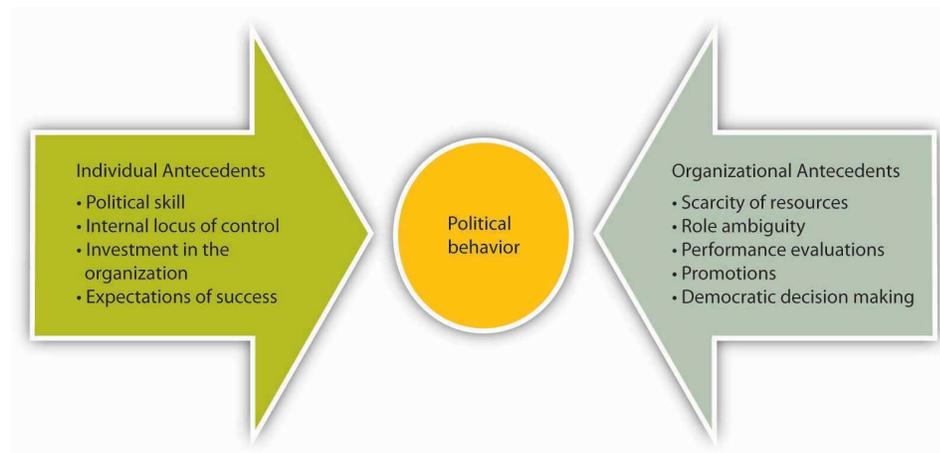
### **Individual Antecedents**

There are a number of potential individual antecedents of political behavior. We will start off by understanding the role that personality has in shaping whether someone will engage in political behavior.

Political skill refers to peoples' interpersonal style, including their ability to relate well to others, self-monitor, alter their reactions depending upon the situation they are in, and inspire confidence and trust. Ferris, G. R., Perrewé, P. L., Anthony, W. P., & Gilmore, D. C. (2000). Political skill at work. *Organizational Dynamics*, 28, 25–37. Researchers have found that individuals who are high on political skill are more effective at their jobs or at least in influencing their supervisors' performance ratings of them. Ferris, G. R., Fedor, D. B., & King, T. R. (1994). A political conceptualization of managerial behavior. *Human Resource Management Review*, 4, 1–34; Kilduff, M., & Day, D. (1994). Do chameleons get ahead? The effects of self-monitoring on managerial careers. *Academy of Management Journal*, 37, 1047–1060. Individuals who are high in *internal locus of control* believe that they can make a difference in organizational outcomes. They do not leave things to fate. Therefore, we would expect those high in internal locus of control to engage in more political behavior. Research shows that these individuals perceive politics around them to a greater degree. Valle, M., & Perrewe, P. L.

(2000). Do politics perceptions relate to political behaviors? Test of an implicit assumption and expanded model. *Human Relations*, 53, 359–386. *Investment in the organization* is also related to political behavior. If a person is highly invested in an organization either financially or emotionally, they will be more likely to engage in political behavior because they care deeply about the fate of the organization. Finally, *expectations of success* also matter. When a person expects that they will be successful in changing an outcome, they are more likely to engage in political behavior. Think about it: If you know there is no chance that you can influence an outcome, why would you spend your valuable time and resources working to effect change? You wouldn't. Over time you'd learn to live with the outcomes rather than trying to change them. Bandura, A. (1996). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control*. New York: Worth Publishers.

Figure 13.10



*Individual and organizational antecedents can both lead to political behavior.*

## Organizational Antecedents

*Scarcity of resources* breeds politics. When resources such as monetary incentives or promotions are limited, people see the organization as more political. Any type of ambiguity can relate to greater organizational politics. For example, *role*

*ambiguity* allows individuals to negotiate and redefine their roles. This freedom can become a political process. Research shows that when people do not feel clear about their job responsibilities, they perceive the organization as more political. Muhammad, A. H. (2007, Fall). Antecedents of organizational political perceptions in Kuwait business organizations. *Competitiveness Review*, 17(14), 234. Ambiguity also exists around *performance evaluations* and *promotions*. These human resource practices can lead to greater political behavior, such as impression management, throughout the organization. As you might imagine, *democratic decision making* leads to more political behavior. Since many people have a say in the process of making decisions, there are more people available to be influenced.

## **OB Toolbox: Overcoming Ineffective Politics**

Author and consultant Patrick Lencioni recommends the following four steps for overcoming ineffective politics due to turf wars. When members of the organization are more concerned about their own area of operations than doing what's best for the entire organization, in the long run you may have a problem with turf wars. Taking these four steps can help overcome this situation:

1. *Create a thematic goal.* The goal should be something that everyone in the organization can believe in, such as, for a hospital, giving the best care to all patients. This goal should be a single goal, qualitative, time-bound, and shared.
2. *Create a set of defining objectives.* This step should include objectives that everyone agrees will help bring the thematic goal to fruition.
3. *Create a set of ongoing standard operating objectives.* This process should be done within each area so that the best operating standards are developed. These objectives should also be shared across the organization so everyone is aware of them.
4. *Create metrics to measure them.* Measuring whether the standard operating objectives get done is a vital step in the process. Rather than someone else

pointing out what isn't working, all the people within the department will have the information necessary to come to this conclusion and correct the problem, because ultimately, everyone in the organization cares about achieving the thematic goal.

Source: Adapted from information in Lencioni, P. M. (2006). *Silos, politics and turf wars: A leadership fable about destroying the barriers that turn colleagues into competitors*. New York: Jossey-Bass.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Organizational politics is a natural part of organizational life. Organizations that are driven by unhealthy levels of political behavior suffer from lowered employee organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and performance as well as higher levels of job anxiety and depression. Individual antecedents of political behavior include political skill, internal locus of control, high investment in the organization, and expectations of success. Organizational antecedents include scarcity of resources, role ambiguity, frequent performance evaluations and promotions, and democratic decision making.

## 13.5 Understanding Social Networks

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn what social networks are.
2. Understand social network analysis.

### Social Networks

We've seen that power comes from many sources. One major source relates to who you know and how much access you have to information within your organization. Social networks are visual maps of relationships between individuals. They are vital parts of organizational life as well as important when you are first looking for a job. For example,

if you are interested in being hired by Proctor & Gamble, you might call upon your social network—the network of people you know—to find the people who can help you accomplish this task. You might ask your network if they know anyone at Proctor & Gamble. If you did so, the people you'd call on aren't just your friends and family—they're part of your informal network. In fact, research finds that 75% to 95% of all jobs are never formally advertised but are filled through such social networks. Hansen, K. (2008). *A foot in the door: Networking your way into the hidden job market*. Berkeley, CA: Ten Speed Press.

Much of the work that gets done in organizations is done through informal networks as well. Networks serve three important functions. First, they deliver private information. Second, they allow individuals to gain access to diverse skills sets. Third, they can help create power.

Organizations can conduct a social network analysis (SNA), a systematic effort to examine the structure of social relationships in a group. Their purpose is to uncover the informal connections between people. SNA dates back to 1934 when Joseph Moreno introduced the tools of sociometry. More recently, the advent of computers has made SNA possible on large networks. In the past decade, SNA has become widely used across fields.

### **Conducting SNA**

SNA can be conducted either directly or indirectly. The indirect way is to analyze e-mails between people. For example, which employees e-mail each other? How often? Who replies to whom? Another technique is to observe a group in action to see which employees talk to each other and who approaches whom for what. Additional, nonintrusive options are to look at project structures of billable hours such as determining which individuals regularly work together. Direct approaches to SNA involve doing a survey that asks questions directly. Cross, R., Parker, A., Prusak, L., &

Borgatti, S. P. (2001). Knowing what we know: Supporting knowledge creation and sharing in social networks. *Organizational Dynamics* 30(2), 100–120. For example, the survey might ask individuals, “Who would you go to for technical information? Who can you rely on to give you the pulse of the company? Who do you trust to keep your best interests in mind?” SNA can reveal who is trusted, important in decision making (that is, to whom do people turn for advice before making an important decision?), and innovative (“With whom are you most likely to discuss a new idea?”). The direct approach is likely to be more targeted, but some people may see it as an unwanted intrusion.

### **Analyzing Network Ties and Key Network Roles**

Once the data is collected, SNA software is used to create the maps for analysis. The maps draw incoming and outgoing arrows between people to show the number of ties coming into a person (contacts that the person receives) and the number of ties outgoing (contacts that the person initiates). There are three key roles in a network. Central connectors are people linked to the greatest number of people. Boundary spanners are people who connect one network to another within the company or even across organizations. Peripheral specialists have special expertise that can be drawn upon even though they often work independently of the group.

### **Analysis: Strong and Weak Ties**

You can recognize the strength of ties between people by counting the frequency of ties. The more interactions people have, the stronger the ties those individuals have with each other. Strong ties often indicate emotional support, not just informational support between people. Ties that are reciprocated tend to be stronger as well. Weak ties are characterized by less frequent interaction and often do not have as much emotional attachment, but they are also easier to maintain, and therefore people can have more of them. Weak ties are particularly useful for innovation, because people who are good

friends tend to see the same information, whereas people who are merely acquaintances are likely to be exposed to different information. Thus, a casual encounter may spark that creative idea. Social networks tend to be informal, but by doing an SNA, the company can harness their power to help improve communication throughout the company (such as by making sure people have the information to share) and to help generate and spread innovation (by giving information to the boundary-spanning people who will pass it on beyond their work group). Social networks serve to promote collaboration, improve new product development, and respond to emergencies or unusual circumstances quickly. Cross, R., Liedtka, J., & Weiss, L. (2005). *A practical guide to social networks*. *Harvard Business Review*, 83(3), 124–132.

*Figure 13.11*



*Mark Zuckerberg, cofounder of Facebook, helped to bring social networking to thousands of individuals.*

*Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Image:Zuckerberg2.jpg>.*

Social networks connect people with others. Consider networking Web sites such as Facebook or LinkedIn, where being connected with many people makes you more

visible. This is becoming more and more salient as 80% of 12- to 17-year-olds use MySpace at least weekly, and over 40,000 MySpace groups are devoted to companies and colleagues. Frauenheim, E. (2007). Social revolution: A wired workforce community. *Workforce Management*. Retrieved November 27, 2007, from <http://www.workforce.com/section/10/feature/25/20/77/index.html>. In business, the more central you are, the more power you will have. The closer you are to more people, the more powerful you are. Cross, R. L., Parker, A., & Cross, R. (2004). *The hidden power of social networks: Understanding how work really gets done in organizations*. Harvard, MA: Harvard Business Publishing. If you are the person who many people link to and you serve as a node between people, you have brokering power—you can introduce people to each other. People high on this “betweenness” are also in a position to withhold information from one person to the next, which can happen during power plays. You also have a greater number of people to call on when you need something, which makes you less dependent on any one person. The more ties you have that are incoming (toward you), the more trusted you are.

Social network analysis shows who communicates with whom, who knows whom, and where gaps in communication or collaboration may exist. After conducting a network analysis, organizations can take actions to modify people’s roles or responsibilities in ways that improve communication or diffuse innovation throughout the organization more effectively by putting people or departments in touch with each other.

## **Building Your Own Network**

*Figure 13.12*



*Doing social things such as playing golf or tennis outside work is one way to help build your social network.*

There are several simple steps you can take to help build your own social network. For example, you can go to lunch with someone new. You can also try to do more to encourage, help, and share with others. You can seek information outside your own class or work group. You can spend time with people from work outside work. All these suggestions are effective ways to naturally build your social network.

### KEY TAKEAWAY

Social networks make up a key part of organizations. A social network analysis (SNA) involves tracing who interacts with whom. Central connectors have a large number of contacts. Boundary spanners connect to several networks of people. Peripheral specialists often work independently. Strong and weak ties can both be helpful for gathering information and building one's network.

## 13.6 The Role of Ethics and National Culture

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Consider the role of ethics and power.
2. Consider the role of national culture on power.

### Ethics and Power

Power brings a special need for ethics, because the circumstances of power make it easy for misuse to occur. As we have seen, a company president wields at least three sources of power: legitimate from the position they hold, coercive from the ability to fire employees, and reward such as the ability to give raises and perks. Expert power and referent power often enter the mix as well. Now take the example of setting the CEO's pay. In a public company, the CEO presumably has to answer to the board of directors and the shareholders. But what if the CEO appoints many of the people on the board? What if the board and the CEO are friends? Consider the case of Richard Grasso, former chairman of the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE), whose compensation was \$140 million plus another \$48 million in retirement benefits. At that time, the average starting salary of a trader on the NYSE was \$90,000, so Grasso was being paid 1,555 times more than a starting employee. The NYSE Board of Directors approved Grasso's payment package, but many of the board members had been appointed to their positions by Grasso himself. What's more, the NYSE's function is to regulate publicly traded companies. As Hartman and Desjardins noted, "The companies being regulated by the NYSE were the very same companies that were paying Grasso." Hartman, L., & Desjardins, J. (2008). *Business ethics*. New York: McGraw-Hill, p. 43. Grasso ultimately resigned amid public criticism but kept the \$140 million. Other CEOs have not faced the same outcry, even though average CEO pay increased 200% to 400% during the same time period that average worker pay increased only 4.3%. CEO paycharts. (2005).

Retrieved January 4, 2008, from the *Fair Economy* Web site: [http://www.faireconomy.org/issues/ceo\\_pay](http://www.faireconomy.org/issues/ceo_pay). Some CEOs have earned a great deal of respect by limiting what they are paid. For example, Japan Airlines CEO Haruka

Nishimatsu earns the equivalent to \$90,000 per year while running the 10th largest airline in the world. In addition, he rides the bus to work and eats in the company cafeteria with everyone else. Petersen, B. (2009, January 28). Japan Airline boss sets exec example. *CBS Evening News*. Retrieved January 28, 2009, from <http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/2009/01/28/eveningnews/main4761136.shtml>.

## Video Connection: Haruka Nishimatsu

If you are interested in learning more about CEO Haruka Nishimatsu, view this CBS News video segment, available at the following Web site:

<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=4761187n>

*Figure 13.13*



*CEOs like James Sinegal of Costco Wholesale Corporation note that compensation is not the main motivation for their work. Consistent with this sentiment, by choice, Sinegal remains one of the lowest paid CEOs of a Standard & Poor's 500 company, and he has not received a raise in 7 consecutive years.*

*Source: Used with permission. Photo by France Freeman, Costco Wholesale.*

## Power Around the Globe

Power also has a cultural dimension. In some countries, power is centralized in the hands of a few. This type of distribution makes up high power distance countries. Within organizations in these countries, the structure is hierarchical, and compensation is based on your position in the hierarchy. People in high power distance countries

expect unequal distribution of power, such as large differences in pay and status. Javidan, M., Dorfman, P., Sully de Luque, M., & House, R. (2006, February). In the eye of the beholder: Cross cultural lessons in leadership from project GLOBE. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 20, 67–90. People in positions of authority in these countries expect (and receive) obedience. In Brazil, for example, there are formal relationships between the leader and followers, and it's clear who has the most power in any given work environment. Important decisions, including decisions on hiring and raises, are made by the person in charge, and decisions are often based on loyalty rather than on formal review mechanisms. Japan is also a higher power distant country and has unequal power and wealth among its citizens. But, people do not perceive this inequity as inherently wrong; rather, they accept it as their cultural heritage. Other examples of high power distance countries include the Arab nations, the Philippines, Venezuela, and Spain.

Countries with a low power distance rating, such as Australia, the Netherlands, and Sweden, value cooperative interaction across power levels. They emphasize equality and opportunity for everyone. For example, Australians want their leaders to be achievement-oriented, visionary, and inspirational, but they don't want their leaders to stand out too much. Leaders need to be seen as "one of us." Ashkanasy, N. (1998, August). What matters most in leadership: A 60 nation study—implications of GLOBE country-specific empirical findings for organizational behavior and management. Presentation at Academy of Management Conference, San Diego, CA. Organizational structures in low power distance countries are flatter with higher worker involvement. Status is based on achievement rather than class distinction or birth. People in power cannot arbitrarily hire their relatives or reward those loyal to them. There are formal review mechanisms in place to give everyone a fair chance at pay raises, and the difference in pay between high-level and lower level jobs is smaller.

These differences in perceptions of power become especially important in international ventures in which people of different countries work together. For example, in a joint

venture between an American and a Mexican company, American managers were continually frustrated with what they perceived to be slow decision making by Mexican managers. Even the e-mails sent to the Mexican subsidiary were taking a long time to be answered. Mexico ranks higher on the power distance dimension than the United States—company structures are more hierarchical, and decisions are made only by top managers; therefore, lower level managers in Mexico could not make decisions on behalf of their bosses. In the case of e-mails, employees were consulting with their managers before answering each e-mail, taking a long time to answer them.

In addition to differing perceptions of power, how people influence each other seems to be determined by culture. Cross-cultural research shows that the more task-oriented influence tactics, such as rational persuasion, are seen as more effective in the United States than in China, and that Chinese managers rated tactics involving relationships such as coalitions as more effective than did the American managers. Fu, P. P., & Yukl, G. (2000). Perceived effectiveness of influence tactics in the United States and China. *Leadership Quarterly*, 11, 251–266; Yukl, G., Fu, P. P., & McDonald, R. (2003). Cross-cultural differences in perceived effectiveness of influence tactics for initiating or resisting change. *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 52, 68–82.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Power can be easily abused. This is especially the case of CEOs who are rewarded by a board of directors that is often staffed by trusted friends and colleagues of the CEO. It is not hard to imagine that this might become a conflict of interest. Countries differ in terms of power distance. Some countries such as Brazil see a formal relationship between leaders and followers based on a rigid hierarchy.

## 13.7 Getting Connected: The Case of Social Networking

Networking has the potential to open doors and create possibilities for jobs and partnerships. Networking establishes connections between individuals and access to information that one might not normally have access to. Reaching out to strangers can be an intimidating and nerve-racking experience. In business, the more central you are, the more power you have. Creating connections and ties to other people affords you the opportunity for power and the ability to more closely control your future, so while at times networking might feel awkward and uncomfortable, it is a necessary and important part of establishing and maintaining a career.

Online social networking sites play an important role in this networking process for individuals both professionally and personally. With 1,200 employees in 2010, Facebook has 350 million users around the world, and LinkedIn has over 60 million members in over 200 countries. A new member joins LinkedIn every second, and about half of the members are outside the United States. These online sites have created new opportunities for networking and allow individuals to branch out beyond their normal world of industry, school, and business. The key is to avoid costly missteps as employers have begun to search online for information about prospective and current employees. In 2009, 8% of companies reported that they had fired an employee for misuse of social media.

Many of these online sites have become a tool for business. For example, LinkedIn targets working professionals and provides them a way to maintain lists of business connections and to use those connections to gain introduction to people using mutual contacts. Unlike other social networking sites, LinkedIn is almost entirely used by professionals. The power of social networking flows in both directions. Employers can screen applicants through their online accounts and recruiters more than ever are using these sites to view background information, individual skill sets, and employment history, which can be cross-referenced with submitted applications. Job seekers can

review the profiles of those at top management firms and search for mutual contacts. LinkedIn also provides statistics about firms, which can be useful information for individuals looking at potential employers.

Networking is about building your brand and managing relationships. Using social networks as a vehicle to market one's self and make professional connections is becoming increasingly common, as well as using loose ties or connections through others to open doors and land jobs. In an increasingly high-tech and digital world, it is important to be aware and conscience of the digital footprint that we create. But with careful cultivation these online networks can present many opportunities.

Case written by [citation redacted per publisher request]. Based on information from Hof, R. (2008, October 28). Facebook in a suit: LinkedIn launches applications platform. *BusinessWeek*. Retrieved March 23, 2010, from [http://www.businessweek.com/the\\_thread/techbeat/archives/2008/10/linkedin\\_launch.html](http://www.businessweek.com/the_thread/techbeat/archives/2008/10/linkedin_launch.html); Horswill, A. (2009). How to get a job online using social networking. *The Courier Mail*. Retrieved March 23, 2010, from LexisNexis Academic database; Lavenda, D. (2010, March 10). 10 tips for safe and effective social networking. *Fast Company*. Retrieved March 23, 2010, from <http://www.fastcompany.com/1577857/10-tips-for-safe-and-effective-social-networking>; How to use social networking sites for marketing and PR. (2008, December 24). *AllBusiness*. Retrieved April 23, 2010, from <http://www.allbusiness.com/marketing-advertising/public-relations/11674037-1.html>; Ostrow, A. (2009, August). Facebook fired: 8% of US companies have sacked social media miscreants. *Mashable*. Retrieved March 30, 2010, from <http://mashable.com/2009/08/10/social-media-misuse>.

## 13.8 Conclusion

Power and politics in organizations are common. In most cases, each concept is necessary and executed with skill and precision. Unfortunately, power can lead to conformity from those around us, and this occurring conformity can breed corruption. The amount of power you have has strong ties to how much others depend on you. If you are deemed a valuable resource within an organization, then you are able to wield that dependability to make demands and get others to do what you want. Besides having an innate or acquired control over particular resources, there are several social aspects of power to draw on.

Methods for obtaining more power in an organization can often lead to political behaviors. As one person seeks to influence another to support an idea, politics begins to play out. Though necessary in some instances, many people that follow the rules see the politics of an organization as resulting in an unfair distribution of resources. Still others, despite understanding the politics of a given organization, see it as an unnecessary time consumer.

Politics, influence, and power can often reside within your social network. When an individual is core to a social structure, they will often have some degree of control over others. Social networks can also help you acquire jobs, make beneficial connections, and generally make life easier. It is often a good idea to analyze your social network and determine if it needs to be strengthened or tailored.

# Kentucky State University: Charles R. Nichols' "Nelson Mandela: A leader's guide"

After reading this article, see what other documentary footage you can find out on the Web about Mandela's struggle and activism in Apartheid South Africa. Consider sharing resources that you find with your peers on our Discussion Forums.

## **Nelson Mandela: A leader's guide**

Nelson Mandela was a leader who believed in equal rights for all people. He started his crusade for justice as a young man in his native South Africa. Mandela saw a situation that needed changing (in his case, Apartheid) and decided to take action. His persistence and perseverance helped win over the people of his country. He paid the price of sacrificing his personal freedom on behalf of his causes and beliefs spending nearly three decades in prison. What we can learn from this man in regards to leadership is that a leader needs to have a vision which is inclusive so that there is the potential for a wide range of support, not just support from a few. Nelson knew that goals and objectives should result in a better situation for many rather than a select few.

We must understand that transformation does not come easily nor quickly. Leaders must be able to devote a significant time period to help make the transition come about. Change requires an inner strength. Despite the hardships inflicted upon him in prison, Mr. Mandela never gave up hope that someday he would be free again and that his life's efforts would bear fruit.

In 1994, after serving most of his adult life campaigning for the rights of his people, Nelson Mandela was elected to the Presidency of the Republic of South Africa. He became the first Black man to hold that position and his years of public service in relation to his cause of justice also helped to promote him to a national stage with his Presidency.

One important aspect of his life as a leader was that leadership does not end when the service is over. Mandela retired from his Presidency in 1999 but he continued to be a public figure for good. Mandela served out the remainder of his life taking up new causes such as AIDS awareness and prevention, children's rights, and global peace.

When we consider Nelson Mandela as a leader, we think of the courage to live up to one's convictions, the tenacity to pursue one's dreams despite the various hardships that threaten to end them, the will to bring about change and transformation that provides benefits to all involved, and finally, the understanding that when one position ends, there are always other needs to which leaders must apply their influence and power. Nelson Mandela took his role as a leader seriously, and as such, he gained the admiration and respect of the world by attempting to help make the world a better place for all mankind. Let us learn the lessons Mr. Mandela left with us and do what we can to play our part in continuing the resolutions for the struggles he fought to overcome and inspire future generations to do so as well.

Mandela's Leadership Traits

- Inclusion of vision and cause
- Determined spirit
- Patience to endure suffering
- Understanding that a positive outlook can eventually bring about a positive change

A good leader does not seek immediate change rather, they help set the conditions to make it happen and when it comes, it becomes a little easier to accept. Leadership can be a continuous service for those leaders willing to serve

# Teddy Roosevelt: The Rough Rider in the White House



Teddy Roosevelt was a fearless friend of nature. Mark Twain called him " the Tom Sawyer of the political world of the twentieth century."

There had never been a President like him. He was only forty-two years old when his predecessor William McKinley was assassinated, the youngest age ever for the chief executive.

He was graduated with the highest honors from Harvard, wrote 23 books, and was considered the world's foremost authority on North American wildlife. He was a prizefighting championship finalist, leader of the Rough Riders, a cowboy, a socialite, a police commissioner, a governor, and a Vice-President.

All this was accomplished before he entered the White House. His energy was contagious, and the whole country was electrified by their new leader.

## Early Obstacles

Roosevelt was born in 1858 to a wealthy New York banker and the daughter of a prosperous Georgia planter. He was anything but the model physical specimen. His eyesight was poor. He wore thick glasses his entire life. As a child he was small and weak. He suffered from acute asthma, which contributed to his frailty.

Taking his father's advice, he dedicated himself to physical fitness, without which he believed there could be no mental fitness. His hard work paid off, and as he entered Harvard with a muscular frame, his condition bothered him less and less.

Soon he met ALICE HATHAWAY LEE. Although he believed her to be the most unobtainable woman around, he was determined to marry her. Again, he was successful, but his life with

Alice was short-lived. In 1884, four years after his graduation, Alice delivered a daughter. Owing to complications, she died in childbirth on the very same day as the death of his mother.

## A Rising Star

Devastated, he withdrew to North Dakota Territory, but could not live without the New York pace for long. Returning to New York in 1886, Roosevelt remarried and dedicated his life to public service. By 1898, he compiled an impressive resumé including

- Member of the Civil Service Commission
- Police Commissioner of New York City
- Assistant Secretary to the Navy.



Theodore Roosevelt's much-heralded charge up Cuba's San-Juan Hill made him into a national hero.

When the SPANISH-AMERICAN WAR erupted, he helped form a volunteer regiment called the ROUGH RIDERS. His success in the war led to the governor's office and then the Vice-Presidency.

Up to this point, the Vice-President had little power, and few had gone on to the White House unless a tragedy befell the President. Many Republican leaders supported Roosevelt in the number-two job for this very reason. They feared his headstrong style and maverick attitude. Their greatest fears were realized when a bullet ended President McKinley's life on September 13, 1901.

## A New Kind of President

Soon it was clear that a new type of President was in town. The Presidency had been dormant since Lincoln's time. Congress seemed to be running the government, and big business seemed to be running Congress.



Library of Congress

President William McKinley was struck down by assassin Leon Czolgosz at the Pan-American Exhibition in Buffalo on September 6, 1901. He died 8 days later. (Drawing by T. Dart Walker, 1905)

Philosophically, Roosevelt was outraged by these realities. Although he himself hailed from the wealthy classes, he strongly believed that no individual, no matter how rich and powerful, should control the people's representatives.

Furthermore, Roosevelt was convinced that if abuse of workers continued to go unchecked, a violent revolution would sweep the nation. An outspoken foe of socialism, Roosevelt believed that capitalism would be preserved with a little restraint and common sense. Within months he began to wield his newfound power.

Roosevelt changed the office in other important ways. He never went anywhere without his photographer. He wanted Americans to see a rough and tumble leader who was unafraid to get his hands dirty. He became the first President to travel out of the country while in office and the first to win the NOBEL PRIZE.

Unlike his quieter predecessors, Roosevelt knew that if the Washington politicians resisted change, he would have to take his case to the people directly. He traveled often and spoke with confidence and enthusiasm. Americans received him warmly.

The country was thirsting for leadership and Roosevelt became a political and popular hero. Merchandise was sold in his likeness, paintings and lithographs created in his honor, and even a film was produced portraying him as a fairy-tale hero. The White House was finally back in business.

# *Boundless U.S. History: "Chapter 22, Section 3: The Politics of Progressivism: Leaders of the Progressive Era"*

Read this article describes some of Teddy Roosevelt's contemporaries. In your journal, offer suggestions for at least three more leaders who you believe also reflect the traits of those profiled in this article and explain why.

## Leaders of the Progressive Era

Progressive reformers included activists, writers, academics, and some of America's most prominent statesmen.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Identify the primary leaders of the Progressive Movement, and the roles of women and African Americans in the movement.

### KEY POINTS

- Many big names that citizens associate with law, business, ethics, and literature spring from the Progressive Movement.
- A great political progressivist, Theodore Roosevelt passed many laws that were meant to curb business and aid labor. He was, however, also some one who wished to maintain a large military. As a private citizen, he explored conservation issues, especially in the West.
- The women's health movement was incubated by Jane Addams but evolved into a movement on contraceptive education by people such as Margaret Sanger.
- Many progressivists knew each other, despite their fields, and often worked together to help create sweeping changes in society.
- The progressive movement grew because of the likes of well-educated and well-informed individuals from the middle-or upper classes.
- Though labor and business often collided, men like Andrew Carnegie and John D. Rockefeller used the money they made from their businesses to help society. They built schools and donated money to the arts. Likewise, Henry Ford used his company to give people generous wages to show that big businesses can be proactive.
- The progressive movement grew because of the likes of well-educated and well-informed individuals from the middle-or upper classes.

### TERMS

- Woodrow Wilson

Thomas Woodrow Wilson (1856 –1924) was the 28th President of the United States, from 1913 to 1921.

- Margaret Sanger

Margaret Higgins Sanger (September 14, 1879 – September 6, 1966) was an American birth control activist, sex educator, and nurse.

- Jane Addams

Jane Addams (September 6, 1860 – May 21, 1935) was a pioneer settlement worker, founder of Hull House in Chicago, public philosopher, sociologist, author, and leader in woman suffrage and world peace, who vehemently opposed Wilson's turn away from pacifism to militarism.

Theodore "Teddy" Roosevelt (1858 – 1919) was the 26<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America (1901–1909). He is noted for his exuberant personality, range of interests and achievements, and his leadership of the Progressive Movement, as well as his "cowboy" persona and robust masculinity.

William Howard Taft (1857 – 1930) was the 27<sup>th</sup> President of the United States (1909–1913). In his only term, Taft's domestic agenda emphasized trust-busting, civil servicereform, strengthening the Interstate Commerce Commission, improving the performance of the postal service, and passage of the Sixteenth Amendment.

Thomas Woodrow Wilson (1856 – 1924) was the 28<sup>th</sup> President of the United States, from 1913 to 1921. In his first term as President, Wilson persuaded a Democratic Congress to pass major progressive reforms, including the Federal Reserve Act, Federal Trade Commission Act, the Clayton Antitrust Act, the Federal Farm Loan Act and an income tax.

Jane Addams (1860 – 1935) was a pioneer settlement worker, founder of Hull House in Chicago, public philosopher, sociologist, author, and leader in woman suffrage and world peace. She was among the most prominent reformer of the Progressive Era and helped turn the nation to issues of concern to mothers, such as the needs of children, public health, and world peace.

## **Jane Addams**

Florence Kelley (1859 – 1932) was an American social and political reformer, widely regarded for her work against sweatshops and for the minimum wage, eight-hour workdays, and children's rights.

Alice Stokes Paul (January 11, 1885 – July 9, 1977) was an American suffragist and activist. Along with Lucy Burns and others, she led a successful campaign for women's suffrage that resulted in the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920.

Charlotte Perkins Gilman (July 3, 1860 – August 17, 1935) was a prominent American sociologist, novelist, writer of short stories, poetry, and nonfiction, and a lecturer for social reform. She served as a role model for future generations of feminists because of her unorthodox concepts and lifestyle.

Margaret Higgins Sanger (1879 – 1966) was an American sex educator, nurse, and birth control activist. Sanger coined the term birth control, opened the first birth control clinic in the United States, and established Planned Parenthood.

Emma Goldman (1869 – 1940) was an anarchist known for her political activism, writing and speeches. She played a pivotal role in the development of anarchist political philosophy in North America and Europe in the first half of the twentieth century.

### **Emma Goldman**

Susan Brownell Anthony (February 15, 1820 – March 13, 1906) was a prominent American civil rights leader who played a pivotal role in the 19<sup>th</sup> century women's rights movement to introduce women's suffrage into the United States. She was co-founder of the first Women's Temperance Movement with Elizabeth Cady Stanton and an important advocate in leading the way for women's rights to be acknowledged by the American government.

Ida Bell Wells-Barnett (July 16, 1862 – March 25, 1931) was an African American journalist, newspaper editor and an early leader in the civil rights movement. She documented lynching in the United States, showing how it was often a way to control or punish blacks who competed with whites.

Booker T. Washington (1856 – 1915) was an African-American educator, author, and advisor to Republican presidents. He was the dominant figure in the African-American community in the United States from 1890 to 1915.

Booker T. Washington

William Edward Burghardt "W. E. B." Du Bois (1868 – 1963) was an American sociologist, historian, civil rights activist, Pan-Africanist, author and editor. After graduating from Harvard, where he was the first African American to earn a doctorate, he became a professor of history, sociology and economics at Atlanta University. Du Bois was one of the co-founders of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) in 1909.

Samuel Gompers (1850 – 1924) was an English-born American cigar maker who became a labor union leader and a key figure in American labor history. Gompers founded the American Federation of Labor (AFL), and served as that organization's president from 1886 to 1894 and from 1895 until his death in 1924.

Frederick Winslow Taylor (1856 –1915) was an American mechanical engineer who sought to improve industrial efficiency. He is regarded as the father of scientific management and was one of the first management consultants. Taylor was one of the intellectual leaders of the Efficiency Movement and his ideas, broadly conceived, were highly influential in the Progressive Era.

Henry Ford (July 30, 1863 – April 7, 1947) was an American industrialist, the founder of the Ford Motor Company, and sponsor of the development of the assembly line technique of mass production. His introduction of the Model T automobile revolutionized transportation and American industry.



**STRATEGY  
RESEARCH  
PROJECT**

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**VINCE LOMBARDI AS A STRATEGIC LEADER**

**BY**

**LIEUTENANT COLONEL BELINDA L. BUCKMAN**  
United States Army

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USAWC STRATEGY RESEARCH PROJECT

**Vince Lombardi as a Strategic Leader**

by

Lieutenant Colonel Belinda L. Buckman  
United States Army

Colonel Frank R. Hancock  
Project Advisor

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CARLISLE BARRACKS, PENNSYLVANIA 17013

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## ABSTRACT

AUTHOR: Lieutenant Colonel Belinda L. Buckman  
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When one mentions Vince Lombardi's name, people immediately associate it with the Green Bay Packers and the dynasty he created within the National Football League (NFL). As head coach and general manager of the Packers from 1958 to 1967, Lombardi guided the organization to five NFL championships and back-to-back Super Bowl titles.

Without question, Vince Lombardi was a successful coach. However, there were other successful coaches in the league, who also believed in discipline, consistency, selflessness, resilience, confidence and pride. But what was it that set Vince Lombardi apart? Why more than 30 years after his death does he remain the standard against which others are measured? Who was Vince Lombardi and why did his leadership and value to the nation transcend the world of professional football?

The purpose of this effort is to answer these questions while exploring Lombardi as a strategic leader. This will be accomplished by examining Lombardi's conceptual, technical and interpersonal strategic leader competencies described in The Strategic Leadership Primer published by the United States Army War College. Particular emphasis will be placed upon analyzing how Lombardi's education, background and experience developed a solid frame of reference to support execution of these competencies at the strategic level.

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## PREFACE

A very special thanks to Frank "The Man" Hancock who epitomizes everything that is good about the American competitive spirit. He is the backbone of the faculty and truly cares about student development.

I also have great respect for the skills and assistance of Ms Dot Overcash who has guided numerous students through this process with patience and professionalism. A very special thanks to Paul Bennett, Gil Griffin and Steve Yarborough who have taught me more this year than they will ever know. They are true professionals in every sense of the word.

## VINCE LOMBARDI AS A STRATEGIC LEADER

When one mentions Vince Lombardi's name, people immediately associate it with the Green Bay Packers and the dynasty he created within the National Football League (NFL). Arriving in rural Green Bay, Wisconsin as a 45 year-old former assistant coach and with no previous head coaching experience, Lombardi quickly established and implemented standards that led to his selection as the NFL's "Coach of the Year" during his initial season. As head coach and general manager of the Packers from 1958 to 1967, Lombardi guided the organization to five NFL championships and back-to-back Super Bowl titles.

Without question, Vince Lombardi was a successful coach. However, there were other successful coaches in the league, Don Shula of the Miami Dolphins, Chuck Noll of the Pittsburgh Steelers and Tom Landry of the Dallas Cowboys who also believed in discipline, consistency, selflessness, resilience, confidence and pride.<sup>1</sup> But what was it that set Vince Lombardi apart? Why more than 30 years after his death does he remain the standard against which others are measured? Who was Vince Lombardi and why did his leadership and value to the nation transcend the world of professional football?

The purpose of this effort is to answer these questions while exploring Lombardi as a strategic leader. This will be accomplished by examining Lombardi's conceptual, technical and interpersonal strategic leader competencies described in The Strategic Leadership Primer published by the United States Army War College. Particular emphasis will be placed upon analyzing how Lombardi's education, background and experience developed a solid frame of reference to support execution of these competencies at the strategic level.

Although the normal tendency is to limit one's view of strategic leaders to great military generals, this paper will challenge the reader to expand his/her horizons in dealing with this subject. This paper will clearly show that Coach Vince Lombardi was a strategic leader who possessed and exercised those core competencies which allowed him to effectively deal with the complex issues and events confronting the nation in the late 1960s.

### STRATEGIC LEADER COMPETENCIES

Critical to an analysis of Vince Lombardi as a strategic leader is establishing an accepted definition of a 'strategic leader.' According to The Strategic Leadership Primer, published by the United States Army War College (USAWC),

Strategic leadership is the process used by a leader to affect the achievement of a desirable and clearly understood vision by influencing the organizational culture, allocating resources, directing through policy and directive, and building

consensus within a volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous global environment which is marked by opportunities and threats.<sup>2</sup>

While the definition above addresses the process, it is important to understand that strategic leadership is exercised at the highest levels of an organization and requires leaders to apply their leadership skills, as well as, develop a new and unique set of skills to provide guidance in an ever-changing environment. These strategic leader competencies are the knowledge, skills and attributes which enable a leader to function at the highest levels of an organization. The major categories of leadership competencies are conceptual, technical and interpersonal.<sup>3</sup> These competencies prepare strategic leaders to focus on the future and personally lead change in challenging and complex environments. This requires the development of strategic conceptual competencies which include frame of reference development, problem management and envisioning the future.<sup>4</sup> Examining each of these categories is critical to establishing a clear understanding of what it takes to be a strategic leader.

Although categorized as a conceptual competency, frame of reference development provides the critical support necessary for all three competencies. A solid frame of reference is developed over a lifetime as a leader synthesizes information, knowledge and experiences. To build a frame of reference a strategic leader must be open to new experiences and input from others including subordinates, be reflective and willing to learn from past experiences, and be comfortable operating in the strategic environment.<sup>5</sup>

Strategic leader conceptual competencies include problem management and the ability to envision the future. Lombardi quickly grasped the various roles that he played within the organization. He expanded his focus to fulfill the requirements of each role shifting his attention over time from the offense, to the team, to the franchise, to the league, and ultimately sharing his leadership with a national audience.

Additionally strategic leaders must possess certain technical competencies. These competencies include the ability to integrate systems in a multicultural environment while influencing the development of national interests and objectives. As the head coach of a very successful professional team in the 1960s, Lombardi's actions and words were gospel to people all across the country. He demanded respect for all of his players regardless of race, and helped transform the attitude in Green Bay from tolerance to acceptance. Lombardi also addressed the growing unrest in American society, "I am sure that you are disturbed like I am by what seems to be a complete breakdown of law and order and the moral code which is almost beyond belief. The prevailing sentiment seems to be if you don't like the rule, break it."<sup>6</sup>

The final competency critical to a strategic leader is categorized as interpersonal. This includes the ability to build consensus, negotiate and communicate. Lombardi mastered these skills at every level as he built a football dynasty and led the league into the forefront of American consciousness. On a larger stage his leadership philosophy remains a staple in an American society that has maintained its competitive edge on the world.

## **BACKGROUND**

Although it has been over 30 years since Vincent T. Lombardi died of colon cancer at Georgetown University Hospital, his legend endures because he was much more than a football coach. In fact, he is acknowledged as the patron saint of American competition and success.<sup>7</sup> Ten years before he began his unlikely run to fame in remote Green Bay, Lombardi was a virtual unknown, and worried that he might get stuck in the anonymous ranks of coaching assistants. What happened next was that he took the worst team in the NFL and proceeded to dominate the NFL. In his nine seasons as head coach and general manager of the Green Bay Packers, the Packers won six divisional titles, five NFL championships, the first two Super Bowls, and became the standard against which all other teams were measured.<sup>8</sup> While there have been other great NFL coaches, men such as Don Shula of the Miami Dolphins, Chuck Noll of the Pittsburgh Steelers and Tom Landry of the Dallas Cowboys, none are revered and recognized as American icons.<sup>9</sup> How did Lombardi gain the experience, skills and attributes that resulted in his emergence as a leader on the national stage?

Vince Lombardi was born on June 11, 1913 in Brooklyn, New York the oldest son of Italian immigrants. The Lombardi's were a strong Catholic family and at one point Vince thought that he wanted to be a priest and he attended high school at Cathedral College of the Immaculate Conception a diocesan preparatory seminary. Realizing that this was not his path in life he transferred to St. Francis Preparatory School on a football scholarship.<sup>10</sup>

In the fall of 1933, following a successful high school career, Vince accepted a football scholarship to Fordham. He excelled as a guard on Fordham's nationally recognized defensive line tagged "The Seven Blocks of Granite" and graduated in 1937. Lombardi spent the next two years working for a finance company, attending law school at night, and playing semi-pro football.<sup>11</sup> In 1939 Vince Lombardi became Coach Lombardi, first as an assistant coach then as the head coach at St Cecilia, a small Catholic high school, in Englewood, New Jersey. In addition to his duties as an assistant football coach at St Cecilia, Lombardi taught physics, chemistry, latin and coached the varsity basketball team.<sup>12</sup> At one stretch in his eight year tenure, Lombardi led the St Cecilia Saints to a thirty-two game unbeaten streak.<sup>13</sup>

In 1947 Coach Lombardi finally moved up to the next level returning to Fordham as an assistant. However, two years later when he was passed over for the head coaching position at Fordham, Lombardi made a move that would forever define his coaching persona. He was hired by Coach Red Blaik, considered the best coach in the country at the time, to coach the defensive line of an Army team that had completed the previous season ranked sixth in the nation.<sup>14</sup> Lombardi spent five seasons as an assistant at Army, and credited Red Blaik for having the single greatest impact on his coaching career.<sup>15</sup>

Although he was now coaching at the college level and learning from the best, fifteen years had passed since he started at St Cecilians and Lombardi yearned for the opportunity to lead his own team.<sup>16</sup> In 1954, Coach Lombardi continued his slow climb up the coaching ladder, leaving West Point to become the offensive coordinator for the New York Giants of the NFL. In his five seasons with the Giants, they quickly became a championship team; however, now forty-five Lombardi was worried that he may never get the opportunity to lead his own team. This all changed in 1958 when Coach Lombardi signed a five year contract as the head coach and general manager of the Green Bay Packers.<sup>17</sup> With Lombardi in command, the Packers enjoyed their first winning season in twelve years and he was unanimously chosen as the NFL coach of the year.<sup>18</sup> In nine seasons under Coach Lombardi, the Packers dominated professional football by winning six division titles, five NFL championships and two Super Bowls while compiling a record of 98-30-4.<sup>19</sup>

In 1967, he retired as the head coach of the Packers, but remained in the front office as the general manager. After less than a year, Lombardi realized that he still wanted to coach and in 1969 he accepted the head coaching position with the Washington Redskins. In true Lombardi fashion he immediately led the Redskins to their first winning record in fourteen years. Unfortunately, he never had the opportunity to see if he could take the Redskins to a Super Bowl, as he was diagnosed with intestinal cancer and died on September 3, 1970.<sup>20</sup>

In ten years as a head coach in the NFL, Lombardi never coached a losing team and the NFL named him their "1960s Man of the Decade." Less than a year after his death Coach Lombardi was inducted into the Professional Football Hall of Fame and the Super Bowl trophy was renamed the Vince Lombardi Super Bowl Trophy in his honor. Coach Lombardi continues to be the standard by which others are measured and in 2000, ESPN named him the Coach of the Century.<sup>21</sup>

Coach Lombardi transcended his sport. His name is synonymous not only with winning but with a philosophy of what it takes to be a winner. He embodied certain notions of character, will, discipline, obedience, teamwork, and the need to compete, to strive for excellence, to fulfill

one's human potential.<sup>22</sup> Lombardi captured the nation's imagination at precisely the same time professional football was beginning to displace baseball as the national game and American society of the 1960s was in transition.<sup>23</sup>

## EARLY YEARS

Beginning early in his life and continuing until his death, Vince Lombardi relied upon formal education, self study and his ability to learn from his experiences to develop the complex knowledge structure required of a strategic leader.

To understand Lombardi and his impact on the nation, one must understand the dominant role his family played in his upbringing. He was the oldest son of parents who emigrated from Italy as children and settled in Brooklyn, New York. His father, Harry, was a butcher and meat wholesaler who had the words W-O-R-K and P-L-A-Y tattooed above his knuckles to remind him that both played an important role in his life. His mother, Matilda, was one of thirteen children who formed a large extended family all living in Brooklyn. Both perfectionist and strict disciplinarians, Lombardi's parents emphasized early on that he was better than the rest and being average was not good enough. Young Vince attended daily mass with his mother, and this religious routine was as much about discipline as it was about devotion. As the oldest son, he occupied a position next to God in an Italian family, and Lombardi flourished in his assumed role of disciplinarian to his siblings, extended family and his friends. The Trinity in Lombardi's early life was religion, family and sports.<sup>24</sup>

Although Lombardi played basketball and baseball, from first contact he was fascinated with football. It surprised his family when he declared coming out of grammar school that he would prepare for the priesthood by attending Cathedral College of the Immaculate Conception a diocesan preparatory school without a football program.<sup>25</sup> Lombardi continued to demonstrate his natural leadership abilities as he transitioned from a leader on his block to a leader at his school. His intense desire to lead combined with an intimidating physical presence resulted in his unanimous election as section president for four straight years.<sup>26</sup>

Lombardi continued to play sandlot football while at Cathedral and after completing four years of the six year program he realized that he loved physical contact more than spiritual contact. Since he had not yet completed the entire six years, Lombardi did not graduate, therefore, he accepted a football scholarship at St Francis Preparatory School in Brooklyn to repeat his senior year. As a leader, Lombardi demanded perfection of himself and those around him. At St Francis he played fullback over a player with twice the talent but none of the determination.<sup>27</sup>

Growing up in the 1920s, Lombardi benefited from the national sports mania as people found more leisure time. Golf, boxing, baseball and college football were attracting huge crowds.<sup>28</sup> In the 1920s and 30s, the place to play college football was in the northeast where Fordham, Columbia and New York University all had major programs and their games were covered by the most influential sports writers in America. Lombardi accepted a scholarship to study under the Jesuits and play football at Fordham University.<sup>29</sup>

As a senior, Lombardi became a starter on a legendary defensive line heralded as "The Seven Blocks of Granite," who surrendered only one rushing touchdown that season. Although he was not the biggest or the best lineman, he was the leader among his teammates routinely demanding more from them on the field.<sup>30</sup>

It was the strict environment at Fordham that Vince Lombardi continued to strengthen his frame of reference. From the Jesuits he learned the lessons that he would carry with him into a life of football. They forced him to broaden his perspective of duty, obedience, and responsibility. The philosophy of sublimating individual desires for the common good now shaped the way Lombardi looked at himself and his world.<sup>31</sup> The Jesuits argued that perfection was obtainable and went to those who fought the hardest to achieve it.<sup>32</sup> Following graduation in June 1937, Lombardi knew that he did not want to follow his father in the wholesale meat business, and it took only two short years until he was teaching and coaching at a small Catholic powerhouse St Cecilia in Englewood, New Jersey.<sup>33</sup>

### **LIFE AS AN ASSISTANT COACH**

It was during his eight years at St Cecilia high school where Coach Vince Lombardi developed many of the pedagogical skills that set him apart from his peers. These were many of the same leadership skills that Lombardi would adapt to more complex situations as a leader at the next level. He also came to understand early on that coaching was his life's calling.

The years that Lombardi spent at St Cecilia were significant for several reasons. With steady and secure employment, Lombardi found the courage to marry his college sweetheart Marie Planitz and they had a son Vince Jr. and a daughter Susan. Lombardi remained at St Cecilia from 1939 to 1947, where he received three deferments from service in World War II. His Selective Service System records indicate that he was deferred in the national interests for teaching, for being a sole provider to his family and for being too old.<sup>34</sup> It is interesting to note that as the nation sent her sons off to fight the second great war in a thirty year period, the fact that Lombardi did not serve was not held against him. The parents felt fortunate to have someone of his character associated with their children. As Lombardi's reputation grew, he had

opportunities to leave St Cecilia for one of the big high school programs; however, he felt tremendous loyalty to the Saints and remained until he had the opportunity to return to Fordham as an assistant.<sup>35</sup>

After ten seasons away from college football, Lombardi coached the Fordham freshman team that routinely out performed the varsity. He spent the next year as an assistant with the varsity, and when he realized that he was not going to get the head coaching job he left Fordham to become an assistant coach under Red Blaik at Army. Although he would still be an assistant he would be learning from a man considered the best in the country at the time.

According to Lombardi, everything he learned about organizing a football team and preparing it to play its best, he learned during the five years that he spent at West Point. It was at Army under Coach Blaik, himself a devoted disciple of General Douglas MacArthur, that Lombardi honed his leadership skills and perfected his coaching style.<sup>36</sup> Lombardi and Blaik shared the same dominant characteristic - an overwhelming will to win. Blaik strongly believed that the purpose of the game is to win and to dilute the will to win is to destroy the purpose of the game.<sup>37</sup> MacArthur also believed that there was no substitute for victory, and Red Blaik drove that philosophy home to the next generation of our nation's leaders as a dominant figure at West Point in the 40s and 50s. As one of the first coaches to break down game films, Blaik taught Lombardi what it meant to be prepared. He spent endless hours analyzing the game play-by-play, position-by-position and methodically charting the action.<sup>38</sup> It was at West Point that Lombardi's spiritual discipline combined with his military discipline thus defining him forevermore as a football coach.<sup>39</sup>

At Army, Lombardi was exposed to General Douglas MacArthur, one of our nation's greatest strategic leaders. MacArthur had been the Superintendent at West Point shortly after World War I when Red Blaik played for Army. Before MacArthur left West Point for the Philippine Islands, his thoughts on the correlation between war and sport were carved in stone of the front of the gymnasium,

UPON THE FIELDS OF FRIENDLY STRIFE ARE SOWN THE SEEDS UPON  
OTHER FIELDS, ON OTHER DAYS WILL BEAR THE FRUITS OF VICTORY<sup>40</sup>

As MacArthur and Blaik both regarded football as another form of warfare, they corresponded regularly about the team. Before MacArthur was recalled, he had arranged for Lombardi and five other members of the Army staff to travel to the Orient and conduct football clinics. MacArthur's intent was to use football as a tool to instill the traditions of American culture and democracy in the Japanese. Lombardi participated in clinics in Tokyo and the Philippines and made a visit to the front lines in Korea.<sup>41</sup>

Lombardi had unique exposure to General MacArthur when he was detailed to stop at the General's suite on the way back from having the game films developed. During these informal sessions in MacArthur's Waldorf-Astoria suite, they discussed issues that expanded beyond the football field. Years later when Lombardi was a national figure he continued to reflect on what MacArthur told him in those screening sessions.

I can vividly remember him saying that 'competitive sports keeps alive in us a spirit and vitality. It teaches the strong to know when they are weak and the brave to face themselves when they are afraid. To be proud and unbowed in defeat and yet humble and gentle in victory. And to master ourselves before we attempt to master others. And to learn to laugh, yet never forget how to weep. And to give the predominance of courage over timidity.' I think they are great words from what I consider to be one of the great Americans.<sup>42</sup>

Blaik worshiped MacArthur and ensured that Lombardi had access to this American institution. A thread of continuity ran from MacArthur – to - Blaik - to – Lombardi, as they developed hundreds of our nation's future leaders. During his tenure at West Point Lombardi witnessed MacArthur's recall from the Pacific, the signing of the armistice in Korea, and the beginning of the Cold War with the Soviet Union. Adding these experiences to his frame of reference, Lombardi was ready to move to the next level and accepted his first National Football League position as offensive coordinator with the New York Giants.

## **TRANSFORMING PROFESSIONAL FOOTBALL**

By 1954 when Lombardi arrived in New York the United States economy was enjoying an upward surge. Historians attributed this trend to two long term factors. First, Americans held in check by the depression followed by war time shortages and sacrifices, welcomed the opportunity to acquire material goods. The Cold War that followed saw a continued increase in defense spending and between the 1940s and the 1960s the Gross National Product more than doubled. Consumerism and the public's penchant for replacing the old with the new became the dominant theme of the 1950s.<sup>43</sup>

It was in the 1950s that professional football began its rise to prominence. Previously, professional football had occupied the bottom rung of the athletic ladder, well below college football, major league baseball, horse racing, and boxing which demanded greater media coverage and drew larger crowds. Professional football players were regarded as mercenaries who played for meal money and free beer.<sup>44</sup>

By 1954 perceptions were changing and American culture was dominated by anything new and modern. The general population was infatuated with purchasing the most technically

proficient, the biggest, the fastest and the sleekest of everything. In many ways, American's worshipped "the best," and this worship is what essentially defined a professional.<sup>45</sup>

The rise of television was the driving force that allowed professional football and Coach Lombardi to capitalize on this transformation. By the summer of 1954 there were more than 350 broadcasting stations, seven times the number that existed just 3 years prior. Simultaneously, private ownership of television sets exploded from one in five families to two of three having a TV in their homes.<sup>46</sup>

New York was the perfect place for Vince Lombardi to enter the National Football League and be exposed to a national audience. He quickly gained that exposure as the offensive coordinator for the New York Giants. In the 1950s, changes in the United States originated in the advertising offices of Madison Avenue, covered in national magazines and reported on TV networks centered in Manhattan.<sup>47</sup>

Lombardi found himself with the right team at the right time, as the Giants established themselves as a contender in the NFL. In his five seasons running the Giants offense, they did not have a losing season. Furthermore, the Giants accomplishments were witnessed by more Americans than ever before as Columbia Broadcasting System (CBS) for the first time televised all NFL games. As 10.8 million viewers watched the 1958 championship game between the New York Giants and the Baltimore Colts, professional football occupied a place in the American consciousness like never before.<sup>48</sup>

In 1958 at forty-five years old and with his frame of reference anchored in nineteen years of coaching at the high school, college and professional levels, Vince Lombardi became the head coach and general manager of the Green Bay Packers. There were several factors which directly contributed to Lombardi's quick rise to national icon status. First, as one of the thirteen original NFL franchises and the only small market team to survive the Great Depression Green Bay provided the perfect setting. As head coach and general manager, Coach Lombardi controlled all aspects of football operations. This coupled with the fact that the Packers were owned by the citizens of Green Bay and could not be sold or moved, gave Lombardi all the control that he needed to implement his vision for the franchise. The stage was set for Vincent T. Lombardi to become much more than just another football coach.

## **GREEN BAY PACKERS**

To understand how a football coach in the NFL impacted the nation as a strategic leader, one must maintain focus on the strategic environment of the time. The United States and the Soviet Union both possessed nuclear weapons, and the Soviet Union was viewed by the U.S.

as its chief competitor and threat. Historians describe the feeling of panic in the U.S. as the Soviets took the lead in the space race with the successful launch of the Sputnik satellite in October 1957.<sup>49</sup> Many Americans felt like we had lost our competitive edge.

It climaxed with charges that the nation had lost its sense of purpose. President Eisenhower responded by appointing a Commission on National Goals "to develop a broad outline of national objectives for the next decade and longer." Comprised of ten prominent citizens from all walks of life the commission concluded, "... that rather than a change of direction, all the United States needed was a renewed commitment to the pursuit of excellence."<sup>50</sup>

On a national stage Coach Lombardi embodied anything and everything that could be even remotely connected with a commitment to the pursuit of excellence. The first four sections of this paper were devoted to a detailed description of the family, schooling and experiences which comprised Vince Lombardi's life and provided his frame of reference from which he observed and judged future events. At the same time, Lombardi was developing conceptual, technical and interpersonal core leadership competencies which were supported by his broad and rich frame of reference. As the head coach and general manager of the Green Bay Packers, Coach Lombardi served as a strategic leader within that organization, within the institution of football and as a national leader whose abilities transcended his sport.

## CONCEPTUAL COMPETENCIES

Although the development of one's frame of reference continues throughout a lifetime, this effort will shift its focus to a detailed analysis of Vince Lombardi's actions and his impact as a strategic leader. As described in The United States Army War College, Strategic Leadership Primer, a strategic leader's ability to formulate and articulate their strategic vision for the organization is perhaps their single most important contribution to the organization.<sup>51</sup> The Primer defines vision as, the leader-focused, organizational process that gives the organization its sense of purpose, direction, energy and identity.<sup>52</sup>

Lombardi had been waiting for the opportunity to coach professionally his entire life and he was ready to personally lead change in the challenging and complex environment of the NFL. Immediately upon his arrival in Green Bay, Lombardi held a team meeting and announced,

He would have no tolerance for the halfhearted, the defeatist, the loser. The goal was to be the New York Yankees of football. World champions, every day, year-around. Admired everywhere. No more T-shirts on the road. Team blazers and ties for everyone. Wherever you go, you represent the team. You will talk like, you will look like and you will act like the most dignified professional in your

hometown. Relentless in the pursuit of victory. Only winners. Anyone who didn't like it was perfectly free to get the hell out right now.<sup>53</sup>

Although some of the players on that first team may not have known exactly what they were getting into no one left. According to Willie Wood, a player on his first Green Bay team, Coach Lombardi told his team, "You were chosen to be a Green Bay Packer."<sup>54</sup> He made it sound like something unique and wonderful and the results were a bunch of players that felt that they were a select bunch of people. Lombardi took similar actions as he completely remodeled the front office, clearly sending the message that the hapless losing ways of the old days were gone, the Packers were starting over in the spirit of the new by not just starting with a new slate but by completely discarding the old.<sup>55</sup>

In a very short period of time Lombardi had infused a sense of purpose, direction, energy and identity into the organization. In addition to frame of reference development and the ability to envision the future, strategic leaders must have the ability to manage complex problems towards a desired solution. Effective problem management requires an advanced set of leadership skills that include utilizing both direct and indirect influence. A key component of problem management is the ability to recognize and avoid marginal or irrelevant issues.<sup>56</sup>

Much of Coach Lombardi's success rests in his ability to quickly identify and disregard irrelevant factors while successfully implementing his vision through indirect influence. When Lombardi arrived in Green Bay, his playbook was a mere one and one half inches thick in a profession where the norm was at least four inches. He taught a system that revolved around a few plays with many options, where his quarterback was charged with reading the defense and selecting the best option. Some mischaracterized Lombardi's approach as unimaginative, when in fact his entire coaching philosophy was based on legendary Army coach Red Blaik's belief that perfection came with simplicity. Blaik's theory was to discard the immaterial and concentrate your efforts on refining those few things that you did best.<sup>57</sup>

This philosophy was clearly evident in Lombardi's signature play, which came to be known as the 'Packer Sweep.' Although Lombardi had used the sweep when he served as offensive coordinator for the Giants, at Green Bay he transformed the play into something that was singularly identified with him and his Packers. For Coach Lombardi "The Sweep" defined team, all eleven offensive players thinking and reacting as one unstoppable body.<sup>58</sup> The Packers would drill this one play over and over against ever imaginable defense until it was more than routine, it was in their blood and part of their reflective being.<sup>59</sup>

## INTERPERSONAL COMPETENCIES

In addition to conceptual competencies, Lombardi also exhibited the interpersonal skills required of a strategic leader. These skills included the ability to build consensus within the organization, the ability to negotiate with external agencies, and the ability to communicate both externally and internally.<sup>60</sup>

In his first season as a head coach, Lombardi was voted 'Coach of The Year.' Three years later, he was on the cover of Time magazine which proclaimed professional football, "The Sport of the 60s." Professional football was hot, and Vince Lombardi represented American professional football. Lombardi understood that to retain this position of prominence would require the owners to adopt a previously unprecedented unity of purpose. As the undisputed leader in the institution of professional football, he facilitated the necessary cooperation among the owners. In 1962 the Green Bay Packers and the other teams signed a single network contract which strengthened the entire league.<sup>61</sup> Previously each team had negotiated independently from a much weaker position.

By 1965 competition between the National Football League and the American Football League had grown to a point where it required a great deal of Lombardi's attention as general manager. The Packers had never lost a first round selection to the "new league," and Lombardi had no intention of tarnishing that record. Rival teams in the NFL formed odd alliances of collusion to protect their draft picks.<sup>62</sup> In spite of his reputation as unrelenting and headstrong, the real secret of Lombardi's success was his ability to adapt without seeming to compromise.<sup>63</sup>

Perhaps Coach Lombardi's strongest interpersonal skill was his ability to communicate. According to Steve Sabol, the producer for NFL films, Lombardi's communicative ability all started with the voice. Sabol believed that the great leaders in history—Kennedy, Martin Luther King Jr., Roosevelt, Hitler—all had these really unique voices and Lombardi's voice was so unique, so strident, so resonant, it could cut through anything.<sup>64</sup> According to Packer quarterback Bart Starr, "You could tell that the coach believed in what he was doing. His tone of voice, his posture, his manner, it all made you believe."<sup>65</sup> As a strategic leader, Lombardi clearly understood that his actions and words were always carefully analyzed and he was equally talented utilizing both direct and indirect means.

The United States in the 1960s was a nation dealing with the Cold War, the construction of the Berlin Wall, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Civil Rights Movement, the assassinations of President Kennedy and Martin Luther King, the Vietnam War, and the increasingly violent anti-war protest. While the 1960s represented a period of upheaval and rebellion in the public mind,

Lombardi stood for the old virtues of loyalty, discipline and obedience and his victories were interpreted as vindication.<sup>66</sup>

Lombardi connected with the American people at a time when they were looking for someone to believe in and trust. In his book, "When Pride Still Mattered" David Maraniss described the scene at a Sheepshead Bay board of trade dinner dance,

Square and awkward he might be, yet he overpowers people with his will as he walks by. Character is the will in action, his Fordham tutors used to say, and here it is, embodied, magnetism of the will, asserting that life is not merely fleeting luck or chance, that discipline and persistence can prevail, even if it takes twenty years, and as he presses forward the crowd seems certain that he knows the way, the right way, that even if he has not won everything, he will, that he is beyond Sheepshead Bay and Green Bay, and that the applause wells up in the hall deafening now, and it lifts them out of their seats as he goes by and they want to follow him.<sup>67</sup>

By 1967 Green Bay had won five of the previous seven NFL championships and Coach Lombardi had become a leader that transcended the game of football.<sup>68</sup>

#### TECHNICAL COMPETENCIES

Unlike strategic leader conceptual and interpersonal skills, which involved many of the same skills utilized at the organizational level, technical competencies at the strategic level involved a unique set of skills. These skills include understanding how the organization fits into a much broader framework, operating in a multicultural environment, and, most importantly, in some way influencing interests and objectives at the national level.<sup>69</sup>

Both as a head coach and as a general manager Lombardi demonstrated his expertise in moving beyond the internal processes to concentrate on systems integration. On game day Lombardi would be seen ranting and raving up and down the sidelines, but it was little more than that as game day execution was left to his assistant coaches.<sup>70</sup>

Because the Packers were owned by the fans, many of the traditional owner's duties fell to Lombardi as general manager. Lombardi and the owners recognized the prominence that professional football had achieved in the 1960s and they were all eager to maintain that momentum. Instrumental to this process was completing the merger of the NFL and the AFL. Coach Lombardi found himself increasingly involved in the league's new labor issues. Big money, free agency and the players union provided the players with new power and options. Assigned to the management negotiating team, Lombardi hated the players union getting between him and his players, but refused to entertain the thought of bringing in replacement

players. Again, the force of his will upon the owners played a significant role in reaching a deal and avoiding a long strike that would be detrimental for the entire league.<sup>71</sup>

Another technical competency essential to a strategic leader is the ability to operate in a multicultural environment. When asked how many black players were on the Packers Lombardi responded, "I can tell you how many players I have on the squad and I can tell you which ones aren't going to be here next, but I can't tell you how many are black and how many are white."<sup>72</sup> The significance of this response is that seventy-five percent of the NFL was white and there was separation of blacks and whites at meals and in hotels. Coaching in rural Green Bay, Wisconsin where less than one tenth of one percent of the population was black, Lombardi's position facilitated reducing the discrimination that plagued the nation.<sup>73</sup> From a broader perspective angry race riots broke out in 125 cities across the country in response to the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King.<sup>74</sup>

Equally impressive was Lombardi's treatment of gay players who he considered just another group which deserved respect. Lombardi made it clear throughout his career that he would not tolerate discrimination of any sort on his teams.<sup>75</sup> This was more than forty years ago, when gays were not accepted in society much less in the NFL. Howard Cosell described Lombardi as a leader with the ability to see beyond race, class and culture to build a loyal and dependable team out of disparate characters.<sup>76</sup>

By the late 1960s Vince Lombardi was clearly influencing the world outside professional football. Addressing the American Management Association in 1967, Lombardi acknowledged his emergence as a public figure known for more than winning football games.<sup>77</sup> He realized that he had a unique opportunity to influence national interests and objectives at a critical time for the nation. As Lombardi's audiences grew, his message inevitably took on larger dimensions, and he began to be viewed as an important voice in the natural cultural debate. The personal was transformed into the political, and people began talking about a football coach as a political leader.<sup>78</sup> At one point in the chaos of 1968 election both Hubert Humphrey and Richard Nixon seriously considered Lombardi as a possible running mate.<sup>79</sup>

It was Lombardi's opinion that modern society reflected a culture that had too much freedom and not enough respect for authority. He saw this reflected in a greater number of people turning away from competition and fewer striving for perfection.<sup>80</sup> In his first season out of football, Lombardi was booked as a motivational speaker, made a prime-time documentary and a motivational film, and was firmly entrenched in popular culture.<sup>81</sup> As a strategic leader in

the 1960s, Lombardi successfully utilized technical competencies to lead change during a difficult period in this nation's history.

## **CONCLUSION**

As a result of his tenure at West Point Lombardi developed a relationship with MacArthur which enabled him to view first hand the leadership style of this American hero. Through this close and personal friendship Lombardi was able to glean from MacArthur the traits and technical competencies conducive to success at the strategic level. Lombardi honed these skills to ensure the organizations he was associated with were not stagnant, but rather had a long term vision to successfully propel them through the future. As MacArthur told Lombardi, football is simply warfare played on a different field. Lombardi's understanding of this analogy and his focus on education and tradition allowed him to be seen as much more than a football coach and the nation's citizens needed a national figure of hope.

Diagnosed with intestinal cancer, Lombardi died on September 3, 1970. That same year Lombardi led the Washington Redskins to their first winning record in fourteen years. The debate continues today on whether or not Vince Lombardi would have eventually led the Redskins to Super Bowl success; however, what is not debatable is the tremendous success that Lombardi enjoyed as a football coach. In his ten seasons as a head football coach in the NFL, Lombardi compiled a remarkable 105-35-6 record and he never suffered a losing season.

While this record in and of itself was a significant accomplishment, on a much larger scale it thrust Lombardi onto the national stage. With a broad frame of reference developed over a lifetime, Lombardi possessed the tools and the opportunity to exercise his leadership at the strategic level. Grounded with a solid foundation built upon the firm embrace of his family, his Catholic faith, and his education by the Jesuits at Fordham University, Lombardi learned lessons that carried him throughout the rest of his life and enabled him to effectively transform not only the Green Bay Packers but the entire NFL from a fledgling league to a position of prominence.

Although he never commanded a great Army in battle in what has come to be the traditional role associated with a strategic leader, Vince Lombardi was very much such a leader. He evoked, from deep within the American fabric, what it means to be the best. These symbols of American life, discipline, teamwork and loyalty were represented and articulated by Lombardi. He preached his philosophy and principles and society loved it; believing that if he could beat the odds then they had a chance to do it too. The fact remains that the principles that Lombardi stood for do work and are still working. During a critical and confusing period in history he used

a platform of athletic success to deliver a powerful message. He said it best, "Once more we need to develop in this country a strong spirit of competitive interest. We fail in our obligation unless we preserve what has always been an American zeal- that is, to win and to be first, regardless of what we do."<sup>82</sup>

WORD COUNT = 6,855

## ENDNOTES

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<sup>2</sup> Roderick, R. Magee II, ed., Strategic Leadership Primer (Department of Command, Leadership, and Management, United States Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA 1998), 3.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 37.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> David Maraniss, When Pride Still Mattered (New York, NY: Simon and Schuster, 1999), 404.

<sup>7</sup> George F. Will, "Rough Rider in Green Bay," 8 November 1999; available from <http://proquest.umi.com/pdqweb>; Internet; accessed 19 November 2001.

<sup>8</sup> "The Lombardi Era," available from <http://www.packers.com/history/chronology/lombardi.html>; Internet; accessed 7 November 2001.

<sup>9</sup> Powers, 1.

<sup>10</sup> "Vincent T. Lombardi The Early Years," available from [http://pawlowski24.homestead.com/files/MGT\\_388\\_Biography.html](http://pawlowski24.homestead.com/files/MGT_388_Biography.html); Internet; accessed 7 November 2001.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Ibid.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid.

<sup>16</sup> Maraniss, 147.

<sup>17</sup> Maraniss, 190.

<sup>18</sup> Maraniss, 228.

<sup>19</sup> "The Lombardi Era," 1.

<sup>20</sup> "Vince Lombardi's Biography," available from <<http://www.vincelombardi.com/>>; Internet; accessed 24 October 2001.

<sup>21</sup> "Vince Lombardi's Biography," 2.

<sup>22</sup> David Maraniss, "Won and Lost; Vince Lombardi was an American icon, a symbol of competitiveness, a legend for asking his players to play the price for victory. By the time he arrived in Washington, he'd begun to wonder if there were hidden costs," 5 September 1999; available from <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.html>; Internet; accessed 19 November 2001.

<sup>23</sup> Powers, 1.

<sup>24</sup> Maraniss, 19.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 26.

<sup>27</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>28</sup> Robert A. Devine et al., America Past and Present (New York, NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 1991), 747.

<sup>29</sup> Maraniss, 33.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, 51.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 63.

<sup>32</sup> *Ibid.*, 65.

<sup>33</sup> "Vince Lombardi's Biography," 1.

<sup>34</sup> Maraniss, 84.

<sup>35</sup> "Vince Lombardi's Biography," 1.

<sup>36</sup> James Bowman, "Sacking Lombardi," 6 December 1999; available from <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb/html>; Internet; accessed 19 November 2001.

<sup>37</sup> Maraniss, 102.

<sup>38</sup> Maraniss, 100.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 103.

<sup>41</sup> *Ibid.*, 118-119.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 146.

<sup>43</sup> Devine, 858.

<sup>44</sup> Maraniss, 158.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid., 159.

<sup>46</sup> Maraniss, 151.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 159-160.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid., 189-190.

<sup>49</sup> Devine, 865.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 866.

<sup>51</sup> Magee, 40.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid., 27.

<sup>53</sup> Maraniss, 217.

<sup>54</sup> Don Phillips, "Vince Lombardi on Coaching Leadership," 2001; available from <http://www.afca.com/lev1.cfm/117>; Internet; accessed 19 November 2001.

<sup>55</sup> Maraniss, 206.

<sup>56</sup> Magee, 39.

<sup>57</sup> Maraniss, 222.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 224.

<sup>59</sup> Ibid., 221.

<sup>60</sup> Magee, 42.

<sup>61</sup> Maraniss, 324.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 383.

<sup>63</sup> Adam Gopnik, "America's Coach," The New Yorker 27 (20 September 1999): 129.

<sup>64</sup> Maraniss, 373.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 213.

<sup>66</sup> James DiGiacomo, "Coaching with Character," 18 – 25 December 1999; available from <http://proquest.umi.com/pqdweb.html>; Internet; accessed 19 November 2001.

<sup>67</sup> Maraniss, 271.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid., 372.

<sup>69</sup> Magee, 42.

<sup>70</sup> DiGiacomo, 2.

<sup>71</sup> Maraniss, 442.

<sup>72</sup> Phillips, 2.

<sup>73</sup> Maraniss, 239-240.

<sup>74</sup> Divine, 923.

<sup>75</sup> Maraniss, 471.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid., 359.

<sup>77</sup> Ibid., 400.

<sup>78</sup> Ibid., 445.

<sup>79</sup> George F. Will, "Rough Rider in Green Bay," 8 November 1999; available from <http://proquest.umi.com/pdqweb.html>; Internet; accessed 19 November 2001.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid., 402.

<sup>81</sup> Ibid., 448-449.

<sup>82</sup> "Advice to Businessmen on How to Lead," U.S. News and World Report, 20 February 1967, 14.

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# 2.1: Trait Theory

## *Boundless Management*: "Chapter 9, Section 2: Trait Approach"

Read this section, then in your journal, rank-order the four groups of leadership traits in order of importance, in your opinion. Be sure to explain your rationale in your journal in a paragraph of at least 200 words. Those four groups of leadership traits are: (1) personality, (2) demographic, (3) task competence, and (4) interpersonal attributes.

### The Trait-Theory Approach

Understanding the importance of different core personality traits can help organizations select leaders.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Explain the relevance of the trait approach in defining and promoting useful leadership development in the workplace

#### KEY POINTS

- According to trait leadership theory, certain integrated patterns of personal characteristics nurture consistent leader effectiveness in a group of people.
- Trait leadership tries to identify inherent attributes and acquired abilities that differentiate leaders from non-leaders.
- The traits of effective leaders can be organized into three groups: demographic, task competence, and interpersonal.
- These leadership traits motivate leaders to perform and achieve goals for the organizations they represent.

#### TERM

- Trait Leadership

Integrated patterns of personal characteristics that nurture the ability to lead a group of people effectively.

- s are included in this category .

#### **Leadership traits**

## **A list of leader traits by trait category.**

### Proximal vs. Distal Characteristics

Trait leadership also takes into account the distinction between proximal and distal character traits. Proximal characteristics are traits that are malleable and can be developed over time. These include interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, and communication skills. Distal characteristics are more dispositional; that is, people are born with them. These include traits such as self-confidence, creativity, and charisma. Hoffman and others (2011) found that both types of characteristics are correlated with leader effectiveness, implying that while leaders can be born, they can also be made.

### Trait Integration in Effective Leaders

Zaccaro and others (2004) introduced a model of leadership that categorized and specified six types of traits that influence leader effectiveness. The model rests on two basic premises about leadership traits. The first premise states that effective leadership derives not from any one trait, but from an integrated set of cognitive abilities, social capabilities, and dispositional tendencies, with each set of traits adding to the influence of the other. The second premise maintains that the traits differ in how directly they influence leadership. The premise suggests that distal attributes (such as dispositional attributes, cognitive abilities, and motives/values) come first and then lead to the development of proximal characteristics. This model contends the following traits are correlated with strong leadership potential: extroversion, agreeableness, conscientiousness, openness, neuroticism, honesty, charisma, intelligence, creativity, achievement motivation, need for power, communication skills, interpersonal skills, problem-solving skills, decision-making skills, technical knowledge, and management skills.

## Honesty in Leadership: Kouzes and Posner

Kouzes and Posner identify five behaviors of effective leadership, with honesty essential to each.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Assess the theoretical framework devised by Kouzes and Posner in relating leadership and honesty from a business perspective

### KEY POINTS

- Leadership is a process of motivating people and mobilizing resources to accomplish a common goal.
- Honesty refers to different aspects of moral character. It indicates positive and virtuous attributes such as integrity, truthfulness, and straightforwardness.
- Honesty is essential to a leader's legitimacy, credibility, and ability to develop trust with followers.
- Kouzes and Posner identify five behaviors of effective leaders: model the way, inspire vision, enable others, challenge the process, and encourage the heart.
- Effective leaders set strong behavioral examples while expounding upon the company vision to inspire employees to be fulfilled, and honesty is a necessary component of this behavior.

## TERMS

- micromanaging

The act of over-supervising or employing too much detail in delegating a task.

- Honesty

A facet of moral character that connotes positive and virtuous attributes such as integrity, truthfulness, and straightforwardness, along with the absence of lying, cheating, or theft.

Leadership is the ability to motivate people and mobilize resources to accomplish a common goal. In leadership, honesty is an important virtue, as leaders serve as rolemodels for their subordinates. Honesty refers to different aspects of moral character. It indicates positive and virtuous attributes such as integrity, truthfulness, and straightforwardness. These characteristics create trust, which is critical to leaders in all positions. Honesty also implies the absence of lying, cheating, or theft.

Subordinates have faith in the leaders they follow. A leader who is not honest will lose legitimacy in the eyes of followers. Integrity and openness are essential to developing trust, and without honesty a leader cannot gain and maintain the trust needed to build commitment to a shared vision.

Leadership experts Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner find honesty to be the most important trait of effective leaders. In its absence, leaders lack credibility, and their ability to influence others is diminished. Honesty also brings a degree of transparency to a leader's interaction with others.

For Kouzes and Posner, honesty is a critical element of the five behaviors of effective leaders.

### **Five behaviors of effective leaders**

This model was created by Kouzes and Posner to emphasize vital leadership practices.

- **Model the way:** Leaders must clarify their values and set an example for their employees to imitate, underscoring the importance of modeling positive characteristics such as honesty.
- **Inspire vision:** The vision is the emotional element of a company's mission statement, and this vision must be communicated honestly and with passion. Promoting the company's vision allows leaders to inspire employees.
- **Enable others to act:** Leaders often make the critical mistake of micromanaging, as opposed to trusting others to do their job. Trust stems from honesty, and creating an honest environment allows other employees more personal autonomy.
- **Challenge the process:** Leaders need to be attentive to how things are done, not just what gets done, and they must be willing to address areas that require change. These practices are essential for continuous improvement, progress toward goals, and innovation.
- **Encourage the heart:** Leaders must nurture the emotional dimension of their relationships with followers. Showing appreciation, creating a supportive environment, and fostering community sentiment helps build commitment to the leader's vision.

In summary, leaders are tasked with balancing the organizational strategies of management with the social elements of leading. This requires leaders to be in tune with their employees' emotions and concerns in a meaningful and honest way. Effective leaders set strong behavioral examples while communicating their vision to inspire employees. The need for honesty is woven throughout the primary activities of effective leaders.

## Leadership and Gender

Studies on the role of gender in leadership success show mixed results.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Discuss the relationship between gender and leadership behavior

### KEY POINTS

- Research on leadership differences between men and women shows conflicting results. Some research states that women have a different style of leadership than men, while other studies reveal no major differences in leadership behaviors between the genders.
- Areas of study have included perceptions of leadership, leadership styles, leadership practices, and leadership effectiveness.
- Some studies have found women leaders tend to demonstrate more communication, cooperation, affiliation, and nurturing than men in leadership.
- Male leaders have been shown to be more goal- and task-oriented and less relationship- and process-focused than women.

## TERMS

- gender

The sociocultural phenomenon of the division of people into categories of male and female, each having associated clothing, roles, stereotypes, etc.

- leadership

The capacity of someone to lead.

In many areas of society, men have long dominated leadership positions. This dominance was especially apparent in business, where female members of boards of directors and corporate executives had been scarce. Over the past three decades, however, women have entered more leadership positions throughout industry. The trend has provided an opportunity to examine differences in how men and women perform in the role of leaders.

### **Virginia Rometty, CEO of IBM**

**As CEO of one of the largest companies in the U.S., Virginia Rometty is in a highly influential and visible leadership role.**

### Gender Differences in Leadership

Research reveals small but significant differences in the way men and women are perceived in leadership roles, their effectiveness in such positions, and their leadership styles. Studies conducted in the 1980s and early 1990s found that women adopt participative styles of leadership and were more often transformational leaders than men, who more commonly adopted directive, transactional styles. Women in management positions tend to

demonstrate the importance of communication, cooperation, affiliation, and nurturing more than do men in the same positions. The studies also showed men as more goal- and task-oriented and less relationship- and process-focused than women.

### Conflicting Studies

Nonetheless, studies demonstrating distinct leadership styles between men and woman do not represent the final word. Other research has found limited evidence for significant differences between the behaviors of male and female leaders. In 2011, Anderson and Hanson found differences in decision-making styles, but none linked directly to differences in leadership effectiveness. They found no distinction in types or degree of motivation or in leadership styles overall. Other studies show similar results, challenging the notion that leaders' sex shapes their performance as a leader. Management guru Rosabeth Moss Kanter studied men and women in a large corporation and found that differences in their behavior resulted not from gender but from organizational factors. In Kanter's study, men and women, given the same degree of power and opportunity, behaved in similar ways.

## The GLOBE Project

The GLOBE Research Project is an international group of social scientists and management scholars who study cross-cultural leadership.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Outline the nine cultural competences found by the GLOBE project using the six GLOBE dimensions and describe how the project pertains to leadership

### KEY POINTS

- GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Project) is an international group of social scientists and management scholars who study cross-cultural leadership.
- This international team collected data from 17,300 middle managers in 951 organizations and grouped 62 countries into ten geographic clusters.
- The research identified nine cultural competencies that distinguish approaches to leadership.
- The research also identified six global dimensions by which to compare and contrast leadership behaviors.

### TERM

- GLOBE project

Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness study; refers to research into aspects of cross-cultural leadership behavior.

## FULL TEXT

Under the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) Research Project, an international group of social scientists and management scholars studied cross-cultural leadership. In 1993, Robert J. House founded the project at the University of Pennsylvania. The project looked at 62 societies with different cultures, which were studied by researchers working in their home countries. This international team collected data from 17,300 middle managers in 951 organizations. They used qualitative methods to assist their development of quantitative instruments. The research identified nine cultural competencies and grouped the 62 countries into ten geographic clusters, including Latin American, Nordic European, Sub-Saharan, and Confucian Asian.

## The Globe Project

### Logo for the Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness (GLOBE) Project.

#### Bases for Leadership Comparisons

The GLOBE project identified nine cultural dimensions, called competencies, with which the leadership approaches within geographic clusters can be compared and contrasted:

1. *Performance orientation* refers to the extent to which an organization or society encourages and rewards group members for performance improvement and excellence.
2. *Assertiveness orientation* is the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies are assertive, confrontational, and aggressive in social relationships.
3. *Future orientation* is the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies engage in future-oriented behaviors such as planning, investing in the future, and delaying gratification.
4. *Human orientation* is the degree to which individuals in organizations or societies encourage and reward individuals for being fair, altruistic, friendly, generous, caring, and kind to others.
5. *Collectivism I* (institutional collectivism) is the degree to which organizational and societal institutional practices encourage and reward collective distribution of resources and collective action.

6. *Collectivism II* (in-group collectivism) is the degree to which individuals express pride, loyalty, and cohesiveness in their organizations or families.
7. *Gender egalitarianism* is the extent to which an organization or a society minimizes gender role differences and gender discrimination.
8. *Power distance* is the degree to which members of an organization or society expect and agree that power should be unequally shared.
9. *Uncertainty avoidance* is the extent to which members of an organization or society strive to avoid uncertainty by reliance on social norms, rituals, and bureaucratic practices to alleviate the unpredictability of future events.

## GLOBE Leadership Dimensions

Following extensive review of the research, GLOBE participants grouped leadership characteristics into six dimensions. Researchers then made recommendations about how dimensions of culture and leadership could distinguish behavior in one country or culture from another.

Known as the six GLOBE dimensions of culturally endorsed implicit leadership, these leadership dimensions include:

1. Charismatic or value-based: Characterized by integrity and decisiveness; performance-oriented by appearing visionary, inspirational, and self-sacrificing; can also be toxic and allow for autocratic commanding.
2. Team-oriented: Characterized by diplomacy, administrative competence, team collaboration, and integration.
3. Self-protective: Characterized by self-centeredness, face-saving, and procedural behavior capable of inducing conflict when necessary, while being conscious of status.
4. Participative: Characterized by non-autocratic behavior that encourages involvement and engagement and that is supportive of those who are being led.
5. Human orientation: Characterized by modesty and compassion for others in an altruistic fashion.
6. Autonomous: Characterized by ability to function without constant consultation.

# U.S. Small Business Association: "Leadership Traits"

This reading is a brief list of the nine personality traits identified by leadership research pioneer Raymond Cattell in 1954, along with several traits uncovered since then. Would you add any additional traits that you believe a manager or leader would need in the modern workplace? Note this listing is based on conventional personality qualities.

## Leadership Traits

Over the past several years, one of the most important contributions psychology has made to the field of business has been in determining the key traits of acknowledged leaders. Psychological tests have been used to determine what characteristics are most commonly noted among successful leaders. This list of characteristics can be used for developmental purposes to help managers gain insight and develop their leadership skills.

The increasing rate of change in the business environment is a major factor in this new emphasis on leadership; whereas in the past, managers were expected to maintain the status quo in order to move ahead, new forces in the marketplace have made it necessary to expand this narrow focus. The new leaders of tomorrow are visionary. They are both learners and teachers. Not only do they foresee paradigm changes in society, but they also have a strong sense of ethics and work to build integrity in their organizations.

Raymond Cattell, a pioneer in the field of personality assessment, developed the Leadership Potential equation in 1954. This equation, which was based on a study of military leaders, is used today to determine the traits which characterize an effective leader. The traits of an effective leader include the following:

- Emotional stability. Good leaders must be able to tolerate frustration and stress. Overall, they must be well-adjusted and have the psychological maturity to deal with anything they are required to face.
- Dominance. Leaders are often competitive, decisive, and usually enjoy overcoming obstacles. Overall, they are assertive in their thinking style as well as their attitude in dealing with others.
- Enthusiasm. Leaders are usually seen as active, expressive, and energetic. They are often very optimistic and open to change. Overall, they are generally quick and alert and tend to be uninhibited.
- Conscientiousness. Leaders are often dominated by a sense of duty and tend to be very exacting in character. They usually have a very high standard of excellence and an inward desire to do one's best. They also have a need for order and tend to be very self-disciplined.
- Social boldness. Leaders tend to be spontaneous risk-takers. They are usually socially aggressive and generally thick-skinned. Overall, they are responsive to others and tend to be high in emotional stamina.
- Tough-mindedness. Good leaders are practical, logical, and to-the-point. They tend to be low in sentimental attachments and comfortable with criticism. They are usually insensitive to hardship and are very poised.

- Self-assurance. Self-confidence and resiliency are common traits among leaders. They tend to be free of guilt and have little or no need for approval. They are generally secure and free from guilt and are usually unaffected by prior mistakes or failures.
- Compulsiveness. Leaders were found to be controlled and very precise in their social interactions. Overall, they were very protective of their integrity and reputation and consequently tended to be socially aware and careful, abundant in foresight, and very careful when making decisions or determining specific actions.

Beyond these basic traits, leaders of today must also possess traits which will help them motivate others and lead them in new directions. Leaders of the future must be able to envision the future and convince others that their vision is worth following. To do this, they must have the following personality traits:

- High energy. Long hours and some travel are usually a prerequisite for leadership positions, especially as your company grows. Remaining alert and staying focused are two of the greatest obstacles you will have to face as a leader.
- Intuitiveness. Rapid changes in the world today combined with information overload result in an inability to know everything. In other words, reasoning and logic will not get you through all situations. In fact, more and more leaders are learning the value of using their intuition and trusting their gut when making decisions.
- Maturity. To be a good leader, personal power and recognition must be secondary to the development of your employees. In other words, maturity is based on recognizing that more can be accomplished by empowering others than can be by ruling others.
- Team orientation. Business leaders today put a strong emphasis on team work. Instead of promoting an adult/child relationship with their employees, leaders create an adult/adult relationship which fosters team cohesiveness.
- Empathy. Being able to put yourself in the other person's shoes is a key trait of leaders today. Without empathy, you can't build trust; without trust, you will never be able to get the best effort from your employees.
- Charisma. People usually perceive leaders as larger than life. Charisma plays a large part in this perception. Leaders who have charisma are able to arouse strong emotions in their employees by defining a vision which unites and captivates them. Using this vision, leaders motivate employees to reach toward a future goal by tying the goal to substantial personal rewards and values.

Overall, leaders are larger than life in many ways. Personal traits play a major role in determining who will and who will not be comfortable leading others. However, it's important to remember that people are forever learning and changing.

Leaders are rarely (if ever) born. Circumstances and persistence are major components in the developmental process of any leader, so if your goal is to become a leader, work on developing those areas of your personality that you feel are not up to par. For instance, if you have all of the basic traits

but do not consider yourself very much of a people person, try taking classes or reading books on empathy. On the other end, if relating to others has always come naturally to you, but you have trouble making logical decisions, try learning about tough-mindedness and how to develop more psychological resistance. Just remember, anyone can do anything they set their mind to.

# 8 traits of successful entrepreneurs--Do you have what it takes?

Starting a business is a lot of work. Anyone who tells you it's not is either lying or has never actually started one themselves. The hours are long, sacrifices are great and you are assulted with new problems and challenges every day with seemingly no end. If you don't have the constitution to weather these things, your business could implode on you faster than it started.

Clearly, entrepreneurship is not for everyone. But how do you know whether it's for you? You should start by asking yourself what it takes to be a leader because, for the most part, you'll be doing a lot of the work up front by yourself. If you can't lead yourself through startup, chances are you won't likely be able to lead your business and future employees through growth and on to success.

If you enjoy only a few actual hours of real work per day, the rest of the time spent either looking busy or hanging out at the water cooler to catch up on TV talk, a modest but steady paycheck and benefits and are okay with routine day-in and day-out, stop reading here and go back to your cushy desk job.

If you seek a challenge wrought with risk but with tremendous potential reward both financially and morally, read on friend, for you have something of what it takes to be a successful entrepreneur.

Successful entrepreneurs, from Henry Ford to Steve Jobs, share similar qualities with one another. To see how you rank against these distinguished entrepreneurs, do you share at least half of these qualities?

## **1. Strong leadership qualities**

Leaders are born, not made. Do you find yourself being the go-to person most of the time? Do you find people asking your opinion or to help guide or make decisions for them? Have you been in management roles throughout your career? A leader is someone who values the goal over any unpleasantness the work it takes to get there may bring. But a leader is more than just tenacious. A leader has strong communication skills and the ability to amass a team of people toward a common goal in a way that the entire team is motivated and works effectively to get there as a team. A leader earns the trust and respect of his team by demonstrating positive work qualities and confidence, then fostering an environment that proliferates these values through the team. A leader who nobody will follow is not a leader of anything at all.

## **2. Highly self-motivated**

You probably know from knowing even a little bit about some of the most famous business entrepreneurs in history that leaders are typically pretty intense personalities. Nobody makes progress by sitting back and waiting for it to find them. Successful people go out into the world and invoke change through their actions. Typically, leaders enjoy challenges and will work tirelessly to solve problems that confront them. They adapt well to changing situations without unraveling and are typically expert at helping their teams change with them by motivating them toward new goals and opportunities. Often you will learn that successful entrepreneurs are driven by a more complete vision or goal than simply the task at hand and able to think on a more universal level in that regard. They are also often very passionate about their ideas that drive toward these ultimate goals and are notoriously difficult to steer off the course.

## **3. Strong sense of basic ethics and integrity**

Business is sustainable because there is a common, understood code of ethics universally that underpins the very fabric upon which commerce is conducted. While cheaters and thieves may win in the short term, they invariably lose out in the long run. You will find that successful, sustainable business people maintain the highest standards of integrity because, at the end of the day, if you cannot prove yourself a credible business person and nobody will do business with you, you are out of business. With importance in working with clients or leading a team, effective leaders admit to any error made and offer solutions to correct rather than lie about, blame others for, or dwell on the problem itself.

## **4. Willingness to fail**

Successful entrepreneurs are risk takers who have all gotten over one very significant hurdle: they are not afraid of failure. That's not to say that they rush in with reckless abandon. In fact, entrepreneurs are often successful because they are calculating and able to make the best decisions in even the worst of cases. However, they also accept that, even if they make the best decision possible, things don't always go according to plan and may fail anyhow. If you've heard the old adage, "nothing ventured, nothing gained," that's exactly what it's saying: do not be afraid to fail, put it out there and give it your best shot. Again, there's not one successful entrepreneur out there sitting on his couch asking, "what if?"

## **5. Serial innovators**

Entrepreneurs are almost defined by their drive to constantly develop new ideas and improve on existing processes. In fact, that's how most of them got into business in the first place. Successful people welcome change and often depend on it to improve their effectiveness as leaders and ultimately the success of their businesses as many business concepts rely on improving products, services and processes in order to win business.

## **6. Know what you don't know**

While successful entrepreneurs are typically strong personalities overall, the best have

learned that there's always a lesson to be learned. They are rarely afraid to ask questions when it means the answers will provide them insight they can then leverage to effect. Successful entrepreneurs are confident, but not egotistical to the point that their bull-headedness is a weakness that continually prohibits them from seeing a bigger picture and ultimately making the best decisions for the business.

### **7. Competitive spirit**

Entrepreneurs enjoy a challenge and they like to win. They would have to since starting a business is pretty much one of the biggest challenges a person can take on in their lifetime. In business it's a constant war with competition to win business and grow market share. It's also a personal challenge to use all of this to focus inward and grow a business from nothing into a powerhouse that either makes a lot of money or is so effective that it is sold or acquired for a profit as well.

### **8. Understand the value of a strong peer network**

In almost every case, entrepreneurs never get to success alone. The best understand it takes a network of contacts, business partners, financial partners, peers and resources to succeed. Effective people nurture these relationships and surround themselves with people who can help make them more effective. Any good leader is only as good as those who support him.

## 12.3 What Do Leaders Do? Behavioral Approaches to Leadership

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain the behaviors that are associated with leadership.
2. Identify the three alternative decision-making styles leaders use and the conditions under which they are more effective.
3. Discuss the limitations of behavioral approaches to leadership.

### Leader Behaviors

When trait researchers became disillusioned in the 1940s, their attention turned to studying leader behaviors. What did effective leaders actually do? Which behaviors made them perceived as leaders? Which behaviors increased their success? To answer these questions, researchers at Ohio State University and the University of Michigan used many different techniques, such as observing leaders in laboratory settings as well as surveying them. This research stream led to the discovery of two broad categories of behaviors: task-oriented behaviors (sometimes called **initiating structure**) and people-oriented behaviors (also called **consideration**). Task-oriented leader behaviors involve structuring the roles of subordinates, providing them with instructions, and behaving in ways that will increase the performance of the group. Task-oriented behaviors are directives given to employees to get things done and to ensure that organizational goals are met. People-oriented leader behaviors include showing concern for employee feelings and treating employees with respect. People-oriented leaders genuinely care about the well-being of their employees, and they demonstrate their concern in their actions and decisions. At the time, researchers thought that these two categories of behaviors were the keys to the puzzle of leadership. See House, R. J., & Aditya, R. N. (1997). The social scientific study of leadership: Quo Vadis? *Journal of Management*, 23, 409–473. However, research did

not support the argument that demonstrating both of these behaviors would necessarily make leaders effective. Nystrom, P. C. (1978). Managers and the hi-hi leader myth. *Academy of Management Journal*, 21, 325–331.

When we look at the overall findings regarding these leader behaviors, it seems that both types of behaviors, in the aggregate, are beneficial to organizations, but for different purposes. For example, when leaders demonstrate people-oriented behaviors, employees tend to be more satisfied and react more positively. However, when leaders are task oriented, productivity tends to be a bit higher. Judge, T. A., Piccolo, R. F., & Ilies, R. (2004). The forgotten ones? The validity of consideration and initiating structure in leadership research. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 89, 36–51. Moreover, the situation in which these behaviors are demonstrated seems to matter. In small companies, task-oriented behaviors were found to be more effective than in large companies. Miles, R. H., & Petty, M. M. (1977). Leader effectiveness in small bureaucracies. *Academy of Management Journal*, 20, 238–250. There is also some evidence that very high levels of leader task-oriented behaviors may cause burnout with employees. Seltzer, J., & Numerof, R. E. (1988). Supervisory leadership and subordinate burnout. *Academy of Management Journal*, 31, 439–446.

## **Leader Decision Making**

Another question behavioral researchers focused on involved how leaders actually make decisions and the influence of decision-making styles on leader effectiveness and employee reactions. Three types of decision-making styles were studied.

In authoritarian decision making, leaders make the decision alone without necessarily involving employees in the decision-making process. When leaders use democratic decision making, employees participate in the making of the decision. Finally, leaders using laissez-faire decision making leave employees alone to make the decision. The leader provides minimum guidance and involvement in the decision.

As with other lines of research on leadership, research did not identify one decision-making style as the best. It seems that the effectiveness of the style the leader is using depends on the circumstances. A review of the literature shows that when leaders use more democratic or participative decision-making styles, employees tend to be more satisfied; however, the effects on decision quality or employee productivity are weaker. Moreover, instead of expecting to be involved in every single decision, employees seem to care more about the overall participativeness of the organizational climate. Miller, K. I., & Monge, P. R. (1986). Participation, satisfaction, and productivity: A meta-analytic review. *Academy of Management Journal*, 29, 727–753. Different types of employees may also expect different levels of involvement. In a research organization, scientists viewed democratic leadership most favorably and authoritarian leadership least favorably, Baumgartel, H. (1957). Leadership style as a variable in research administration. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 2, 344–360. but employees working in large groups where opportunities for member interaction was limited preferred authoritarian leader decision making. Vroom, V. H., & Mann, F. C. (1960). Leader authoritarianism and employee attitudes. *Personnel Psychology*, 13, 125–140. Finally, the effectiveness of each style seems to depend on who is using it. There are examples of effective leaders using both authoritarian and democratic styles. At Hyundai Motor America, high-level managers use authoritarian decision-making styles, and the company is performing very well. Deutschman, A. (2004, September). Googling for courage. *Fast Company*, 86, 58–59; Welch, D., Kiley, D., Ihlwan, M. (2008, March 17). My way or the highway at Hyundai. *Business Week*, 4075, 48–51.

*Figure 12.8*



*Google cofounders Larry Page and Sergey Brin (shown here) are known for their democratic decision-making styles.*

*Source: <http://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/>*

*Image: [Sergey Brin, Web 2.0 Conference.jpg](#).*

The track record of the laissez-faire decision-making style is more problematic. Research shows that this style is negatively related to employee satisfaction with leaders and leader effectiveness. Judge, T. A., & Piccolo, R. F. (2004). Transformational and transactional leadership: A meta-analytic test of their relative validity. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 89*, 755–768. Laissez-faire leaders create high levels of ambiguity about job expectations on the part of employees, and employees also engage in higher levels of conflict when leaders are using the laissez-faire style. Skogstad, A., Einarsen, S., Torsheim, T., Aasland, M. S., & Hetland, H. (2007). The destructiveness of laissez-faire leadership behavior. *Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 12*, 80–92.

## **Leadership Assumptions about Human Nature**

Why do some managers believe that the only way to manage employees is to force and coerce them to work while others adopt a more humane approach? Douglas McGregor, an MIT Sloan School of Management professor, believed that a manager's actions toward employees were dictated by having one of two basic sets of assumptions about

employee attitudes. His two contrasting categories, outlined in his 1960 book, *The Human Side of Enterprise*, are known as Theory X and Theory Y.

According to McGregor, some managers subscribe to Theory X. The main assumptions of Theory X managers are that employees are lazy, do not enjoy working, and will avoid expending energy on work whenever possible. For a manager, this theory suggests employees need to be forced to work through any number of control mechanisms ranging from threats to actual punishments. Because of the assumptions they make about human nature, Theory X managers end up establishing rigid work environments. Theory X also assumes employees completely lack ambition. As a result, managers must take full responsibility for their subordinates' actions, as these employees will never take initiative outside of regular job duties to accomplish tasks.

In contrast, Theory Y paints a much more positive view of employees' attitudes and behaviors. Under Theory Y, employees are not lazy, can enjoy work, and will put effort into furthering organizational goals. Because these managers can assume that employees will act in the best interests of the organization given the chance, Theory Y managers allow employees autonomy and help them become committed to particular goals. They tend to adopt a more supportive role, often focusing on maintaining a work environment in which employees can be innovative and prosperous within their roles.

One way of improving our leadership style would be to become conscious about our theories of human nature, and question the validity of our implicit theories.

Source: McGregor, D. (1960). *Human side of enterprise*. New York: McGraw Hill.

## **Limitations of Behavioral Approaches**

Behavioral approaches, similar to trait approaches, fell out of favor because they neglected the environment in which behaviors are demonstrated. The hope of the researchers was that the identified behaviors would predict leadership under all

circumstances, but it may be unrealistic to expect that a given set of behaviors would work under all circumstances. What makes a high school principal effective on the job may be very different from what makes a military leader effective, which would be different from behaviors creating success in small or large business enterprises. It turns out that specifying the conditions under which these behaviors are more effective may be a better approach.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

When researchers failed to identify a set of traits that would distinguish effective from ineffective leaders, research attention turned to the study of leader behaviors. Leaders may demonstrate task-oriented and people-oriented behaviors. Both seem to be related to important outcomes, with task-oriented behaviors more strongly relating to leader effectiveness and people-oriented behaviors leading to employee satisfaction. Leaders can also make decisions using authoritarian, democratic, or laissez-faire styles. While laissez-faire has certain downsides, there is no best style, and the effectiveness of each style seems to vary across situations. Because of the inconsistency of results, researchers realized the importance of the context in which leadership occurs, which paved the way to contingency theories of leadership.

# *Boundless Management: "Chapter 9, Section 3: Behavioral Approach"*

Read this section. Considering that the University of Michigan behavioral studies are over 50 years old, do the findings still hold validity in our current society? Why or why not? Explain your response in detail. Then, record in your journal whether you feel the behaviors discussed in the section about the Ohio State studies, namely "consideration" and "initiating structure," are dichotomous or if they rather exist on a continuum. Compare and contrast the two universities' studies.

## Leadership Model: University of Michigan

The Michigan behavioral studies are an important link in the ongoing development of behavioral theory in a leadership framework.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Discuss the Michigan Leadership Studies generated in the 1950s and 1960s in the broader context of behavioral approaches to leadership

### KEY POINTS

- The Michigan Leadership Studies of the 1950s and 1960s researched behavioral approaches and identification of leader relationships and group processes.
- The Michigan Leadership Studies classified leaders as either "employee-centered" or "job-centered".
- These studies identified three critical characteristics of effective leaders: task-oriented behavior, relationship-oriented behavior, and participative leadership.

### TERM

- theory

A coherent statement or set of ideas that explains observations or phenomena or that sets out the laws and principles of something known or observed; a hypothesis confirmed by observation, experiment.

### FULL TEXT

The recognition of leaders and the development of leadership theory have evolved over centuries. Individual ideas, actions, and behaviors have been identified as indicating leadership within societal structures. This theoretical evolution has progressed over time, from identifying individual personalities or characteristics to formal studies related to what constitutes leadership and why leadership is or is not successful. Some of these studies and observations have been informal, while others have included empirical research and data.

Studies of individual leadership styles and behaviors continue to contribute to understanding what it takes to be an effective leader, one who is attuned to the needs of an organization and those it serves. Much of the evolution in the study of leadership behavior has become more connected not only to people within an organization, but also extended to those outside the organization. This extension acknowledges that an understanding of the values, beliefs, and norms of those shaping the organization have a definite effect on the evolution and growth of the organization as a whole, as well as its ultimate impact on the community and people it serves.

### A Brief History of Leadership Research

Rost (1991) writes that in the 20th century, over 200 definitions for leadership were proposed. Leadership research continues as scholars observe, identify, and promote the emergence of new leadership styles and behaviors in the 21st century. A multitude of approaches have been used to identify and explain the complex factors that shape leadership and how it is practiced. These approaches include quantitative methods such as surveys, questionnaires, and diagnostic tests, as well as qualitative observational and ethnographic studies. These theories evaluate the relationship of the leader to organizational members and examine styles of leadership, adding to the general knowledge of leader behavior and effectiveness.

**A group of leaders receiving recognition for their service.  
These people are all leaders.**

### Michigan Leadership Studies in the 1950s and 1960s

As a leading center of social science research, the University of Michigan has produced some of the most important studies of leadership. Studies dating back to the 1950s identified two broad leadership styles: an employee orientation and a production orientation. The studies also identified three critical characteristics of effective leaders: task-oriented behavior, relationship-oriented behavior, and participative leadership. The studies concluded that an employee orientation rather than a production orientation, coupled with general instead of close supervision, led to better results. The Michigan leadership studies,

along with the Ohio State University studies that took place in the 1940s, are two of the best-known behavioral leadership studies and continue to be cited to this day.

## Leadership Model: The Ohio State University

The Ohio State Leadership Studies found that consideration and initiating structure are two essential behaviors for leaders.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Discuss the results of the Ohio State University Leadership Model research study of 1945

### KEY POINTS

- According to the findings of the Ohio study, leaders exhibit two types of behaviors, people-oriented (consideration) and task-oriented (initiating structure), to facilitate goal accomplishment.
- Consideration is the extent to which leaders are concerned with the well-being of their followers and the extent to which leaders are personable and understanding.
- Initiating structure is the extent to which a leader defines leader and group member roles, initiates actions, organizes group activities, and defines how tasks are to be accomplished by the group.
- The Ohio State researchers generated a list of 150 statements designed to measure nine different dimensions of leadership behavior.
- The study's findings suggest that effective leaders possess a strong ability to work with others and build a cohesive team balanced with the capability to create structure within which activities can be accomplished.

### TERMS

- Consideration

The extent to which a leader exhibits concern for the welfare of the members of the group.

- Initiating Structure

The extent to which a leader defines leader and group member roles, initiates actions, organizes group activities, and defines how tasks are to be accomplished by the group.

Prior to 1945, most studies of leadership sought to identify the individual traits of effective leaders. Trait theories of leadership were the first to approach leadership study systematically. Trait studies, however, yielded inconsistent results and opened the door to broader perspectives on understanding the behavior of leaders.

In 1945, a group of researchers at Ohio State University sought to identify the observable behaviors of leaders instead of focusing on their individual traits. To document their findings, they generated a list of 150 statements designed to measure nine different dimensions of leadership behavior. These statements were used to develop the Leaders' Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ). The surveys were then given to members of a group, who were asked to respond to a series of statements about the leader of their group. Respondents of the LBDQ-rated leaders cited how frequently they engaged in a certain behavior. The results of the survey showed that two main behaviors, consideration and initiating structure, were the most significant factors in leadership.

Consideration and Initiating Structure

### **Issuing orders**

**An important characteristic of military leaders is the ability to initiate structure with their followers.**

The Ohio State researchers defined *consideration* as the extent to which a leader exhibits concern for the welfare of the members of the group. This behavior is oriented towards interpersonal relationships, mutual trust, and affiliation. This dimension of leadership style is people-oriented. Some of the statements used to measure this factor in the LBDQ include:

- being friendly and approachable
- treating all group members as the leader's equal
- looking out for the personal welfare of group members
- making themselves accessible to group members

The Ohio researchers defined *initiating structure* as the extent to which a leader specifies group member roles, initiates actions, organizes group activities, and defines how tasks are

to be accomplished by the group. This leadership style is task-oriented. Some of the statements used to measure the initiating structure behavior in the LBDQ include:

- letting group members know what is expected of them
- maintaining definite standards of performance
- scheduling the work to be done
- asking that group members follow standard rules and regulations

### Application of Findings

The LBDQ findings suggest that an effective leader will possess a strong ability to work with others and build a cohesive team but will also balance that with the capability to create structure within which activities can be accomplished. For example, an effective leader must be both personable and empathetic, but he or she will also be able to set expectations and guidelines that can motivate and direct the efforts of others.

# Praxis Framework: "Blake and Mouton"

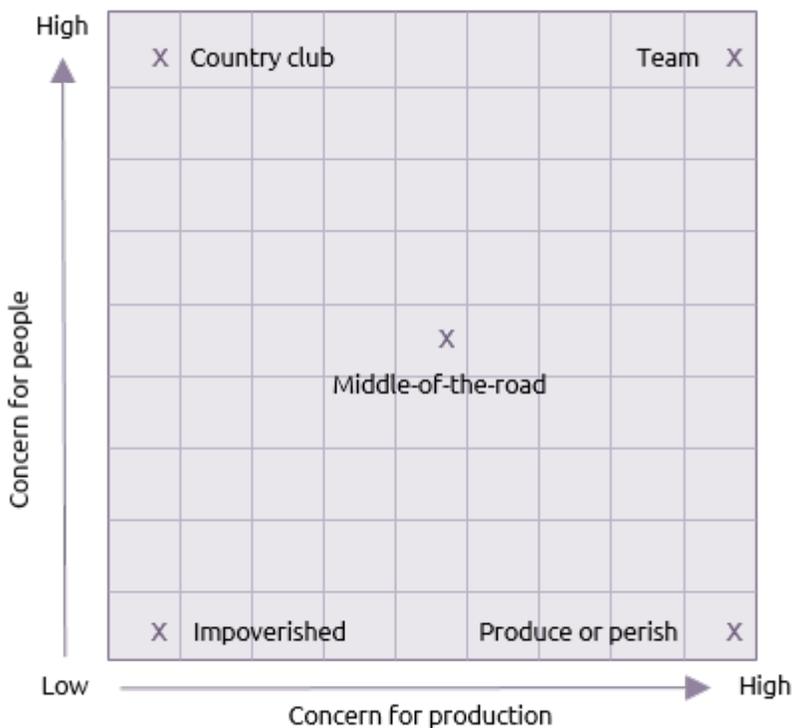
Review this synopsis of Blake and Mouton's research. Considering the grid created by the two dimensions, "concern for people" and "concern for production," where would you "plot" your own leadership style? Write your thoughts in your journal. Also, take this time to journal about what could be some other names for the five categories Blake and Mouton describe. Can you think of an alternative name for each category based on their description? Record an alternative for each in your journal.

## Blake and Mouton

Robert Blake and Jane Mouton developed their managerial grid in the early 1960's<sup>1</sup>. They described two dimensions:

- **concern for people** indicates the degree to which a leader considers team members' needs, interests and personal development.
- **concern for production** indicates the degree to which the leader emphasises objectives, organisational efficiency and productivity.

Within these dimensions they identified five example managerial styles:



- **Impoverished**  
An impoverished leader is largely ineffective. They are not particularly interested in developing systems or people. In fact they aren't especially interested in getting a job done – not really a leader at all.
- **Country club**  
A country club leader is primarily focused on people and assumes that if they are happy and secure, they will work hard and achieve the objectives. This style of [leadership](#) can result in poor results due to a lack of direction and control.
- **Produce or perish**  
This type of leader is authoritative and similar to [McGregor's](#) theory X. They focus on efficient procedures and employee needs are always secondary to the production of the objectives.
- **Team leadership**  
A manager with this style places equal emphasis on both people and production. To paraphrase Blake and Mouton for the P3 environment - they believe that if people understand the objectives, their role in achieving the end benefits and are involved in determining the means of achieving those benefits, then their needs and production needs will coincide.

Blake and Mouton saw this as the best managerial style although models such as [Hersey and Blanchard](#) show that one managerial style doesn't fit all situations. This style is similar to McGregor's theory Y.

- **Middle-of-the-road**  
While this may appear to be a useful compromise situation between people and production it often means that the manager is happy with average performance and neither the needs of people nor the needs of production are fully met.

The managerial grid has been used as the basis for many other models such as Hersey and Blanchard and [Thomas-Kilmann](#). From a P3 manager's point of view all these models must be interpreted according to the context of a project or programme, the way a team develops (e.g. [Tuckman](#)), the [life cycle](#) phase being led and the general [capability maturity](#) of the host organisation.

# What our families teach us about organizational life

In October I appeared on the [100th episode](#) of [The Dave and Gunnar Show](#), an independent podcast about open source and open government issues hosted by [two members](#) of Red Hat's public sector team. We spoke at length about *The Open Organization* (one of my all-time favorite topics!), and the interview gave me a chance to address an important question. That question actually came from [Paul Smith](#), Red Hat's VP of Public Sector (you might recognize him as the guy who recently [photobombed me](#) at a book signing), who asked:

This wasn't the first time someone had posed this question to me. In fact, I'd been mulling it over for quite some time. The truth is, people who succeed in leading open organizations embrace open principles in multiple aspects of their lives—not just in the workplace.

## Emotions matter

When we're with our families, we recognize that emotions matter—and we express them. We laugh. We [cry](#). We have impassioned debates. We're frank with one another, because we recognize that our deep relationships will outlast any single interaction (even a turbulent one). And we recognize that the people in our lives aren't entirely rational; they're motivated by more than their left-brain impulses. But we tend to check our emotional selves at the door when we enter the workplace.

Why?

Emotions are a sign that we're deeply invested in what we're doing. Good leaders know how to read and gauge them (as I say in *The Open Organization*, outstanding emotional intelligence is pivotal today). Emotions are indicators of employee passion, something open organizations must harness if they're going to be successful today. Family life forces us to confront, embrace, and channel emotions. Life in an organization should do the same.

## Engagement in the home

Trust me: I'm speaking from experience when I say that participating in a family requires cultivating engagement. Families tend to work best when everyone has sufficient context for understanding the group's goals (not to mention the resources the group has for *achieving* those goals).

In fact, family goal setting should be a collaborative effort. I'm not sure too many families sit down at the beginning of a new year and have frank discussions about their goals for the coming months. But more should. After all, families tend to recognize the importance of having everyone on the same page, working in the same direction. Questions like "What charities will we support this year?" or "Where will we vacation this summer?" are too often questions that individuals try to answer themselves when they should be bringing these to the group for a more robust discussion.

## Inclusive family decisions

When goal setting becomes collaborative, it immediately becomes inclusive: Family members suddenly have a stake in family decisions, and they feel tied to the outcomes of those decisions. They embrace the group's objectives, and they work to help achieve them.

Imagine the difference. You might come to a decision privately, then communicate that finalized decision to your family in the hope that they'll accept it, understand it, and help enact it. But have you ever taken this approach with your kids? It doesn't end well (actually, it typically ends with confusion and hurt feelings). But you might also consider involving family members in decisions from the start, gathering feedback and adjusting your expectations accordingly. In the end, family members will not only better understand the implications of big decisions, they'll also feel more invested in the process of carrying them out. My experience at Red Hat has taught me this, because the company works with so many passionate open source communities, and issuing orders to a group is simply not as effective as drawing that group into a dialogue.

So in response to Paul, I'd say: You might be asking the wrong question.

The real question is not about how principles of open organizations can apply to life with a family. It's about what our family relationships can teach us about creating more open, inclusive, participatory, and humane workplaces.

## ~~10.4~~ What Is the Role of the Context? Contingency Approaches to Leadership

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn about the major situational conditions that determine the effectiveness of different leadership styles.
2. Identify the conditions under which highly task-oriented and highly people-oriented leaders can be successful based on Fiedler's contingency theory.
3. Discuss the main premises of the Path-Goal theory of leadership.
4. Describe a method by which leaders can decide how democratic or authoritarian their decision making should be.

What is the best leadership style? By now, you must have realized that this may not be the right question to ask. Instead, a better question might be: under which conditions are different leadership styles more effective? After the disappointing results of trait and behavioral approaches, several scholars developed leadership theories that specifically incorporated the role of the environment. Researchers started following a contingency approach to leadership—rather than trying to identify traits or behaviors that would be effective under all conditions, the attention moved toward specifying the situations under which different styles would be effective.

### Fiedler's Contingency Theory

The earliest and one of the most influential contingency theories was developed by Frederick Fiedler. Fiedler, F. (1967). *A theory of leadership effectiveness*, New York: McGraw-Hill; Fiedler, F. E. (1964). A contingency model of leader effectiveness. In L. Berkowitz (ed.), *Advances in experimental social psychology* (Vol. 1, 149–190). New York: Academic Press. According to the theory, a leader's style is measured by a scale called Least Preferred Coworker (LPC) scale. People who are filling out this survey are asked to think of a person who is their least preferred coworker. Then, they rate this person in terms of how friendly, nice, and cooperative this person is. Imagine someone

you did not enjoy working with. Can you describe this person in positive terms? In other words, if you can say that the person you hated working with was still a nice person, you would have a high LPC score. This means that you have a people-oriented personality and you can separate your liking of a person from your ability to work with that person. However, if you think that the person you hated working with was also someone you did not like on a personal level, you would have a low LPC score. To you, being unable to work with someone would mean that you also dislike that person. In other words, you are a task-oriented person.

According to Fiedler's theory, different people can be effective in different situations. The LPC score is akin to a personality trait and is not likely to change. Instead, placing the right people in the right situation or changing the situation is important to increase a leader's effectiveness. The theory predicts that in "favorable" and "unfavorable" situations, a low LPC leader—one who has feelings of dislike for coworkers who are difficult to work with—would be successful. When situational favorableness is medium, a high LPC leader—one who is able to personally like coworkers who are difficult to work with—is more likely to succeed.

How does Fiedler determine whether a situation is favorable, medium, or unfavorable? There are three conditions creating situational favorableness: (1) leader-subordinate relations, (2) position power, and (3) task structure. If the leader has a good relationship with most people, has high position power, and the task is structured, the situation is very favorable. When the leader has low-quality relations with employees, has low position power, and the task is relatively unstructured, the situation is very unfavorable.

Research partially supports the predictions of Fiedler's contingency theory. Peters, L. H., Hartke, D. D., & Pohlmann, J. T. (1985). Fiedler's contingency theory of leadership: An application of the meta-analysis procedures of Schmidt and Hunter. *Psychological Bulletin*, 97, 274–285; Strube, M. J., & Garcia, J. E. (1981). A meta-analytic investigation of Fiedler's contingency model of leadership effectiveness. *Psychological Bulletin*, 90,

307–321; Vecchio, R. P. (1983). Assessing the validity of Fiedler’s contingency model of leadership effectiveness: A closer look at Strube and Garcia. *Psychological Buletin*, 93, 404–408. Specifically, there is more support for the theory’s predictions about when low LPC leadership should be used, but the part about when high LPC leadership would be more effective received less support. Even though the theory was not supported in its entirety, it is a useful framework to think about when task- versus people-oriented leadership may be more effective. Moreover, the theory is important because of its explicit recognition of the importance of the context of leadership.

*Figure 10.10 Situational Favorableness*

Situational favorableness	Leader-subordinate relations	Position Power	Task structure	Best Style
Favorable	Good	High	High	Low LPC Leader
	Good	High	Low	
	Good	Low	High	
Medium	Good	Low	Low	High LPC Leader
	Poor	High	High	
	Poor	High	Low	
	Poor	Low	High	
Unfavorable	Poor	Low	Low	Low LPC leader

*Source: Based on information in Fiedler, F. (1967). A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness. New York: McGraw-Hill; Fiedler, F. E. (1964). A contingency model of leader effectiveness. In L. Berkowitz (Ed.), Advances in Experimental Social Psychology (Vol. 1, pp. 149–190). New York: Academic Press.*

## Situational Leadership

Another contingency approach to leadership is Kenneth Blanchard and Paul Hersey’s Situational Leadership Theory (SLT) which argues that leaders must use different

leadership styles depending on their followers' development level. Hersey, P.H., Blanchard, K.H., ' Johnson, D.E. (2007). *Management of Organizational Behavior: Leadership human resources*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall. According to this model, employee readiness (defined as a combination of their competence and commitment levels) is the key factor determining the proper leadership style. This approach has been highly popular with 14 million managers across 42 countries undergoing SLT training and 70% of *Fortune* 500 companies employing its use. <http://www.situational.com/Views/SituationalLeadership/RightHereRightNow.asp>  
x

The model summarizes the level of directive and supportive behaviors that leaders may exhibit. The model argues that to be effective, leaders must use the right style of behaviors at the right time in each employee's development. It is recognized that followers are key to a leader's success. Employees who are at the earliest stages of developing are seen as being highly committed but with low competence for the tasks. Thus, leaders should be highly directive and less supportive. As the employee becomes more competent, the leader should engage in more coaching behaviors. Supportive behaviors are recommended once the employee is at moderate to high levels of competence. And finally, delegating is the recommended approach for leaders dealing with employees who are both highly committed and highly competent. While the SLT is popular with managers, relatively easy to understand and use, and has endured for decades, research has been mixed in its support of the basic assumptions of the model. Blank, W., Green, S.G., ' Weitzel, J.R. (1990). A test of the situational leadership theory. *Personnel Psychology*, 43, 579–597; Graeff, C. L. (1983). The situational leadership theory: A critical review. *Academy of Management Review*, 8, 285–291; Fernandez, C.F., ' Vecchio, R.P. (2002). Situational leadership theory revisited: A test of an across-jobs perspective. *Leadership Quarterly*, 8, 67–84. Therefore, while it can be a useful way to think about matching behaviors to situations, overreliance on this model, at the exclusion of other models, is premature.

Table 10.1

<b>Follower Readiness Level</b>	Competence (Low)	Competence (Low)	Competence (Moderate to High)	Competence (High)
	Commitment (High)	Commitment (Low)	Commitment (Variable)	Commitment (High)
<b>Recommended Leader Style</b>	Directing Behavior	Coaching Behavior	Supporting Behavior	Delegating Behavior

Situational Leadership Theory helps leaders match their style to follower readiness levels.

### Path-Goal Theory of Leadership

Robert House’s path-goal theory of leadership is based on the expectancy theory of motivation. House, R. J. (1971). A path goal theory of leader effectiveness. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 16(3), 321–338. Expectancy theory of motivation suggests that employees are motivated when they believe—or expect—that (1) their effort will lead to high performance, (2) their high performance will be rewarded, and (3) the rewards they will receive are valuable to them. According to the path-goal theory of leadership, the leader’s main job is to make sure that all three of these conditions exist. Thus, leaders will create satisfied and high-performing employees by making sure that employee effort leads to performance, and their performance is rewarded. The leader removes roadblocks along the way and creates an environment that subordinates find motivational.

The theory also makes specific predictions about what type of leader behavior will be effective under which circumstances. House, R. J. (1996). Path-goal theory of leadership: Lessons, legacy, and a reformulated theory. *Leadership Quarterly*, 7, 323–352; House, R. J., & Mitchell, T. R. (1974). Path-goal theory of leadership. *Journal of Contemporary Business*, 3, 81–97. The theory identifies four leadership styles. Each of these styles can be effective, depending on the characteristics of employees (such as their ability level,

preferences, locus of control, achievement motivation) and characteristics of the work environment (such as the level of role ambiguity, the degree of stress present in the environment, the degree to which the tasks are unpleasant).

## **Four Leadership Styles**

Path-goal theory of leadership identifies four styles leaders may adopt. Directive leaders provide specific directions to their employees. They lead employees by clarifying role expectations, setting schedules, and making sure that employees know what to do on a given workday. The theory predicts that the directive style will work well when employees are experiencing role ambiguity on the job. If people are unclear about how to go about doing their jobs, giving them specific directions will motivate them.

However, if employees already have role clarity, and if they are performing boring, routine, and highly structured jobs, giving them direction does not help. In fact, it may hurt them by creating an even more restricting atmosphere. Directive leadership is also thought to be less effective when employees have high levels of ability. When managing professional employees with high levels of expertise and job-specific knowledge, telling them what to do may create a low empowerment environment, which impairs motivation.

Supportive leaders provide emotional support to employees. They treat employees well, care about them on a personal level, and are encouraging. Supportive leadership is predicted to be effective when employees are under a lot of stress or when they are performing boring and repetitive jobs. When employees know exactly how to perform their jobs but their jobs are unpleasant, supportive leadership may also be effective.

Participative leaders make sure that employees are involved in making important decisions. Participative leadership may be more effective when employees have high levels of ability and when the decisions to be made are personally relevant to them. For employees who have a high internal locus of control, or the belief that they can control

their own destinies, participative leadership gives employees a way of indirectly controlling organizational decisions, which will be appreciated.

Achievement-oriented leaders set goals for employees and encourage them to reach their goals. Their style challenges employees and focuses their attention on work-related goals. This style is likely to be effective when employees have both high levels of ability and high levels of achievement motivation.

*Figure 10.12 Predictions of Path-Goal Theory*

Situation	Appropriate Leadership Style
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When employees have high role ambiguity</li> <li>• When employees have low abilities</li> <li>• When employees have external locus of control</li> </ul>	Directive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When tasks are boring and repetitive</li> <li>• When tasks are stressful</li> </ul>	Supportive
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When employees have high abilities</li> <li>• When the decision is relevant to employees</li> <li>• When employees have high internal locus of control</li> </ul>	Participative
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• When employees have high abilities</li> <li>• When employees have high achievement motivation</li> </ul>	Achievement-oriented

*Source: On the basis of information presented in House, R. J. (1996). Path-goal theory of leadership: Lessons, legacy, and a reformulated theory. Leadership Quarterly, 7, 323–352; House, R. J., & Mitchell, T. R. (1974). Path-goal theory of leadership. Journal of Contemporary Business, 3, 81–97.*

The path-goal theory of leadership has received partial but encouraging levels of support from researchers. Because the theory is highly complicated, it has not been fully and

adequately tested. House, R. J., & Aditya, R. N. (1997). The social scientific study of leadership: Quo Vadis? *Journal of Management*, 23, 409–473; Stinson, J. E., & Johnson, T. W. (1975). The path-goal theory of leadership: A partial test and suggested refinement. *Academy of Management Journal*, 18, 242–252; Wofford, J. C., & Liska, L. Z. (1993). Path-goal theories of leadership: A meta-analysis. *Journal of Management*, 19, 857–876. The theory's biggest contribution may be that it highlights the importance of a leader's ability to change styles, depending on the circumstances. Unlike Fiedler's contingency theory, in which the leader's style is assumed to be fixed and only the environment can be changed, House's path-goal theory underlines the importance of varying one's style, depending on the situation.

## **Vroom and Yetton's Normative Decision Model**

Yale School of Management professor Victor Vroom and his colleagues Philip Yetton and Arthur Jago developed a decision-making tool to help leaders determine how much involvement they should seek when making decisions. Vroom, V. H. (2000). Leadership and the decision making process. *Organizational Dynamics*, 68, 82–94; Vroom, V. H., & Yetton, P. W. (1973). *Leadership and Decision-Making*. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press; Jago, A., & Vroom, V. H. (1980). An evaluation of two alternatives to the Vroom/Yetton Normative Model. *Academy of Management Journal*, 23, 347–355; Vroom, V. H., & Jago, A. G. 1988. *The new leadership: Managing participation in organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall. The model starts by having leaders answer several key questions and working their way through a funnel based on their responses.

Let's try it. Imagine that you want to help your employees lower their stress so that you can minimize employee absenteeism. There are a number of approaches you could take to reduce employee stress, such as offering gym memberships, providing employee assistance programs, establishing a nap room, and so forth. Let's refer to the model and

start with the first question. As you answer each question as high (H) or low (L), follow the corresponding path down the funnel.

1. *Decision significance.* The decision has high significance because the approach chosen needs to be effective at reducing employee stress for the insurance premiums to be lowered. In other words, there is a quality requirement to the decision. Follow the path through H.
2. *Importance of commitment.* Does the leader need employee cooperation to implement the decision? In our example, the answer is high, because employees may simply ignore the resources if they do not like them. Follow the path through H.
3. *Leader expertise.* Does the leader have all the information needed to make a high-quality decision? In our example, leader expertise is low. You do not have information regarding what your employees need or what kinds of stress reduction resources they would prefer. Follow the path through L.
4. *Likelihood of commitment.* If the leader makes the decision alone, what is the likelihood that the employees would accept it? Let's assume that the answer is Low. Based on the leader's experience with this group, they would likely ignore the decision if the leader makes it alone. Follow the path from L.
5. *Goal alignment.* Are the employee goals aligned with organizational goals? In this instance, employee and organizational goals may be aligned because you both want to ensure that employees are healthier. So let's say the alignment is high, and follow H.
6. *Group expertise.* Does the group have expertise in this decision-making area? The group in question has little information about which alternatives are costlier or more user friendly. We'll say group expertise is low. Follow the path from L.
7. *Team competence.* What is the ability of this particular team to solve the problem? Let's imagine that this is a new team that just got together and they

have little demonstrated expertise to work together effectively. We will answer this as low, or L.

Based on the answers to the questions we gave, the normative approach recommends consulting employees as a group. In other words, the leader may make the decision alone after gathering information from employees and is not advised to delegate the decision to the team or to make the decision alone with no input from the team members.

*Figure 10.13*

								→			
								Decision Significance			
								Importance of Commitment			
								Leader Expertise			
								Likelihood of Commitment			
								Goal Alignment			
								Group Expertise			
								Team Competence			
P R O B L E M  S T A T E M E N T	H	H	H	H	-	-	-	Decide			
				L	H	H	H	H	Facilitate		
			L			H	L	-	Consult (Group)		
				L	H		L	-	Consult (Group)		
			L			H	H	H	Delegate		
				L	H		L	-	Consult (Individually)		
		L	L			H	H	H	Facilitate		
				L	L		-	Consult (Group)			
					L	L	L	-	Consult (Group)		
	L	H	H	H	-	-	-	Decide			
				L	-	H	H	H	Facilitate		
			L				-	H	L	-	Consult (Individually)
		L		L	-	H			L	-	Consult (Individually)
			L				-	H	L	-	Consult (Individually)
									L	L	L
	L	H	-	H	-	-	-	Decide			
				L	-	-	-	H	Delegate		
		L	L					L	-	Facilitate	
L	L	-	-	-	-	-	Decide				

*Vroom and Yetton's leadership decision tree shows leaders which styles will be most effective in different situations.*

*Used by permission from Victor H. Vroom.*

Vroom and Yetton's model is somewhat complicated, but research results support the validity of the model. On average, leaders using the style recommended by the model tend to make more effective decisions compared with leaders using a style not recommended by the model. Vroom, V. H., & Jago, G. (1978). On the validity of the Vroom Yetton model. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 63, 151–162.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

The contingency approaches to leadership describe the role the situation would play in choosing the most effective leadership style. Fiedler's contingency theory argued that task-oriented leaders would be most effective when the situation was the most and the least favorable, whereas relationship-oriented leaders would be effective when situational favorableness was moderate. Situational Leadership Theory takes the maturity level of followers into account. House's path-goal theory states that the leader's job is to ensure that employees view their effort as leading to performance and increase the belief that performance would be rewarded. For this purpose, leaders would use directive, supportive, participative, and achievement-oriented leadership styles, depending on what employees needed to feel motivated. Vroom and Yetton's normative decision model is a guide leaders can use to decide how participative they should be given decision environment characteristics.

# *Boundless Management: "Chapter 9, Section 4: Contingency Approach"*

Read this section and study each of the four models closely. Which of them have you seen in action?

## Leadership and Situational Context: Fiedler

The Fiedler model shows that effective leadership depends on how a leader's traits and the surrounding context interact.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Assess the value and efficacy of Fred Fiedler's leadership model

### KEY POINTS

- Situational contingency attests that different circumstances require different leadership traits.
- The Fiedler model uses the Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) test to measure leadership traits.
- A favorable situation for a leader has three components: good relations between the leader and follower, a highly structured task, and a powerful leadership position.

### TERMS

- Favorable Situation

Leadership contexts with good leader-member relations, high task structure, and high leader-position power.

- Situational Contingency

The theory that different leaders and leadership traits are required for different situations.

Fred Fiedler's model of leadership states that different types of leaders are required for different situations. This situational contingency understanding of leadership suggests, for instance, that a leader in a strict, task-oriented workplace would have different qualities than

a leader in a more open, idea-driven workplace. Fiedler subsequently enhanced his original model to increase the number of leadership traits it analyzed. This later theory, known as Cognitive Resource Theory (CRT), identifies the conditions under which leaders and group members will use their intellectual resources, skills, and knowledge effectively.

### Least Preferred Co-Worker (LPC) Test

The Fiedler situational contingency model measures leadership traits with a test that provides a leadership score corresponding to the workplace where the leader would be most suited. The Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) test asks test takers to think of someone they least prefer working with and rate that person from one to eight on a scale of various traits. For example, the taker is asked to rate the co-worker from Unfriendly (1) to Friendly (8), or Guarded (1) to Open (8). The ratings are then averaged. Generally, a higher LPC score means the person being rated is more oriented to human relations, while a lower score means the person is more oriented to tasks.

The LPC test is not actually about the co-worker; it is a profile of the test taker. Test subjects who are more oriented to human relations generally rate their least preferred co-workers higher, and the opposite is true for task-oriented test takers. The LPC test reveals how respondents react to those that with whom they do not like working, and thereby reveals leadership contexts best suited to the test takers' personality.

### Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) test

**The Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC) test reveals more about the test-taker than about the co-worker or the type of work the tester and co-worker did together.**

### Situational Context

The Fiedler model also analyzes the situation in which the leader functions. The situation analysis has three components:

1. Leader-member relations – the amount of respect, trust, and confidence between leaders and their followers
2. Task structure – the degree to which group tasks, roles, and processes are specified and formalized
3. Leader position power – the amount of formal authority leaders have based on their role within the group

When good leader-member relations, a highly structured task, and high leader-position power are in place, the situation is considered a "favorable situation." Fiedler found that

low-LPC leaders are more effective in extremely favorable or unfavorable situations, whereas high-LPC leaders perform best in situations with intermediate favorability. Leaders in high positions of power have the ability to distribute resources among their members, meaning they can reward and punish their followers. Leaders with low position power cannot control resources to the same extent as leaders with high position power, and so lack the same degree of situational control. For example, the CEO of a business has high position power, because she is able to increase and reduce the salary that her employees receive. On the other hand, an office worker in this same business has low position power, because although he may be the leader on a new business deal, he cannot control the situation by rewarding or disciplining colleagues with salary changes.

### Criticism of the Fielder Model

Fiedler's contingency theory has drawn criticism because it implies that the only option for a mismatch of leader orientation and unfavorable situation is to change the leader. Some have disputed the model's validity by questioning how accurately it reflects a leader's personality traits. Also, the contingency model does not take into account the percentage of situations that might be somewhat favorable, completely unfavorable, or even extremely favorable. For this reason, critics of the model suggest that it does not provide a complete comparison between low-LPC leaders and high-LPC leaders.

## Leadership and Followers: Hersey and Blanchard

Hersey and Blanchard's model defines effective leadership based on leadership style and maturity of follower(s).

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Compare and contrast leadership style characteristics with the follower maturity concepts as defined by Hersey and Blanchard

### KEY POINTS

- The ideal leadership style varies based on what is required of a group and that group's level of development. The Hersey and Blanchard model measures this by categorizing leadership style and group (follower) maturity.
- Leadership styles are a mix of task behavior and relationship behavior. There are four combinations of high and low task and relationship behaviors that imply different leadership roles.
- Group maturity describes how confident group members are in the group's ability to complete its tasks.

## TERMS

- Situational Leadership

The theory that different leadership styles are required for different contexts.

- Task Behavior

The style of leadership that is concerned with instructing followers what actions to take.

- Relationship Behavior

The style of leadership that is concerned with guiding how people interact, instead of the mechanics of how they complete the task.

Paul Hersey and Ken Blanchard introduced their theory of situational leadership in the 1969 book *Management of Organizational Behavior*. Situational leadership states that there is no single, ideal approach to leadership because different types of leadership are required in different contexts. The Hersey and Blanchard model explains effective leadership in terms of two variables: leadership style and the maturity of the follower(s).

### Task Behavior and Relationship Behavior

For Hersey and Blanchard, leadership style is determined by the mix of task behavior and relationship behavior that the leader shows. Task behavior concerns the actions required of followers and how they should be conducted. Relationship behavior concerns how people interact together to achieve a goal. The various combinations of high and low task and relationship behaviors suggest four leadership roles:

1. S1 – Telling: The leader's role is to direct the actions of the followers. The leader instructs the followers on how, what, where, and when to do a certain task. This is primarily task behavior.
2. S2 – Selling: The leader is still primarily concerned with directing action but now accepts communication from followers. This communication allows the followers to feel connected to the task and buy into the mission. S2 leading is still primarily task behavior, but now it includes some relationship behavior.
3. S3 – Participating: This role is similar to S2, except now the leader welcomes shared decision-making. Participating leadership shifts the balance toward relationship behavior and away from task behavior.

4. S4 – Delegating: The leader simply ensures that progress is being made. Decisions involve a lot of input from the followers, and the process and responsibility now lie with followers. S4 is primarily relationship behavior.

## Maturity

The other fundamental concept in the Hersey and Blanchard model is maturity of the group. Group maturity describes how confident group members are in the group's ability to complete its tasks. This concept, too, is broken into four categories:

### **Maturity levels**

In Hersey and Blanchard's model, group maturity is divided into four distinct categories based on how able and willing the group is to complete the job.

1. M1: The group does not have the skills to do the job, and is unwilling or unable to take responsibility. This is a very low maturity level.
2. M2: The group is willing to work on the job but not yet able to accept responsibility. Imagine a group of volunteers working on a house for Habitat for Humanity: the volunteers are willing to perform the work, but probably not capable of building a house on their own.
3. M3: The group has experience but is not confident enough or willing to take responsibility. The main difference between M2 and M3 is that the M3 group has the skills to work effectively on the job.
4. M4: The group is willing and able to work on the job. Group members have all of the skills, confidence, and enthusiasm necessary to take ownership of the task. This is a very high level of maturity.

Because maturity level varies based on the group and the task (for example, professional football players are an M4 group on the football field, but an M1 group if asked to play baseball), the leadership style must adapt based on the situation.

Effective leadership varies not only with the person or group that is being influenced but also depending on the task, job, or function that needs to be accomplished. The Hersey and Blanchard model encourages leaders to be flexible and find the right style for the task and the group maturity level. The most successful leaders are those who adapt their leadership style to the maturity of the group they are attempting to lead or influence and to that group's purpose.

## Leadership and Task/Follower Characteristics: House

The Path-Goal theory argues that a leader's role is to help followers achieve both personal and organizational goals.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Identify the leadership and task/follower characteristics identified by Robert House in the Path-Goal theory (1971)

## KEY POINTS

- In the Path-Goal model as defined by House, the role of the leader is to help followers define personal goals, understand organizational goals, and find a path to reach both.
- House defined four leadership styles: directive, achievement-oriented, participative, and supportive.
- Outstanding Leadership Theory is an extension of the Path-Goal model that adds leadership behaviors required to channel follower motivations and goals toward the leader's vision.

## TERMS

- Path-Goal theory

A leadership model outlining the role of the leader as helping followers define personal and organizational goals and find a path to reach those goals.

- Outstanding Leadership Theory

A model that defines ten traits that exceptional leaders possess; an expansion of the Path-Goal model.

In 1971, Robert House introduced his version of a contingent theory of leadership known as the Path-Goal theory. According to House's theory, leaders' behavior is contingent upon the satisfaction, motivation, and performance of their subordinates. House argued that the goal of the leader is to help followers identify their personal goals as well understand the organization's goals and find the path that will best help them achieve both. Because individual motivations and goals differ, leaders must modify their approach to fit the situation.

## Leadership Styles

House defined four different leadership styles and noted that good leaders switch fluidly between them as the situation demands. He believed that leadership styles do not define types of leaders as much as they do types of behaviors. House's leadership styles include:

1. Directive, path-goal clarifying leader: The leader clearly defines what is expected of followers and tells them how to perform their tasks. The theory argues that this behavior has the most positive effect when the subordinates' role and task demands are ambiguous and intrinsically satisfying.
2. Achievement-oriented leader: The leader sets challenging goals for followers, expects them to perform at their highest level, and shows confidence in their ability to meet this expectation. Occupations in which the achievement motive was most predominant were technical jobs, salespersons, scientists, engineers, and entrepreneurs.
3. Participative leader: The leader seeks to collaborate with followers and involve them in the decision-making process. This behavior is dominant when subordinates are highly personally involved in their work.
4. Supportive leader: The main role of the leader is to be responsive to the emotional and psychological needs of followers. This behavior is especially needed in situations in which tasks or relationships are psychologically or physically distressing.

The Path-Goal model emphasizes the importance of the leader's ability to interpret follower's needs accurately and to respond flexibly to the requirements of a situation.

### Outstanding Leadership Theory (OLT)

In 1994, House published *Organizational Behavior: The State of the Science* with Philip Podsakoff. House and Podsakoff attempted to summarize the behaviors and approaches of "outstanding leaders" that they obtained from some more modern theories and research findings. Using the Path-Goal model as a framework, their Outstanding Leadership Theory (OLT) expanded the list of leadership behaviors required to channel follower's motivations and goals more effectively toward the leader's vision:

- Vision: Leaders are able to communicate a vision that meshes with the values of their followers.
- Passion and self-sacrifice: Leaders believe fully in their vision and are willing to make sacrifices in order to achieve it.
- Confidence, determination, and persistence: Leaders are confident their vision is correct and take whatever action is necessary to reach it.
- Image-building: Leaders are cognizant of how they are perceived by their followers. They strive to ensure followers view them in a positive light.
- Role-modeling: Leaders seek to model qualities such as credibility and trustworthiness that their followers would seek to emulate.

- External representation: Leaders are spokespersons for their organizations (for example, Steve Jobs).
- Expectations of and confidence in followers: Leaders trust that their followers can succeed and expect them to do so.
- Selective motive-arousal: Leaders are able to hone in on specific motives in followers and use them to push their followers to reach a goal.
- Frame alignment: Leaders align certain interests, values, actions, etc. between leadership and followers to inspire positive action.
- Inspirational communication: Leaders are able to inspire followers to act using verbal and non-verbal communication.

## Leadership and Decision Making: The Vroom-Yetton-Jago Model

The Vroom-Yetton-Jago model is a leadership theory of how to make group decisions.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Apply the Vroom-Jago decision-tree model to guide leaders in a decision-making situation

### KEY POINTS

- Different tasks and situations require leaders to make different types of decisions.
- There are five different approaches to making group decisions according to the degree and type of follower participation.
- The Vroom-Yetton-Jago model employs a decision tree for determining the right mode of decision making under different conditions.

### TERMS

- Contingency Approach

A school of thought on leadership that proposes that there is no single ideal leader or leadership style. Also known as situational leadership.

- decision tree

A visualization of a complex decision-making situation in which the possible choices and their likely outcomes are organized in the form of a graph.

- autocratic

Conducted alone and with sole responsibility.

The Vroom-Yetton-Jago model is a contingency approach to group decision making that is designed specifically to help leaders select the best approach to making decisions. The model identifies different ways a decision can be made by considering the degree of follower participation. It proposes a method for leaders to select the right approach to making a decision in a given set of circumstances.

### Decision Types

The Vroom-Yetton-Jago model defines five different decision approaches that a leader can use. In order of participation from least to most, these are:

1. *A1 – Autocratic Type 1*: Decisions are made completely by the leader. Leaders make the decision on their own with whatever information is available.
2. *A2 – Autocratic Type 2*: The decision is still made by the leader alone, but the leader collects information from the followers. Followers play no other role in the decision-making process.
3. *C1 – Consultative Type 1*: The leader seeks input from select followers individually based on their relevant knowledge. Followers do not meet each other, and the leader's decision may or may not reflect followers' influence.
4. *C2 – Consultative Type 2*: Similar to C1, except the leader shares the problem with relevant followers as a group and seeks their ideas and suggestions. The followers are involved in the decision, but the leader still makes the decision.
5. *G2 – Group-based Type 2*: The entire group works through the problem with the leader. A decision is made by the followers in collaboration with the leader. In a G2 decision, leaders are not at liberty to make a decision on their own.

### Decision Trees

The Vroom-Yetton-Jago model also provides guidance for leaders trying to determine which approach to decision making to use (A1 through G2). The model uses a decision-tree technique to diagnose aspects of the situation methodically. This technique involves answering a series of yes or no questions and following the yes path to the recommended type of decision-making approach.

### **Decision tree**

This is an example of a decision tree. One decision (go on vacation) leads to further decisions (whether to go to Europe, visit family, or go camping), all of which lead to another tier of decisions. The Vroom-Yetton-Jago model utilizes decision trees to determine the best leadership style for a given situation.

1. Is there a quality requirement? Is the nature of the solution critical? Are there technical or rational grounds for selecting among possible solutions?
2. Do I have sufficient information to make a high-quality decision?
3. Is the problem structured? Are the alternative courses of action and methods for their evaluation known?
4. Is acceptance of the decision by subordinates critical to its implementation?
5. If I were to make the decision by myself, is it reasonably certain that it would be accepted by my subordinates?
6. Do my subordinates share the organizational goals to be met by solving this problem?
7. Is conflict among subordinates likely in obtaining the preferred solution?

By answering the questions honestly, the decision tree provides the leader with the preferred decision style for the given situation.

# Donald Clark's "Introduction to Competencies"

By the end of this reading, you should be able to explain why competency does not equal competence. Can you?

## Introduction to Competencies

Competencies are probably most closely related to abilities. However, in our craft, Learning and Development, the term *ability* normally means either able to do or a special talent; while competencies relate more to expertise and experience. Competencies can be thought of as the state or quality of being well qualified to perform a task. A person gains competency through education, training, experience, or natural abilities.

As the chart below show, competence does not equal competency. *Competence* is skill-based can be trained and learned, while *competency* is behavior-based and describes the individual's characteristics and personality. Competencies can also be learned, but due to their behavior-based nature, it is not possible simply to teach or measure them. (Sanghi, 2007)

### Competence vs. Competency

Competence	→	Competency
Skill-based		Behavior-based
Standard obtained		Manner of behavior
What is measured	←	How the standard is achieved

Klemp (1980, p21) defined competence as, "an underlying characteristic of a person which results in effective and/or superior performance on the job."

While a more detailed definition is, "a cluster or related knowledge, skills, and attitudes that reflects a major portion of one's job (a role or responsibility), that correlates with performance on the job, that can be measured with well-accepted standards, and that can be improved with training and and development (Parry, 1996, p50)."

While there are many definitions of competency, most of them have two common elements:

- The competency is an observable and measurable knowledge and skills.
- The knowledge and skills must distinguish between superior or exemplary performers and other performers.

Since its initial conception, attitudes, traits, or personalities have also played a major role in competencies, even though they are not normally thought of as being observable and measurable. Some people group [attitudes](#) with competencies, such as McClelland, while others, such as the U.S. Army, separate them by listing attitudes under *attributes* to create a [Capability Model](#) (Northouse, 2004):

**Attributes —> Competencies —> Performance Outcomes**

## David McClelland

The original use of competencies was conceived by [David McClelland](#). He first used it as an alternative for the replacement of intelligence tests with criterion reference testing (McClelland, 1973). He argued that intelligence tests were not valid predictors of intelligence and irrelevant to the workforce. There used to be a joke among Psychologists that intelligence was what the intelligence test measured, but McClelland thought the joke was “uncomfortably near the whole truth and nothing but the truth.”

Following his groundbreaking 1973 article, a number of large organizations called him. McClelland selected to work with the U.S. State Department to improve their failing selection process, which was based on selecting the best and brightest from elite universities. McClelland developed competencies for each position based on behavioral interviews with superior performing Foreign Service Officers and underpinned each competency with behavior indicators. However, the State Department never really implemented his findings because it challenged their fundamental view — they came from the top schools themselves, thus they were personally committed to upholding the status quo, rather than improving their selection process (Berger, Berger, 2003). However, he was more successful in implementing similar programs for the U.S. Navy and other large organizations.

## Contrasting Competencies with Tasks

If one had to contrast or contextualize competencies with something, it would probably be [tasks \(to include conditions and standards\)](#). Tasks are normally very specific in that they inform the task holder and other interested persons, such as supervisors and trainers, on the required actions needed to contribute a specified end result to the accomplishment of an objective.

The main benefit of tasks is that since they are normally very specific, especially when they include the required steps to perform the task. Thus, a good task statement leaves little room for error when it comes to evaluating the worthiness of task performance. However, being very specific, they can be extremely time-consuming to create, especially when a job

may have 50 or 100 tasks or more. And with jobs and processes rapidly changing in many environments, they can quickly become outdated. In addition, when it comes to such professions as management, leadership, and knowledge workers, most job responsibilities are often ill-defined and very broad in scope, thus the specific nature of tasks do not work well.

Thus, the ideal way of creating competencies is to base them on the analysis of **exemplary performers** (McClelland, 1973). After an analysis, normally composed of interviews and/or observations, a few keyword(s) are chosen to describe each competency. Each job normally has five to ten competencies. The number is normally kept small, otherwise they run into the same problems as tasks — there are too many to properly evaluate, create, and then keep up-to-date.

For example, some of the competencies for a person in a leadership position might include Ethics, decision-making, Team Development, and Coaching.

## Behavioral Indicators

As noted earlier, competencies are normally based on an analysis by interviewing and observing expert performers. During the analysis, key behavioral indicators are determined for successful performance of the job. These behavioral indicators are linked to a competency. For example, the competency of *decision-making* might include the following behavioral indicators:

- Dealing with difficult decisions:
  - Able to connect information together in order to diagnose problem.
  - Determines root cause to fully resolve issue
  - Sensitive to the needs of others when dealing with divisive issues.
- Commits to a course of action:
  - Can make decisions quickly when necessary.
  - Seeks the correct answer and understands the impact that the decision could have on other organization issues.

The behavioral indicators are often contrasted with **ineffective** indicators, for example:

Dealing with difficult decisions:

- Avoids making decisions and often waits for others to make the decision.
- Does not take responsibility for wrong or ineffective decisions.

Since one of the main uses of competencies is to help in the interviewing and selection of new hires, questions may be created to elicit responses from the candidates that will reveal

their past behaviors with the premise being that past behaviors will help in predicting the behaviors that you can expect from them if hired.

Listed below are two lines of questions to help in determining a person's competency on *decision-making*. Note that each question is followed by one or more questions in case there is a need to draw additional information from the candidate:

- Tell me about a recent decision you had to make in which there was little or no time to seek additional information? What impact did the decision have on the business? What did you do to help lessen the risk of making a bad decision?
- Tell me about a time you made a bad decision? What lessons did you learn from it?

Competency models are also helpful in the growth of present employees. Few, if any employees will be expert performers in all the competencies listed for a position, thus the model is used to help them with their career growth within the organization. For example, in one organization where I worked we had a manager who was very good, except for his decision-making abilities. He had a tendency to make decisions that were good for his department, but were often not well suited for the organization as a whole, that is, according to the behavioral indicator given above, he failed to realize the impact his decisions had on other organizational issues. Thus, he was promoted to a department that had a history of making good decisions and was put under the mentorship of a person known to excel in making quality decisions (sometimes it pays to be not quite perfect).

## Criticisms

The two major complaints about competencies seem to be its lack of a common definition and understanding and the possibility of becoming ethnocentric.

While many terms in our craft lack a common definitions and understanding among its members, competencies seem to be about the worst offender. In some cases, the word entirely changes. For example, *Behavioral-Based Interviewing* looks as if it is mostly based upon the concept of the competency modeling process.

Since competencies often encompass attitudes, there is the danger of them becoming so specific that it could promote ethnocentrism, rather than diversity. One has to be quite careful when including attitudes with competencies.

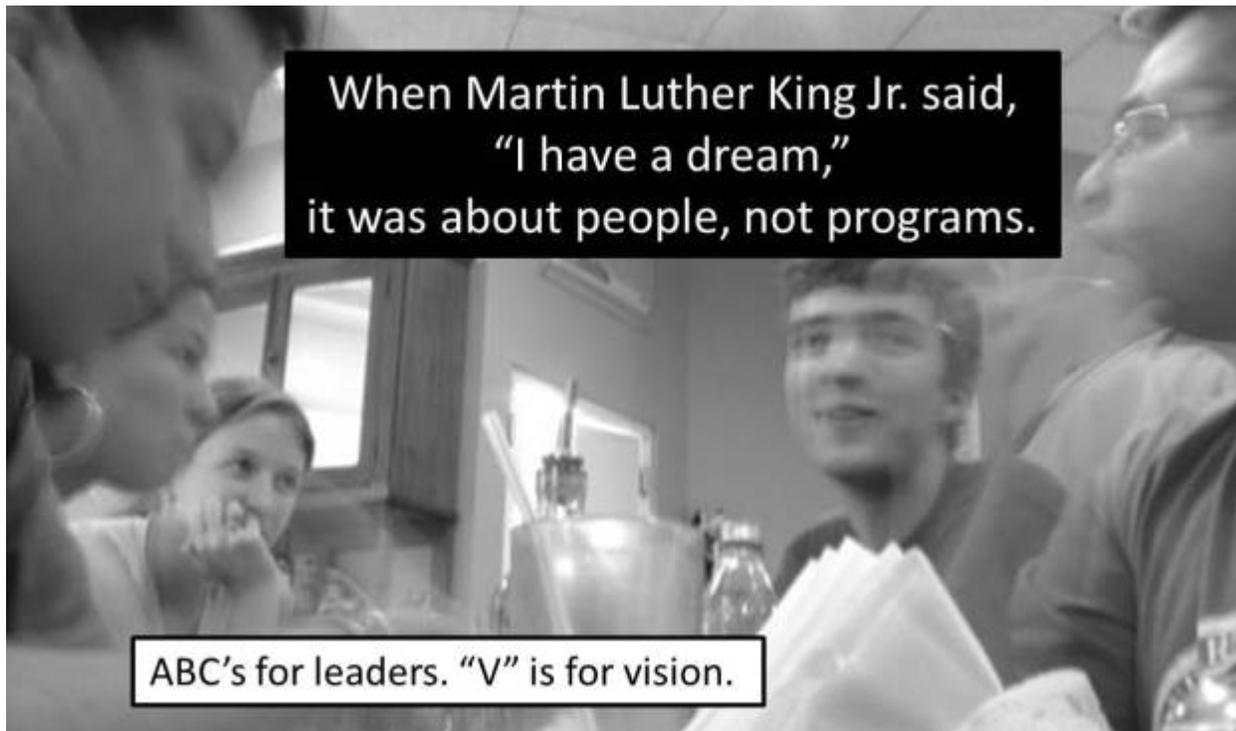
## Dan Rockwell's "The Seven Qualities of Visionary Leaders"

Read this article and consider how a concept like charisma would – or would not – relate to the traits presented in this article. Are transformational leaders always charismatic? Do you believe charisma is an innate skill or can it be learned? Explain your choice with a couple of sentences in your journal.

### THE SEVEN QUALITIES OF VISIONARY LEADERS

Vision always centers on people *never* projects, programs, properties, or profits.

Vision focused on anything other than people is ego driven exploitation.



Vision answers the question, "How will we make the world better *for others*?"

"Vision makes work meaningful." [Jesse Stoner](#)

Vision always drives and directs change-makers but never executes or operationalizes anything. Vision points!

"*Being forward-looking* is the quality that most separates leaders from individual contributors." Jim Kouzes and Barry Posner in the [Leadership Challenge](#).

**Vision:**

1. Creates vitality.
2. Focuses energy.
3. Explains purpose.

The clearer the vision the greater the vitality.

**Apart from clear vision:**

1. Distraction directs.
2. Desperation disrupts.
3. Despair discourages.

**Hope:**

Vision feels like hope.

Hope creates *and* energizes vision. Separated from hope, vision is futility. Leaders without hope are lost, along with everyone who follows them.

The chapter on vision in [Brad Lomenick's](#) new book, "[The Catalyst Leader](#)," is titled, "Hopeful." He explains what vision feels like and does, rather than offering safe definitions. (Brad's book is the first Christian leadership book I've recommended on Leadership Freak.)

## Seven qualities of visionary leaders:

Over the years, Brad has spent quality time with the world's top leaders. He writes, "I've observed that the most hopeful, vision-centered leaders are:

1. Optimistic about the future.
2. Focused on the best in their people. They focus on the unique strengths of every employee.
3. Never satisfied but always content. They seem happy where they are but refuse to stay there.
4. Consumed with making tomorrow better than today. Hopeful leaders never settle.
5. Accepting of change.
6. Inclusive, not exclusive. Hopeful leaders invite others into their vision.
7. Personally bought in. Vision is inside them."

**Clarification:**

Projects, programs, properties, or profits are about goals. Goals express vision. But vision itself is always about people not deliverables.

***What are the essential qualities of leaders who inspire hope?***

***What are the essential qualities of compelling vision?***

# *Boundless Management: "Chapter 9, Section 5: Types of Leaders: Key Behaviors of Transformational Leaders"*

Read this section. Keep this information fresh in mind as you head into Unit 3.

Transformational leadership and organizational change go hand-in-hand. In your journal, write at least two paragraphs listing some connections between transformational leadership, progress, and organizations.

## Key Behaviors of Transformational Leaders

Transformational leaders exhibit individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Explain the varying approaches and behaviors that define transformational leadership

### KEY POINTS

- Transformational leaders show individualized consideration to followers by paying attention to and meeting the needs of followers.
- Transformational leaders stimulate ideas and creativity from followers by creating a safe environment to challenge the status quo.
- Transformational leaders have a vision that inspires and motivates followers to achieve important goals.
- Transformational leaders serve as role models for their followers, allow them to identify with a shared organizational vision, and provide a sense of meaning and achievement.

### TERM

- Transformational Leadership

An approach to leading that enhances the motivation, morale, and performance of followers through a variety of mechanisms.

Transformational leaders challenge followers with an attractive vision and tie that vision to a strategy for its achievement. They engage and motivate followers to identify with the

organization's goals and values. Transformational leadership comprises four types of behavior:

## **Leading the team**

Transformational leaders inspire their employees to do more.

- Individualized consideration or compassionate leadership
- Intellectual stimulation
- Inspirational motivation
- Idealized influence or charismatic leadership

### Individualized Consideration

Individualized consideration is the degree to which the leader attends to each follower's needs, acts as a mentor or coach to the follower, and listens to the follower's concerns. This behavior can include the following actions:

- Discussing and empathizing with the needs of individual employees
- Making interpersonal connections with employees
- Showing genuine compassion
- Encouraging ongoing professional development and personal growth of employees

### Intellectual Stimulation

Transformational leaders encourage followers to be innovative and creative. Intellectual stimulation springs from leaders who establish safe conditions for experimentation and sharing ideas. They tackle old problems in a novel fashion and inspire employees to think about their conventional methods critically and share new ideas. This type of behavior includes:

- Encouraging employees' creativity
- Challenging the status quo
- Aiming for consistent innovation
- Empowering employees to disagree with leadership
- Risk-taking when appropriate to achieve goals

### Inspirational Motivation

Leaders with an inspiring vision challenge followers to leave their comfort zones, communicate optimism about future goals, and provide meaning for the task at hand.

Purpose and meaning provide the energy that drives a group forward. The visionary aspects of leadership are supported by communication skills that make the vision understandable, precise, powerful, and engaging. Followers are willing to invest more effort in their tasks; they are encouraged and optimistic about the future and believe in their abilities. Behaviors that demonstrate inspirational motivation include:

- Inspiring employees to improve their outcomes
- Explaining how the organization will change over time
- Fostering a strong sense of purpose among employees
- Linking individual employee and organizational goals
- Aiding employees to succeed to an even greater extent than they expect

### Idealized Influence

Transformational leaders act as role models for their followers. Transformational leaders must embody the values that the followers should be learning and internalizing. The foundation of transformational leadership is the promotion of consistent vision and values. Transformational leaders guide followers by providing them with a sense of meaning and challenge. They foster the spirit of teamwork and commitment in the following ways:

- Promoting a broad, inclusive vision
- Leading by example
- Showing strong commitment to goals
- Creating trust and confidence in employees
- Representing organizational goals, culture, and mission

# Unit 3: Change Management and Decision-Making

## Planning and Executing Change Effectively

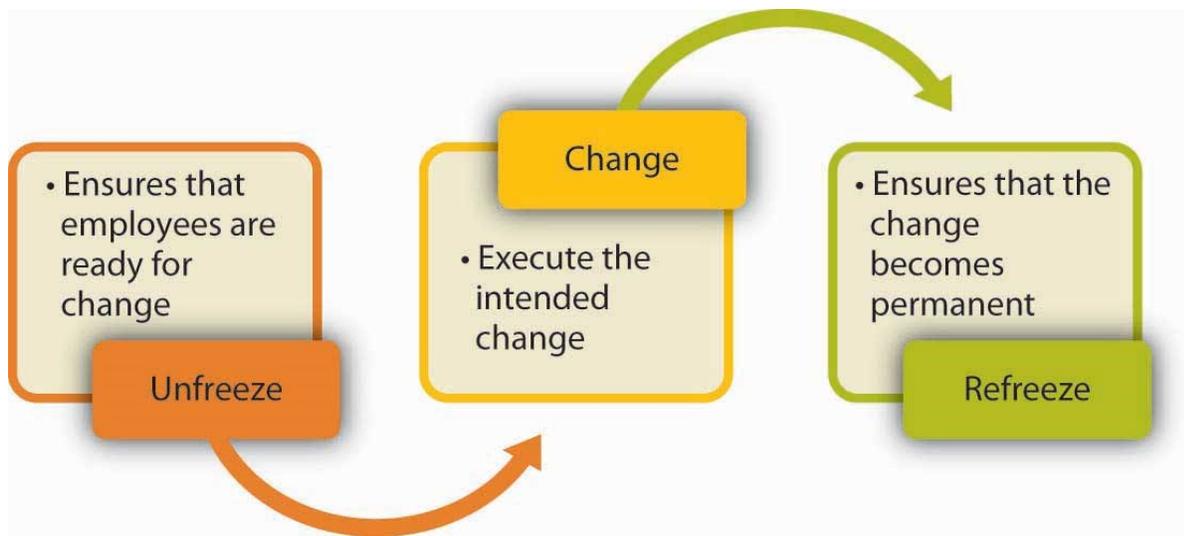
### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Describe Lewin's three-stage model of planned change.
2. Describe how organizations may embrace continuous change.

How do you plan, organize, and execute change effectively? Some types of change, such as mergers, often come with job losses. In these situations, it is important to remain fair and ethical while laying off otherwise exceptional employees. Once change has occurred, it is vital to take any steps necessary to reinforce the new system. Employees can often require continued support well after an organizational change.

One of the most useful frameworks in this area is the three-stage model of planned change developed in the 1950s by psychologist Kurt Lewin. Lewin K. (1951). *Field theory in social science*. New York: Harper & Row. This model assumes that change will encounter resistance. Therefore, executing change without prior preparation is likely to lead to failure. Instead, organizations should start with unfreezing, or making sure that organizational members are ready for and receptive to change. This is followed by change, or executing the planned changes. Finally, refreezing involves ensuring that change becomes permanent and the new habits, rules, or procedures become the norm.

*Figure 7.14 Lewin's Three-Stage Process of Change*



## Unfreezing Before Change

Many change efforts fail because people are insufficiently prepared for change. When employees are not prepared, they are more likely to resist the change effort and less likely to function effectively under the new system. What can organizations do before change to prepare employees? There are a number of things that are important at this stage.

## Communicating a Plan for Change

Do people know what the change entails, or are they hearing about the planned changes through the grapevine or office gossip? When employees know what is going to happen, when, and why, they may feel more comfortable. Research shows that those who have more complete information about upcoming changes are more committed to a change effort. Wanberg, C. R., & Banas, J. T. (2000). Predictors and outcomes of openness to changes in a reorganizing workplace. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*, 132–142. Moreover, in successful change efforts, the leader not only communicates a plan but also an overall vision for the change. Herold, D. M., Fedor D. B., Caldwell, S., & Liu, Y. (2008). The effects of transformational and change leadership on employees' commitment to a change: A multilevel study. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*, 346–

357. When this vision is exciting and paints a picture of a future that employees would be proud to be a part of, people are likely to be more committed to change.

Ensuring that top management communicates with employees about the upcoming changes also has symbolic value. Armenakis, A. A., Harris, S. G., & Mossholder, K. W. (1993). Creating readiness for organizational change. *Human Relations*, 46, 681–703. When top management and the company CEO discuss the importance of the changes in meetings, employees are provided with a reason to trust that this change is a strategic initiative. For example, while changing the employee performance appraisal system, the CEO of Kimberly Clark made sure to mention the new system in all meetings with employees, indicating that the change was supported by the CEO.

### **Develop a Sense of Urgency**

People are more likely to accept change if they feel that there is a need for it. If employees feel their company is doing well, the perceived need for change will be smaller. Those who plan the change will need to make the case that there is an external or internal threat to the organization's competitiveness, reputation, or sometimes even its survival and that failure to act will have undesirable consequences. For example, Lou Gerstner, the former CEO of IBM, executed a successful transformation of the company in the early 1990s. In his biography *Elephants Can Dance*, Gerstner highlights how he achieved cooperation as follows: "Our greatest ally in shaking loose the past was IBM's eminent collapse. Rather than go with the usual impulse to put on a happy face, I decided to keep the crisis front and center. I didn't want to lose the sense of urgency." Gerstner, L. V. (2002). *Who says elephants can't dance? Inside IBM's historic turnaround*. New York: HarperCollins; Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

### **Building a Coalition**

To convince people that change is needed, the change leader does not necessarily have to convince every person individually. In fact, people's opinions toward change are affected by opinion leaders or those people who have a strong influence over the behaviors and attitudes of others. Burkhardt, M. E. (1994). Social interaction effects following a technological change: A longitudinal investigation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 37, 869–898; Kotter, J. P. (1995, March–April). Leading change: Why transformations fail. *Harvard Business Review*, 73(2), 59–67. Instead of trying to get everyone on board at the same time, it may be more useful to convince and prepare the opinion leaders. Understanding one's own social networks as well as the networks of others in the organization can help managers identify opinion leaders. Once these individuals agree that the proposed change is needed and will be useful, they will become helpful allies in ensuring that the rest of the organization is ready for change. Armenakis, A. A., Harris, S. G., & Mossholder, K. W. (1993). Creating readiness for organizational change. *Human Relations*, 46, 681–703. For example, when Paul Pressler became the CEO of Gap Inc. in 2002, he initiated a culture change effort in the hope of creating a sense of identity among the company's many brands such as Banana Republic, Old Navy, and Gap. For this purpose, employees were segmented instead of trying to reach out to all employees at the same time. Gap Inc. started by training the 2,000 senior managers in "leadership summits," who in turn were instrumental in ensuring the cooperation of the remaining 150,000 employees of the company. Nash, J. A. (Nov/Dec 2005). Comprehensive campaign helps Gap employees embrace cultural change. *Communication World*, 22(6).

### **Provide Support**

Employees should feel that their needs are not ignored. Therefore, management may prepare employees for change by providing emotional and instrumental support. Emotional support may be in the form of frequently discussing the changes, encouraging employees to voice their concerns, and simply expressing confidence in employees' ability to perform effectively under the new system. Instrumental support

may be in the form of providing a training program to employees so that they know how to function under the new system. Effective leadership and motivation skills can assist managers to provide support to employees.

### **Allow Employees to Participate**

Studies show that employees who participate in planning change efforts tend to have more positive opinions about the change. Why? They will have the opportunity to voice their concerns. They can shape the change effort so that their concerns are addressed. They will be more knowledgeable about the reasons for change, alternatives to the proposed changes, and why the chosen alternative was better than the others. Finally, they will feel a sense of ownership of the planned change and are more likely to be on board. Wanberg, C. R., & Banas, J. T. (2000). Predictors and outcomes of openness to changes in a reorganizing workplace. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 85*, 132–142. Participation may be more useful if it starts at earlier stages, preferably while the problem is still being diagnosed. For example, assume that a company suspects there are problems with manufacturing quality. One way of convincing employees that there is a problem that needs to be solved would be to ask them to take customer calls about the product quality. Once employees experience the problem firsthand, they will be more motivated to solve the problem.

### **Executing Change**

The second stage of Lewin's three-stage change model is executing change. At this stage, the organization implements the planned changes on technology, structure, culture, or procedures. The specifics of how change should be executed will depend on the type of change. However, there are three tips that may facilitate the success of a change effort.

### **Continue to Provide Support**

As the change is under way, employees may experience high amounts of stress. They may make mistakes more often or experience uncertainty about their new responsibilities or job descriptions. Management has an important role in helping employees cope with this stress by displaying support, patience, and continuing to provide support to employees even after the change is complete.

### **Create Small Wins**

During a change effort, if the organization can create a history of small wins, change acceptance will be more likely. Kotter, J. P. (1996). *Leading change*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press; Reay, T., Golden-Biddle, K., & Germann, K. (2006). Legitimizing a new role: Small wins and microprocesses of change. *Academy of Management Journal*, 49, 977–998. If the change is large in scope and the payoff is a long time away, employees may not realize change is occurring during the transformation period. However, if people see changes, improvements, and successes along the way, they will be inspired and motivated to continue the change effort. For this reason, breaking up the proposed change into phases may be a good idea because it creates smaller targets. Small wins are also important for planners of change to make the point that their idea is on the right track. Early success gives change planners more credibility while early failures may be a setback. Hamel, G. (2000, July/August). Waking up IBM. *Harvard Business Review*, 78(4), 137–146.

### **Eliminate Obstacles**

When the change effort is in place, many obstacles may crop up along the way. There may be key people who publicly support the change effort while silently undermining the planned changes. There may be obstacles rooted in a company's structure, existing processes, or culture. It is the management's job to identify, understand, and remove these obstacles. Kotter, J. P. (1995, March–April). Leading change: Why transformations fail. *Harvard Business Review*, 73(2), 59–67. Ideally, these obstacles would have been

eliminated before implementing the change, but sometimes unexpected roadblocks emerge as change is under way.

## **Refreezing**

After the change is implemented, the long-term success of a change effort depends on the extent to which the change becomes part of the company's culture. If the change has been successful, the revised ways of thinking, behaving, and performing should become routine. To evaluate and reinforce ("refreeze") the change, there are a number of things management can do.

## **Publicize Success**

To make change permanent, the organization may benefit from sharing the results of the change effort with employees. What was gained from the implemented changes? How much money did the company save? How much did the company's reputation improve? What was the reduction in accidents after new procedures were put in place? Sharing concrete results with employees increases their confidence that the implemented change was a right decision.

## **Reward Change Adoption**

To ensure that change becomes permanent, organizations may benefit from rewarding those who embrace the change effort (an aspect of the controlling function). The rewards do not necessarily have to be financial. The simple act of recognizing those who are giving support to the change effort in front of their peers may encourage others to get on board. When the new behaviors employees are expected to demonstrate (such as using a new computer program, filling out a new form, or simply greeting customers once they enter the store) are made part of an organization's reward system, those behaviors are more likely to be taken seriously and repeated, making the change effort

successful. Gale, S. F. (2003). Incentives and the art of changing behavior. *Workforce Management*, 82(11), 48–54.

## **Embracing Continuous Change**

While Lewin's three-stage model offers many useful insights into the process of implementing change, it views each organizational change as an episode with a beginning, middle, and end. In contrast with this episodic change assumption, some management experts in the 1990s began to propose that change is—or ought to be—a continuous process.

The learning organization is an example of a company embracing continuous change. By setting up a dynamic feedback loop, learning can become a regular part of daily operations. If an employee implements a new method or technology that seems to be successful, a learning organization is in a good position to adopt it. By constantly being aware of how employee actions and outcomes affect others as well as overall company productivity, the inevitable small changes throughout organizations can be rapidly absorbed and tailored for daily operations. When an organization understands that change does indeed occur constantly, it will be in a better position to make use of good changes and intervene if a change seems detrimental.

### **KEY TAKEAWAY**

Effective change effort can be conceptualized as a three-step process in which employees are first prepared for change, then change is implemented, and finally the new behavioral patterns become permanent. According to emerging contemporary views, it can also be seen as a continuous process that affirms the organic, ever-evolving nature of an organization.

# *Boundless Management: "Managing Change for Organizations"*

Read this section. Then, thinking back to what you read about Kurt Lewin in the previous resource, discuss why Lewin's research on change is applicable today. You should be picking up on a theme in this course about how the ways our concept of leadership has evolved over time and differed among various professional environments, such as national politics, professional athletics, and of course, business.

## Managers as Leaders of Change

Leaders are in the unique role of not only designing change initiatives but also enacting and communicating them.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Review the strategies leaders must use to lead change effectively

### KEY POINTS

- Managing change requires more than simple planning; the significant human element of change resistance needs to be addressed to ensure success.
- Leaders must define change strategy and communicate it effectively to shareholders, empower and support employees, and mitigate resistance to the change initiative.
- Conner identifies six distinct leadership styles related to change: anti-change, rational, panacea, bolt-on, integrated, and continuous. Each leadership style represents a unique set of perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors regarding how organizational disruption should be addressed.
- Conner also posited that the six leadership styles are related to two different types of organizational change: first-order change and second-order change. Different leadership styles are more effective in different situations.

### TERMS

- attribute

A characteristic or quality of a thing.

- leading

To conduct or direct with authority.

## FULL TEXT

Managing change requires strong leadership and an understanding of how organizational change occurs. Leaders are in the unique role of not only designing change initiatives but enacting and communicating them to subordinates. Managing change requires more than simple planning: the significant human element of change resistance needs to be addressed to ensure success.

### Leadership Strategies for Change

Successful change management is more likely if leaders:

- *Create a definable strategy* - Define measurable stakeholder aims, create a business case for their achievement (and keep it continuously updated), monitor assumptions, risks, dependencies, costs, return on investment, and cultural issues affecting the progress of the associated work.
- *Communicate effectively* - Explain to stakeholders why the change is being undertaken, what the benefits of successful implementation will be, and what how the change is being rolled out.
- *Empower employees* - Devise an effective education, training, or skills upgrading scheme for the organization.
- *Counter resistance* - Identify employee issues and align them to the overall strategic direction of the organization. Adapt the change initiative when necessary to mitigate discontentment.
- *Support employees* - Provide personal counseling (if required) to alleviate any change-related fears.
- *Track progress* - Monitor the implementation and fine-tuning as required.

These six components of change are the responsibility of management to create and implement.

### **The reengineering process top to bottom to top**

**Change management is often discussed as reengineering processes and integrating changes from the top down. This model demonstrates how leaders are liable to communicate downwards and decide and execute upwards as the change permeates the organization.**

### Six Leadership Styles for Change

Conner (1998) identified six distinct leadership styles related to change: anti-change, rational, panacea, bolt-on, integrated, and continuous. Each leadership style "represents a unique set of perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors regarding how organizational disruption should be addressed." Stopper (1999) characterizes each of Conner's leadership styles in this way:

- The anti-change leader - A leader embracing this style seeks to avoid change as much as possible. The message is, "Stay the course. Keep adjustments small. No need to change in any major way."
- The rational leader - This leader focuses on how to constrain and control change with logical planning and clearly defined steps.
- The panacea leader - The panacea leader believes that the way to respond to pressure for change is to communicate and motivate. These leaders understand the resilience to change they are likely to encounter as well as the inevitability of change as organizations evolve. They tend to focus on fostering enthusiasm for change.
- The bolt-on leader - This leader strives to regain control of a changing situation by attaching (bolting on) change management techniques to ad-hoc projects that are created in response to pressure for change. This manager is more concerned about helping others change than creating a strategy for the actual change itself.
- The integrated leader - The integrated leader searches for ways to use the structure and discipline of what Harding and Rouse (2007) called "human due diligence" (the leadership practice of understanding the culture of an organization and the roles, capabilities, and attitudes of its people) as individual change projects are created and implemented. The concept is simply to combine, or integrate, human and cultural concerns with the strategy itself.
- The continuous leader - The continuous leader works to create an agile and quick-responding organization that can quickly anticipate threats and seize opportunities as change initiatives are designed and implemented. Continuous leaders believe that to disruption is continuous, and adaptability a necessary organizational competency.

Conner says that these six leadership styles are related to two different types of organizational change: first-order change and second-order change. First-order change is incremental, piecemeal change. According to Conner, second-order change is "nonlinear in nature and reflects movement that is fundamentally different from anything seen before within the existing framework."

Conner identifies the first four leadership styles as appropriate for managing first-order change. When an organization is engaging in discontinuous, transformational change, however, integrated and continuous leadership styles are more appropriate .

## Types of Organizational Change

There are three main categories of change: business process re-engineering, technological change, and incremental change.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Differentiate between business process re-engineering, technological change, and incremental change as the three main categories of organizational development

### KEY POINTS

- Business process re-engineering focuses on the analysis and design of workflows and processes within an organization.
- Technological change refers to the process of invention, innovation, and diffusion of technology or processes.
- Incremental change means introducing many small, gradual changes to a project instead of a few large, rapid changes.

### TERMS

- incremental

Occurring over a series of gradual increments, or small steps.

- devise

To use one's intellect to plan or design something.

- incremental model

A method of product development where the model is designed, implemented, and tested incrementally (a little more is added each time) until the product is finished.

Change management is an approach to shifting or transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from their current state to a desired future state. It is an organizational process aimed at helping stakeholders accept and embrace change in their business environment. In some project management contexts, change management refers to a project management process wherein changes to a project are formally introduced and approved.

Kotter defines change management as the utilization of basic structures and tools to control any organizational change effort. Change management's goal is to maximize organizational

benefit, minimize impacts on workers, and avoid distractions. There are different types of change an organization can face.

### Business Process Re-Engineering

Business process re-engineering (BPR) is a business management strategy first pioneered in the early 1990s that focuses on the analysis and design of workflows and processes within an organization. BPR aims to help organizations fundamentally rethink how they do their work in order to dramatically improve customer service, cut operational costs, and become world-class competitors. In the mid-1990s, as many as 60% of the Fortune 500 companies claimed to have either initiated re-engineering efforts or begun planning for it.

BPR helps companies radically restructure their organizations by focusing on their business processes from the ground up. A business process is a set of logically related tasks performed to achieve a defined business outcome. Re-engineering emphasizes a holistic focus on business objectives and how processes relate to them, encouraging full-scale recreation of processes rather than iterative optimization of sub-processes.

Business process re-engineering is also known as business process redesign, business transformation, and business process change management.

### Incremental Change

Incremental change is a method of introducing many small, gradual (and often unplanned) changes to a project instead of a few large, rapid (and extensively planned) changes. Wikipedia illustrates the concept by building an encyclopedia bit by bit. Another good example of incremental change is a manufacturing company making hundreds of small components that go into a larger product, like a car. Improving the manufacturing process of each of these integral components one at a time to cut costs and improve process efficiency overall is incremental change.

### Technological Change

Technological change (TC) describes the overall process of invention, innovation, and diffusion of technology or processes. The term is synonymous with technological development, technological achievement, and technological progress. In essence, TC is the invention of a technology (or a process), the continuous process of improving a technology (which often makes it cheaper), and its diffusion throughout industry or society. In short, technological change is based on both better and more technology integrated into the framework of existing operational processes.

## Inside and Outside Forces for Organizational Change

Inside forces include strategic and human resource changes, while outside forces include macroeconomic and technological change.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Identify the internal and external pressures for change, which drive organizations to adapt and evolve

### KEY POINTS

- Change management is an approach to shifting individuals, teams, and organizations to a desired future state. Examples of organizational change can include strategic, operational, and technological change that can come from inside or outside the organization.
- Outside forces for change include macroeconomics, technological evolution, globalization, new legislation, and competitive dynamics.
- Inside forces for change include intrapreneurship, new management and restructuring.
- The first step in effective change management is being prepared, in a timely and knowledgeable fashion, for internal and external potentialities that may force organizational adaptation.

### TERM

- macroeconomic

Relating to the entire economy, including the growth rate, money and credit, exchange rates, the total amount of goods and services produced, etc.

### FULL TEXT

Change management is an approach to shifting or transitioning individuals, teams, and organizations from their existing state to a desired future state. Examples of organizational change can include strategic, operational, and technological changes coming from inside or outside the organization. Understanding key internal and external change catalysts is critical to successful change management for organizational leaders.

### Outside Forces

While there are seemingly endless external considerations that can motivate an organization to change, a few common considerations should be constantly monitored. These include economic factors, competitive dynamics, new technology, globalization, and legislative changes:

## **Technology expansion**

**Sometimes technology can dramatically transform feasibility in a given industry or product line, expanding the supply and demand potential. Capturing this opportunity, or avoiding the negative repercussions, requires careful and quick change management.**

- Economics - The 2008 economic collapse is a strong example of why adaptability is important. As consumers tightened their belts, organizations had to either do the same and lower supply to match lowered demand, or come up with new goods to entice them. Migrating from one volume to another can be financially challenging, and change strategies such as creating new affordable product lines or more efficient operational paradigms are key to changing for success.
- Competition - Changes in the competitive landscape, such as new incumbents, mergers and acquisitions, new product offerings, and bankruptcies, can substantially impact a company's strategy and operations. For example, if a competitor releases a new product that threatens to steal market share, an organization must be ready to change and adapt to retain their customer base.
- Technology - Technological changes are a constant threat, and embracing new technologies ahead of the competition requires adaptability. When media went digital, adaptable companies found ways to evolve their operations to stay competitive. Many companies that could not evolve quickly failed.
- Globalization - Capturing new global markets requires product, cultural, and communicative adaptability. Catering to new demographics and identifying opportunities and threats as they appear in the global market is integral to adapting for optimal value.
- Legislation - New laws and legislation can dramatically change operations. Companies in industries that impact the environment must constantly strive to adapt to cleaner and more socially responsible operating methodologies. Failing to keep pace can result in substantial fines and financial detriments, not to mention negative branding.

Inside Forces

There are many inside forces to keep in mind as well, ranging from employee changes to cultural reform to operational challenges. Understanding where this change is coming from is the first step to timely and appropriate change management.

- Management Change - New CEOs or other executive players can significantly impact strategy and corporate culture. Understanding the risks associated with hiring (or promoting for) new upper management is key to making a good decision on best fit.
- Organizational Restructuring - Organizations may be required to significantly alter their existing structure to adapt to the development of new strategic business units, new product lines, or global expansion. Changing structure means disrupting hierarchies and communications, which must then be reintegrated. Employees must be trained on the change and the implications it will have for their everyday operations.
- Intrapreneurship - New ideas come from inside the organization as well as outside the organization, and capitalizing on a great new idea will likely require some internal reconsideration. Integrating a new idea may require reallocation of resources, new hires and talent management, and new branding.

## Common Targets of Organizational Change

Change management can be implemented to change an organization's mission, strategy, structure, technology, or culture.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Recognize and discuss the various components of an organization which may undergo change through the evolution and adaptation of organizational strategy and/or objectives

### KEY POINTS

- Organizational change management should begin with a systematic diagnosis of the current situation in order to determine the organization's need for and ability to change.
- Prior to a cultural change initiative, a needs assessment should examine the current organizational culture and operations. The goal is a careful and objective consideration of what is working and what is not.
- Areas of change include mission, strategy, operations, technology, culture, branding, employees, and work flows.

- Change management should also make use of performance metrics, such as financial results, operational efficiency, leadership commitment, communication effectiveness, and the perceived need for change.

## TERMS

- organization

A group of people or other legal entities with an explicit purpose and written rules.

- change management

The controlled implementation of required changes to some system; includes version control and planned fallback.

When an organization requires changes to address counterproductive aspects of organizational culture, the process can be daunting. Cultural change is usually necessary to reduce employee turnover, influence employee behavior, make improvements to the company, refocus the company objectives, rescale the organization, provide better customer service, or achieve specific company goals and results. Cultural change can be impacted by a number of elements, including the external environment and industry competitors, changes in industry standards, technology changes, the size and nature of the workforce, and the organization's history and management.

### Assessing Change Needs

Prior to launching a cultural change initiative, a company should carry out a needs assessment to examine the existing organizational culture and operations. Careful and objective consideration of what is working and what is not, as well as what is parallel with the broader organizational objectives and what is not, are critical to success here.

Areas that need to change can be identified through interviews, focus groups, observation, and other methods of internal and external research. A company must clearly identify the existing culture and then design a change process to implement the desired culture.

### Common Areas of Change

Common areas of organizational change include:

- Mission
- Strategy

- Operational changes, including structure and hierarchies
- Technology
- Culture
- Employees and/or management
- Work flows (particularly relevant in manufacturing)
- Branding

### **Systems model of the action research process**

**All areas of change can be viewed through a number of internal change processes. This diagram is a good illustration of how the process may unfold. Feedback and transformation from a given input state to a desired output state are the underlying goals of change management.**

Organizational change management should begin with a systematic diagnosis of the existing situation in order to determine the organization's need for and ability to change. The objectives, content, and process of change should be specified as part of the change management plan.

Change management processes can benefit from creative marketing to facilitate communication between change audiences and a deep social understanding of leadership styles and group dynamics. To track transformation projects, organizational change management should align group expectations, communicate, integrate teams, and manage and train people. Change management should also make use of performance metrics including financial results, operational efficiency, leadership commitment, communication effectiveness, and the perceived need for change in order to design appropriate strategies that make the change in organizational culture as smooth and as efficient as possible.

### **Organizational Development**

Organizational development is a deliberately planned effort to increase an organization's relevance and viability.

#### **LEARNING OBJECTIVE**

- Explain the role of organizational development in leadership and organizational change

#### **KEY POINTS**

- Organizational development (OD) is an ongoing, systematic process of implementing effective organizational change.
- The purpose of organizational development is to address the evolving needs of successful organizations.
- Organizational development is often facilitated with the assistance of a "catalyst" or "change agent" such as an effective or influential leader.
- An important role of a leader is to analyze and assess the effectiveness of this developmental process and motivate the organization to achieve developmental targets.

## TERMS

- viability

The ability to live or to succeed.

- catalyst

Someone or something that encourages progress or change.

## FULL TEXT

Organization development (OD) is a deliberately planned effort to increase an organization's relevance and viability. Vasudevan has referred to OD as a systemic learning and development strategy intended to change the basics of beliefs, attitudes, and relevance of an organization's values and structure. This process helps the organization to better absorb disruptive technologies, market opportunities, and ensuing challenges and chaos. Essentially, organizational development is the framework for a change process that is designed to produce desirable and positive results for all stakeholders and the environment.

## The Nature of Organizational Development

Organizational development is a lifelong, built-in mechanism to improve an organization internally. This is often done with the assistance of a "change agent" or "catalyst" who enables appropriate theories and techniques from applied behavioral sciences, anthropology, sociology, and phenomenology. The terms "change agent" and "catalyst" suggest a leader who is engaged in transformation leadership as opposed to management (management being a more incremental or efficiency-based change methodology).

## **A manager providing advice to a team**

**Organizational development is often facilitated with the assistance of a "catalyst" or "change agent" such as an influential manager.**

Although behavioral science provided the basic foundation for the study and practice of OD, new and emerging fields of study have made their presence felt. Experts in systems thinking and organizational learning have also emerged as OD catalysts. These emergent perspectives view the organization as the holistic interplay of a number of systems, all of which impact the processes and outputs of the entire organization.

### Applications of Organizational Development

The purpose of OD is to address the evolving needs of successful organizations. It represents a concerted collaboration of internal and external experts in the field to discover the processes an organization can use to become more effective.

Organizational development aims to improve an organization's capacity to handle its internal and external functioning and relationships. This includes improving interpersonal and group processes; communication; the organization's ability to cope with problems; decision-making processes; leadership styles; conflict and trust; and cooperation among organizational members.

### Weisbord

Weisbord presents a six-box model for understanding—and thereby changing and improving—an organization:

1. *Purposes*: Are employees clear about the organization's mission, purpose, and goals? Do they support the organization's purpose?
2. *Structure*: How is the organization's work divided? Is there an adequate fit between the purpose and the internal structure?
3. *Relationships*: What are the relationships between individuals, units, or departments that perform different tasks? What are the relationships between the people and the requirements of their jobs?
4. *Rewards*: For what actions does the organization formally reward or punish its members?
5. *Leadership*: Does leadership watch for "blips" among the other areas and maintain balance among them?
6. *Helpful mechanisms*: Do planning, control, budgeting, and other information systems help organization members accomplish their goal?

### Lewin

Lewin's description of the process of change involves three steps:

1. *Unfreezing*: Faced with a dilemma or issue, the individual or group becomes aware of a need to change.
2. *Changing*: The situation is diagnosed and new models of behavior are explored and tested.
3. *Refreezing*: Application of new behavior is evaluated, and if it proves to be reinforcing, the behavior is adopted.

### Effectiveness of Organizational Development

The efficacy of organizational development is predicated on the adaptability of the organization and the overall successful integration of new ideas and strategies within an existing framework. Resistance to change is a fundamental organizational problem as all organizations have a degree of general inertia. This is further complicated by the difficulty in quantitatively measuring changes in areas that are generally intangible (i.e., culture).

To remedy this, organizations pursuing OD must set clear and measurable objectives prior to committing to a change initiative. An important role of the leader is to analyze and assess the effectiveness of this developmental process and motivate the organization to achieve developmental targets.

# Kentucky State University: Charles R. Nichols' "The need for communicating change"

Read this article. Can you think of a time when you felt left in the dark about a change? How did it make you feel, and how did you react? Respond in your journal, and consider posting your reflection in the discussion forum.

## The Need for Communicating Change

In every life, change is the only constant. We come to know our parents and siblings, later our friends and relatives and along our journey of discovery, we find out that not everyone sees things as we do. This is an important consideration for organizations. After all, who makes up organizations? It's people, and as people enter an organization they do so with their personal experiences, beliefs and considerations. In business schools, the change concepts of Kurt Lewin and John Kotter are taught as a way to help managers or future managers to address the issue of change coming to an organization.

When change is about to occur, the workforce naturally becomes concerned with the unknown. The manager or administrative team should be proactive in dealing with the issue. It's not uncommon among beings to fear or resist the unknown. The more that leaders can take a role in explaining the reasons for the change(s) and how the employee (s) may or will benefit from it helps to make the transition that much easier. It will not guarantee that all involved or impacted will come to accept or appreciate the change(s) but, they will have a better understanding of whether or not the change is a problem or an opportunity for them.

Change in organizations can come from external sources such as legislation (e.g. laws, policies or procedures). It also can come from social pressure as particular groups within a given society call for/demand change to meet a goal or vision they believe to be important such as Civil Rights in the 50s and 60s and Women's Rights in the 70s. Organizational leaders must be aware of the support such causes bring and how that in turn may impact their organization. The more prepared leadership and management is for the coming change, the more they can set strategy early on to introduce the change into their organization and not let the change come and have their workers react to it.

The highly diverse world we live in presents opportunities for change on almost a daily basis, whether it be because of evolving technologies, social or cultural pressures, political or economic forces; change is inevitable and the best thing to do is understand when it's coming and how to be ready to adapt. Think about the American workforce. In the nation's early history, a lot of jobs centered around agriculture or agricultural needs. The skills developed for positions relative to that field helped the worker to become successful. When the Industrial Revolution happened, it created a whole new knowledge and skill set for

workers. Suddenly, shoeing a horse or raising a crop wasn't as relative to the labor market as the willingness to work in a factory or a packing plant. We can forward to our current society. The Industrial Revolution skills that worked well when factories and manufacturing were in vogue are not as in demand today. Sometime around the 1970s, the economy switched from a manufacturing based one to a service based one. The ability to interact with others, effectively lead people and other interpersonal skills became important. We forward to our current society. Service and interpersonal skills are still needed but today, those skills have to be transitioned into a technology based economy

The labor industry like the fossil fuel industry has seen dramatic changes from the time where they once had significant power to one where their necessity is being challenged. There are those who may not like it but, that's the impact of change.

Consider how much things have changed over the course of your life and respond to the following: "A person today who had little or no understanding of computer use is much like a person in the late 1900s who could not read or write. In a sense, they are both functionally illiterate".

# Colin Price's "Encouraging Organizations to Change: The Influence Model"

Read this article. Colin Price describes a square with four quadrants that represents how management is able to introduce change. Read this information carefully and make a pictorial representation of the model Price describes in your journal.

## Encouraging organizations to change: The influence model

You know your organization needs to change. You've developed a strategic view about where you need to go and you've matched that up with an understanding of the changes that will require in your culture. You've thought very hard about organizational mindsets and personal behaviors that will need to shift to get there. Now, you actually have to do something to shift them.

Getting anyone to change is hard. Getting a whole organization to change can seem nearly impossible. Yet that's exactly what most organizations need to do to continue to thrive. Over a few decades of working with all kinds of organizations--businesses, government agencies, NGOs--we've developed a process to encourage people to change that works. Not all the time, but far more often than not.

In more than a decade of research and far more client work, what we've seen is that the starkest differentiator between organizations that can change successfully (and sustain higher performance over time) and all the others isn't in what they say, it's in what they do--how they actually implement change. You can't just have a workshop and put up a few posters, you have to intervene in the system.

We think about it this way: if you want to change someone's behavior just imagine you're in the middle of this square. There are four things that need to happen, and they need to happen in relative symmetry.

Most people have been behaving however they behave for a long time. At work, very often those ingrained behaviors are reinforced by the organization's culture and by how its leaders behave. So, the first step, top right hand side, people need to understand what you want them to do differently. And they need to get that at least enough to be willing to experiment. That can take anywhere between two days and a year. It's not just sending out a memo and assuming it's done. It's a process of deeply engaging with people, talking with them, listening to them, framing the changes in a context that's meaningful to them.

Next, bottom right, if people understand the strategy and understand the desired culture, but look around and see the systems and processes of the organization reinforcing yesterday rather than tomorrow, they think all that dialog isn't serious. If we're supposed to act with speed and urgency but the budget process takes three months, people will think, "Oh well, why bother? It's just not real." Now, there are thousands of processes in any large organization, so you can't change them all. But you can choose the five or ten that will have most leverage on the outcome and change those very early on.

Bottom left is about capabilities. People may want to change, and see processes changing around them, but they personally also have to have the skills to behave differently. Maybe that's different technical skills, maybe it's different leadership skills. For the organization, that gets you into placement, replacement, and development. Placement is moving people around, replacement is moving people out in the appropriate way, and development is helping people in place gain new skills.

And then top left. Psychologists would tell us that this is as important as the other three added together, and it's that people need to see significant others, usually the senior people, role modeling new behaviors, following new processes, building new capabilities. If we're supposed to be more open to the external world, for example, is the CEO out there visiting customers?

Each of the four levers in our influence model affects mindsets in a particular way. An individual transformation program may rely on some levers more than others, but using all four together sets in motion a powerful system that maximizes a company's chances of getting new patterns of thought and behavior to stick.

To illustrate how the levers work together, imagine that you go to the opera on Saturday and a football game on Sunday. At the climax of the opera, you sit silent and rapt in concentration. At the climax of the football game, you leap to your feet, yelling and waving and jumping up and down. You haven't changed, but your context has (the influence model that surrounds you)--and so has your mindset about the behavior that's appropriate for expressing your appreciation and enjoyment.

To continue with the analogy, organizations that are unhealthy are often caught between an opera house and a football stadium--not a comfortable place to be. Asking employees for a football-stadium mindset is no use if your evaluation systems and leadership actions communicate that your organization is still an opera house. If you want your people to think like football fans, you need to provide plenty of cues to remind them they are in a stadium.



# Techniques for consensus decision making in large groups: the council's spokespersons method

27 Aug 2010 — Carlos

*The processes and techniques which can be found below show/ prove that even in large groups of hundreds and thousands of people, it is possible to make decisions in a democratic, horizontal, participative manner, without hierarchy, delegations, hierarchies or votes/ voting.*

*These techniques are borne out of the experience of different social grassroots based movements over the past thirty years, mainly in the organization of mass civil disobedience actions.*

*This text focuses on consensus decision making using the assembly or spokesperson committee method, their variations and other dynamics which can be used in large groups. The experience in introducing these techniques allows us to anticipate the main problems faced when introducing this methodology, as well as suggestions as to how to overcome them.*

*At the end, a handful/ several exercises and dynamics are proposed in order to develop and practice the skills necessary for a group to be able to make group consensus decision making work.*

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## Consensus in large groups...

Is ....impossible: the maximum size of a group of people whereby everyone can be heard and answered totals about 15-20 people.

Therefore the key to consensus based decision making in large groups is to reduce the problem so that consensus is indeed possible: therefore by dividing the large group into small groups.

In small groups:

- Dialogue is possible
- Debates can happen
- Clear and well thought through conclusions are presented to the rest of the groups.

The process towards consensus in large groups uses the **assembly or spokesperson committee structure**.

The process has to be as *clear* as possible for everyone and must be *accepted* amongst all the participants.

Along with all these thoughts on methodology, one must not lose sight of the fact that it is the practice and experience of the participants which makes consensus based decisions possible.

## **Conditions for consensus based decision making**

Consensus decision making depends (greatly so, in the case of large groups) on certain previous conditions being met:

- *Common Objective*: Everyone in the meeting needs to have a common interest/ objective (if an action needs to be carried out at a specific event or there is a shared ethical value). Obviously the more people in a meeting, the more opinions there will be. Therefore, by finding this common interest and going back to this point when differences emerge, it can help maintain a more focused/ united group.
- *Compromise with consensus*. Consensus requires compromise, patience, tolerance and determination to place the group above all else. In the consensus model, disagreement can be used as a tool in order to help reach a more solid final decision.
- *Enough Time*: All the decision making techniques need time if we want to ensure that the decision reached is of high quality. Consensus is not an exception. In international groups one needs to allow time for translation. In the spokesperson's committee, time is needed to consult with Affinity Groups so that they can reach their own consensus.
- *Clear Procedure*: It is essential that each group understand the procedure adopted at the meeting. As there are variations of this procedure, even if we have experience with these tools, it is possible that a group uses the procedure in a different way. There can be a *group agreement* or *basic rules* which are decided upon at the beginning of the meeting. For example, that consensus will be used, the manual signs will be used (see appendix), that one cannot interrupt if someone else is speaking, active participation, that we reject oppressive behaviour, that we respect everybody's opinion, that we will try and stick to the time available. Sticking up a piece of paper with a flow chart of the *consensus based decision making process* will help remind people in which phase of the procedure they are in at any given moment. It also helps to explain the consensus based decision making process at the beginning of a meeting because there could be some new people present.
- *Good facilitation and active participation*: Nominating one or more facilitators can help the meeting where there are a large group of people run more smoothly. The dynamics of the group needs to ensure that the group works in harmony, in a creative and democratic manner. They are also there so as to ensure that the objective of the meeting is achieved, that the decision made is implemented. In order for this to happen, active support by all those present is required.

## Structure

In the consensus based decision making model through the Spokespersons committee, the large group divides into smaller groups: the so called **affinity groups** or **base groups (AG)**. The same issues are discussed in parallel within these groups.

Each one of these groups sends one or two spokespersons to the **spokespersons' committee or assembly of spokespersons (SC)**. In the SC:

- The whole procedure is coordinated
- The AG's conclusions are exchanged
- Decisions are made

The SC is a rather small group so as to enable *direct communication*. As in the SC, there is greater focus on the *exchange* of ideas rather than in the *deep debates*, there is the capacity to have even more participants (an SC made up of thirty people is still viable if certain restrictions are applied).

The combination of **affinity groups** and **spokesperson committees** makes it possible for:

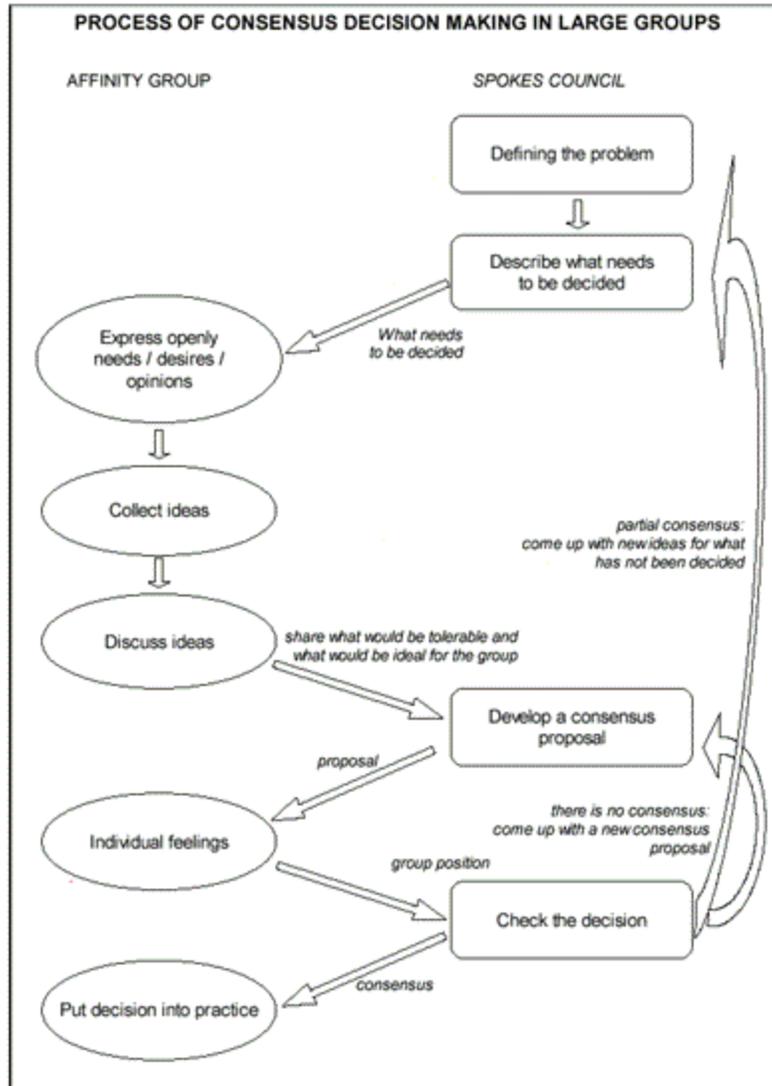
- Everyone to hear about the results and conclusions without being present at the debates.
- Good ideas and important arguments of one AG to reach the other AGs through the SC
- Reflection on a greater number of suggestions because the large group is not having to listen to each person individually.

## Procedure

The decision making process can be divided into 8 steps. These steps are divided between the SC and the AG.

The SC needs to coordinate the work within the AGs: in order for the results of the AGs to be brought together, the same steps need to be followed.

This is not a linear process. There are points which one goes back on. For example, when the SC does not reach a consensus, it is agreed that the next step is to get back into AGs in order to develop new ideas.



An issue or question is addressed in the SC: or an AG puts forward a proposal to the committee, or from the outside a question is put forward, or a problem relating to the current situation is revealed.

Before beginning, **the problem needs to be sufficiently explained** so that all the participants understand it and can explain it to their groups. If they are unaware of an important bit of information, the spokespersons ask within their AG or someone takes on the task of finding out this information.

**Formulate the issue you are deciding on.**

The SC formulates the question upon which a decision is to be made. This question is passed on to the AGs.

### **To express opinions, interests, desires and needs. Gather ideas. Debate ideas.**

Here there is no difference between the large group procedures and the normal model of consensus decisions.

It is very useful if the AGs first clarify *what their interests, desires and needs are in order to reach a final decision*.

The *ideas* are then collected which will enable us to avoid problems. No ideas are evaluated until all of them have been collected.

In the debate the *viability* and *consequences* of each proposal are analyzed. The members of the group form an opinion. The group talks amongst each other until *possible solutions* to the problem are found.

Finally, a group develops *decision proposals*.

### **Creating a consensus based proposal**

The AGs' proposals and opinions are reunited again with the spokespersons in the SC. It is here that the results of the different groups are adjusted.

In the SC, the interests and needs behind the proposals need to be expressed. The same applies to theories, arguments and evaluations which have influenced the opinion of the group. Knowing all this will facilitate the rest of the groups to find a solution which is well accepted by everyone.

In cases where not everyone proposes the same thing, a *proposal based on the results of the AGs* will be formulated which has a good chance of being accepted by the groups.

If it is a matter of choosing between different alternatives, these alternatives should be stated as concrete proposals.

### **Personal Assessment**

The spokespersons pass on the *consensus based proposal* (or the choice between various alternatives) to their respective AGs. Each member of the group expresses their personal opinion.

When it comes to judging between various alternatives, the group must put them *in order of preference*. If the AGs only mention their preferred choice the SC will not have enough material with which to create a new proposal.

### **Making a decision**

With the AGs' preferences, the spokespersons convene once again in the SC. Now the committee must identify whether consensus has been reached.

If the consensus is *partial*, only on some points, any other points which are disagreed upon will be part of *a new question to be decided upon*.

If consensus is not reached first time round, a back and forth game begins between the SC and the AGs:

- As a result of the groups' previous feedback another consensus based proposal is formed in the SC.
- Due to new information coming from the SC, some people or groups change their position.

A question is decided upon through consensus, in the SC which is then passed on to the spokespersons via the AGs.

In the procedure so far we have solely focused on the minimum exchange between the SC and AG in all cases. In determined situations an additional exchange between the SC and AGs may be useful:

- When there is *unclear information* on the starting question, information can be passed on to the groups when clarifying what the problem is about exactly.
- If there are *individual needs of significant importance*, these need to be expressed in the SC before the idea gathering stage.
- If an AG has *very opposing ideas*, the ideas of all the other AGs must be discussed within each group, before the SC can draw up a consensus based proposal.

### **What should the groups and participants pay attention to?**

#### *The participants*

The major difficulty in the consensus based decision making process in large groups demands a greater challenge for all the participants. A balance must be found:

- Between the individual self determination against the pressure to conform, and the will to pay attention to the needs and desires of others and taking their thoughts seriously.

- Between arriving at a proposal with major support and perseverance in order to keep debating in search of the best solution.

### *Afinity Group*

The AG has the role of creating consensus amongst its members. In this procedure other points of view, which are not represented in their own group, must be addressed. Equally for the participants, the AG must strike a balance between self affirmation and the attempt to understand the opinions of others.

### *Spokespersons*

The spokespersons represent their AG in the SC, not their own personal opinions. This means that the spokesperson must consult with his/ her AG when issues have been raised in the SC which had not been raised in their group.

One group must give permission to their spokesperson to make decisions on their behalf, without consulting the group. This can be useful when the group's answer is predictable regarding an issue brought up in the SC. This permission does not mean that the spokesperson does not consult with the group at all. It is therefore up to him/ her to decide when it is necessary to go back to the group and when it isn't. This scenario is only recommended when the spokesperson knows the group sufficiently well in order for the group to decide this.

The role of spokesperson has two main problems:

- Freedom in relation to the group
- Failure in transmitting the information

In order to solve these problems, there are three solutions:

- Write everything down: the groups' petition must be written down and brought to the SC. Notes also should be taken in the SC so as to then inform the group.
- Double representation: if the SC is small it is recommendable to send a spokesperson per group plus a silent observer. In large SCs, this can be impossible due to the noise level.
- Rotation: the group can send different people to the SC, This avoids the danger of breaking away. However, an SC without rotation has the advantage that, with time, the spokespersons get to know one another and this makes communication more effective.

### *Spokepersons' committee*

In the SC the decision making process is coordinated in different meetings.

- In order to do this, clear agreements need to be made on what the next step is for the groups.
- There should also be agreement on how much time groups have in order to reach a conclusion and when the next SC begins.

## **Variations and extensions of the procedure**

In order to tailor the process for each individual context, various variations and additions have been developed.

### *Multi-level spokespersons' committee*

In very large groups it is possible for there to be a multi-level committee: the whole group divides into sub-groups, which often is divided according to geographical proximity. These partial groups organise themselves respectively through their own SC. Then the SCs send their own spokespersons to the joint SC. In this way, there can be many groups made up of thousands of people.

### *Fishtank spokesperson committees*

In not too large groups the SC takes place in the middle of the joint group. Given that only the spokespersons are allowed to speak, the communication situation is manageable but, as everyone is listening, everyone is equally informed. Furthermore, the AGs can communicate with their spokespersons through written form during the SC.

### *Committee with moderation*

The CS meeting can be strengthened with the role of a moderator. The moderation:

- Prepares the meeting, gathers and prioritizes the points to be addressed
- Collects petitions from outside groups
- Structures the dialogue in the committee
- Proposes appropriate facilitation methods
- Accompanies the decision making process through several meetings
- Reminds others of what issues are being addressed and at what stage of the process one is in.

Beyond the facilitator role, it is also useful for the present roles to be present at the meeting:

- *Facilitator* (see role of moderation on the previous point)
- *Coordinator*: when the facilitator is flagging or feels the need to express his/her opinion
- *Doorman*: to welcome people and explain to those entering the meeting what is being talked about, hand in minutes or documents which are needed, ensure that the late arrivals do not interrupt proceedings when entering, explain the consensus based model which is being followed in the meeting...
- *Secretary*: take minutes of the meeting, of the proposals and important decision made, as well as drawing attention to incomplete decisions (who will be in charge of/ responsible for this, that or the other...)
- *Observer*: observes the atmosphere of the meeting, in the rise of tensions, the straying of the debate, the lows in enthusiasm, and they can make suggestions to the group in relation to this problem, for example, that of taking a break.
- *Taking the floor*: they have the list of people who wish to take the floor and ensure that they speak when it is their turn
- *Timekeeper*: they ensure that each item on the agenda is given enough time for debate and for the meeting to end at the agreed time.

### *Plenary*

In order to simply transmit information to everyone, it is simpler to convene a plenary instead of doing so through the SC. Sometime, issues can be debated in the plenary so that everyone can receive a direct impression of what is being discussed.

The true debate should take place in the AGs as an in depth dialogue with ample participation in the plenary is almost impossible to carry out. It is also difficult to work in large groups in the decision making stage because the debates rarely follow a coherent path.

However, for decisions where little debate is required, the plenary is easier and quicker to use.

### *Interest circles*

When there is a great need for a small part of the joint group to debate an issue, it is recommended that they separate from the rest of the group in order to have a more in-depth debate. The interest circle does not make any decisions on the part of the whole group, but it can contribute the conclusions of their debates to the general procedure.

### *Delegation*

Not all decisions need to be made in the plenary. The decision making structures can be less burdensome if certain decisions are delegated to a small group. It is important in

this case to establish which matters can be decided in this group and how these decisions can be adjusted and approved by the joint group.

### *The flood*

This exercise requires time but it is very useful for large groups. The best is to set very strict time limits for each stage.

- Draw up a list of proposals
- Get into pairs. Each pair discusses the list of options and they are asked to agree on three main priorities (or however many there are).
- Each pair joins up with another pair to form a group of 4. The two pairs compare their lists and try to agree on a list of three priorities.
- Each group of 4 joins up with another group to form a group of 8. Each group once again takes their two priority lists and tries to cut them down to a single list.
- Repeat until the whole group has the whole group has reunited and has a shared list of only 3 priorities.

### *The double wheel*

This allows everyone to express their opinion and listen to everyone else. In contrast to the normal wheel, the exercise does not end when everyone has spoken. Instead, the wheel continues allowing everyone to respond to what they have heard. The meeting continues until consensus is reached. This tool is good in order to ensure that everyone's voice is heard, even if it takes a lot of time.

## **What should be focused on when introducing the consensus process in large groups?**

When introducing the process, one needs to think whether to integrate it into the *pre-existing structures* in the group.

In less experienced groups in consensus one can't only communicate the process itself, but must also introduce a *general introduction to consensus based decision making*.

### *Integration into pre-existing structures*

Sometimes subgroups exist within a large group. There are other reasons why groups can be formed with representatives of all the subgroups. Therefore there is an

opportunity to integrate the roles of grassroots groups and spokesperson committees into pre-existing structures. In relation to direct nonviolent action this means for example:

- Each group is not only a group where debates are held and decisions made, but it is also an affinity group: people who stay together during an action take care of one another and they support each other. Many activists organise themselves into affinity groups, irrespective of whether there is a spokespersons committee for an action.
- Information can be disseminated effectively to the activists through the SC. In other cases the announcements made over a loudspeaker are often not heard by anybody and, furthermore, the spectators can listen more easily.
- In the inter-regional meetings the affinity groups are both local groups who have worked together.

The integration into other structures facilitates the creation and maintenance of this type of decision making model. Organizing oneself into groups also entails a certain complexity, as many people will not participate in the decision making system if they are not already integrated in some other way. On the other hand, it is possible that the additional tasks overload the groups and the committee, so that there is not enough time left for the decision making process.

#### *Dissemination of the model*

When consensus based decision making is introduced into a group for the first time or when new participants are included, the procedure and the management of consensus based issues must be introduced. It must be clear to everybody at what point in the procedure people will be able to express their needs and support their proposals or opinions.

As the proceedings for large groups are more complex than for small groups, their description is more extensive. Through a detailed presentation of the rules of the process it is easy to create the feeling that consensus based decision making is a normal and reliable procedure and that if the rules of the procedure are respected, consensus can be achieved.

Therefore certain fundamental concepts need to be addressed:

- It is important to ensure that the same consideration is paid to all the participants.
- One must know how to use the creativity and skills of the whole group in order to reach a good decision.
- The need to reach a real decision
- This decision needs to be adopted as concretely as possible by the participants

The perception of the group that these demands are fair, will depend on how the participants interact with each other, whether they have an attitude which is truly oriented towards consensus and whether, along with defending their own opinions, they are also responsible in ensuring that the procedure progresses.

### *Experience and training*

It will be easier for the group to reach consensus decisions when all the participants are aware of their role in the decision making process and they can therefore carry out their role in a productive manner. This can be significantly strengthened by making the group reflect upon its own experience. Furthermore, training can be organized so that they can practice with concrete decisions.

## **Common difficulties in the search for consensus**

For the majority of people, decision making according to the consensus model is a completely new way of learning which can be learnt overnight. We are immersed in the cultural tradition of authoritarian or majority based decisions, in which everyone has been socialized/ "trained." Only in some cases and often subconsciously is it usual to create consensus amongst participants.

In order for the consensus based decision making process to become a viable and convincing alternative for "new arrivals", practice and constructive assessment of the experience is needed.

As an aid for this process, we have listed below the most common difficulties of seeking consensus.

### *Difficulties and effects*

- The problems are not formulated or contextualized clearly
- The common points agreed upon in the meeting are not shown and the conversation just goes round in circles
- There is lack of awareness when it comes to recognizing solutions which could generate consensus
- A supposed consensus is reached very quickly, with some very important aspects going unaddressed.

### *Possible Solutions*

- It is very useful for the development of dialogue if the moderator continuously summarizes at what stage of the debate the meeting is in.
- Everyone must feel responsible for the course of the dialogue and to contribute in a positive manner.

As it is not enough to only identify the problem in order to solve it, here are a couple of further suggestions on how groups can get around these problems. In this regard, in the next part, we recommend the following practical exercises.

\*

## Appendix

### A. Exercises to practice consensus decision making

#### *Active listening*

In order to understand what the other person has said, it is not merely enough to wait until that person has finished speaking. Active listening means adopting an interested stance and show an interior and exterior acknowledgement towards the person who is speaking.

In order to strengthen active listening, it is useful to repeat what the other person has said using our own words, without entering into any discussions, but rather to seek confirmation of what has been said. One must cater for the emotional part rather than on the factual side of what has been said, as well as ask for clarification when necessary.

A good exercise in order to practice active listening is *the mirror*. In this type of conversation the following rules must be followed:

- Reproduce the point of view of the other person
- Compare the facts and emotions
- Do not start to make value judgments
- Be brief, much more than the other person.

Active listening does not mean that we agree with the opinion of the person we are listening to. It is about trying to correctly understand the other person and what they have said.

#### *Presentation*

Participants are invited to evenly space themselves out in order to reflect the spectrum of opinions, for/ against a specific proposal. The discussion continues and one's position can change if one changes opinion.

### *Fishbowl*

Two concentric circles, only the inner one can discuss one proposed issue. If a person in the outer circle wishes to say something, they have to move into the inner circle, changing places with another person. This form of debate makes it possible for there to be an intense exchange of ideas on controversial topics.

### *Wheel*

This is done in order. Everyone expresses their opinions, feelings, ideas, according to the stage of the debate. The only rule is to not make a comment which has already been made by others previously, nor enter into any debates. The wheel allows the whole group to express themselves.

### *Ball*

Only the person who has the ball in their hand can speak. Therefore everyone can be sure that they will be listened to when it is their turn to speak and everyone will be paying attention as they know they will have an opportunity to speak.

### *Snapshot*

A snapshot for the opportunity to express opinions, feelings, states of mind or experiences. The interventions need to be short. The participants themselves decide if they want to have responses. The moderator also participates in the flash.

### *Brainstrom*

A good method for a warm up at the beginning of a discussion on an issue. With short questions or key-words, equally short opinions or immediate responses are given. You go round in a circle and the ideas are written down on a board or a flipchart. The only rules for brainstorming are the following:

- Quantity over quality: the idea is to try and make as many spontaneous associations between ideas as possible. Good associations can even emerge from strange thought processes.
- Time limit: maximum 5-10 minutes, which creates the mental tension necessary for such an exercise.
- Neither criticisms nor self-criticism: an atmosphere of trust needs to be created in order for everyone to feel comfortable in expressing their ideas and suggestions, however inappropriate or out of place they may seem.

- Neither debate nor judgment: For the same reason. In the stage there will be opportunity for analysis and approval.

There are variations to this method:

- *Imaginary brainstorm*: a brainstorm is made on an invented topic but which is related in some way to the real issue being addressed (and then as we go back to the real issue we try to trace the links between the real issue and the ideas established for the imaginary topic)
- *Revolving brainstorm*: the large group is divided into groups of 4-6 people and they simultaneously note down their ideas on a sheet of paper for 2-3 minutes. They then pass on the piece of paper to the next group who write their notes down on the other sheet of paper and so it goes on. The ideas of some groups will influence those of others.

### *The Pause*

This method comes from the Arca movement. It is the best exercise when emotions are running high and people are at an impasse. The group establishes that any participant can ask for a pause. This means that everyone has to stand up and keep silent for a couple of seconds or half a minute. They can therefore “let go”, gather their thoughts, “get back down to earth”. The result can be that everyone who had lost their tempers, have now calmed down.

### *Join heads*

Simply get up from your seats and place your heads together. The physical movement stimulates, activates and physical contact improves communication. You are only allowed to sit back down in your seat when the decision made is close to pleasing everyone.

### *Conflict lines*

Two groups put themselves into lines. One group has to represent a specific opinion or individual, the other group adopts the opposing stance or plays the antagonist. A debate on the controversial points is developed. The discussions take place at the same time, which leads to quite high noise levels, which can help to represent an aggressive figure. Then, in pairs, the style of the discussion and the arguments used are then analysed and then the roles are switched over. To finish, in a plenary you discuss what was learnt in pairs. This exercise is used a lot in nonviolent direct actions, in order to practice how to interact with officers, the public, workers etc.

### *Circle of whispers*

Very useful and relaxing in meetings where there are lots of participants or in conferences. Every so often, there are breaks in which you can talk to the person next to you about what you have just heard. Therefore, some questions of understanding and objections can be cleared up or verified, which may make a future round of debate a lot more relaxed and effective. The possibility of being able to express one's thoughts, thanks to this exercise, will help increase the listening capacity in the next phase of the meeting.

### *Question with cards*

Work using cards is one of the most used exercises. Each participant or group notes down ideas or proposals on a specific issue on small cards which are then collected and placed so that everyone can see them on a flipchart or on a wall.

- Only one idea per card
- The number of cards can be unlimited or limited, depending on the context
- They need to be written down clearly so that they can be easily seen from a distance

The card exercise gives each participant within the group the same opportunity to participate and it leads to a gathering of a vast amount of ideas and proposals in the quickest time possible. The individual work of filling in the cards allows each participant to develop their thoughts and put them on paper without being influenced by the rest of the group.

The collection of cards can also be worked on afterwards, grouping them together by similarity of topic, which could give a better overall view. A title can be given to each group of cards. This grouping method will make the following phase of evaluation of the different proposals a lot easier.

### *Opinion barometer*

A controversial opinion or theory is proposed for a decision proposal. People who 100% agree with this proposal will stand at one far end of the room and on the other far side of the room, those who are 0% in favour. The two extremes label their positions using cards. In the middle are those who are undecided (50%). Each participant is invited to position themselves along a line, according to their own opinion. In this way, we get an image of whether the group is accepting or rejecting a proposal. Each participant is then asked to explain why they have placed themselves in that particular place.

The barometer can be "changing". If the arguments of other people make participants change opinion, they can change position in order to reflect their change of opinion.

There are variations to this activity:

- *Consensus barometer*: The activity can be used in a modified way, so as to seek consensus. Now each participant has to place themselves quite close to a far side of the room according to whether they partly share or completely share an opinion or proposal. This activity is especially useful when there is more than one proposal because one can immediately see what the group's opinion is. This is not about voting because the process carries on.
- *Conflict barometer*: People who are in conflict place themselves in diametrically opposed spaces and at a certain distance. The rest of the group distributes itself according to the personal proximity or according to their opinions relating to those of the people at the two extremes. These people then begin a dialogue based on clarification between them. As soon as they feel that they have resolved an aspect of the conflict and the confrontation calms down, they can move slightly closer together and the rest of the group can follow them. The conversation continues until the participants feel that the conflict has been sufficiently resolved or has been sufficiently clarified. This can be sensed in the dissipating tension in the atmosphere and it is visible through the two opposing sides having moved physically closer together.

### *Small groups*

In large groups, as time goes by, there is often a sense of discontent which is produced. Furthermore the potential of the group is not exploited appropriately if only a few members are actively participating. It is therefore recommended that the large group exercises be interspersed with small group work every once in a while. Therefore the more shy or withdrawn people can also participate. The investment of time required for small group work and then the presentation in plenary of the results of each group, is recouped through increased satisfaction of each participant, better quality of the proposal content and a quicker path towards consensus.

### *Breaks*

The positive effects of breaks are always underestimated. Breaks not only revive states of mind and re-energise participants. It also allows for informal conversation which takes place during the breaks and which lead to quicker clarifications compared to "official" regulated dialogue. A break is a "time out" in which conversation will flow in a very different way and, more often than not, in a more constructive manner. The waste of time is made up with the time gained with the dialogue towards the end of the session.

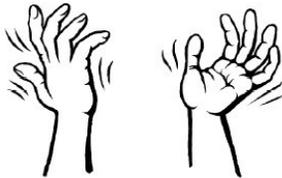
## **B. Manual signs**

When a large group wants to make a decision it is not necessary for everyone who wishes to say something, to do so using words. Hand signs are developed in order to communicate important things without interrupting the person who is speaking. Furthermore, through these signs we get an image of the group's opinion. Speaking from

experience, the need to express one's own opinion is great. At the same time it visibly shows how many people are actively participating to the process. If there is no manual sign this is an indication that the majority of people are no longer concentrating. For some people manual signs can seem stupid but when they are clearly introduced, they can clearly improve the debating process. It is important that they not be used as a way of voting. Manual signs are a very useful tool for debate in large and small groups, but they do not necessarily guarantee a fair debate. Depending on the needs of the group, new signs can be introduced or rejected, as required.

Please find below some signs which can be used to express one's own opinion, to ask for the floor or to contribute something in order to further aid the understanding of an issue.

### Signs for giving opinions



•  
*«I agree with this and I want to say this right now »:*

You raise your hands and you shake turn them quickly in both directions.

Therefore you are applauding silently. In consensus based debates you express if you are in agreement with what is being said, and you get an image of the opinion of the group, if it is close to consensus or not. You also avoid unnecessary taking in turns to speak.



•  
*«No. My opinion is completely different»:*

Hands making an x shape.



•  
Here one can express disagreement with what has been said.



«My opinion in relation to the consensus proposal is...» (level of agreement on what has been said)

You show one, two, three, four, five fingers or closed fist.



•  
«Veto. I block the proposal»:  
Raised fist.

The veto means: I veto the group from adopting the proposal, because the consensus proposal goes entirely against my ideas.

### Signs to take the floor

•

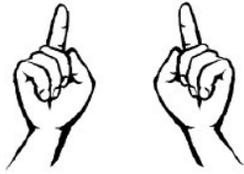
«I would like to add/ ask something in relation to the contents»:

Raised open hand.



•  
«Comment on the debate procedure»  
Hands form a T shape.

With this sign, one announces a proposal on the process. For example, that certain aspects of the problem be discussed in small groups, or that there be a break. In general, these proposals take priority over people taking the floor to talk about the contents of the debate.



•  
«Direct response»

Two index fingers raised.

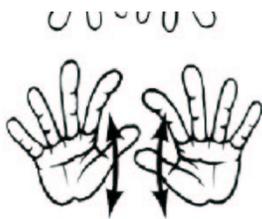
If the intervention is directly relevant. This allows one to jump the queue. There is the risk of taking advantage of this.

### Signs relating to comprehension



•  
«Speak louder»:

Repeatedly moving palms upwards.



•  
«Speak more quietly»:

With palms facing down, repeatedly move hands downwards.



•  
«I don't understand»:

Move fingers in front of the face.

Thereby showing that you do not understand the contents of the discussion.



•  
«You are repeating yourself. Summarize.»

Two hands rotating around each other.

This sign is important in order to avoid repetitions. If the sign appears several times this means the debate is going round in circles.



•  
«Language»

Form an L with the index finger and thumb.

In order to request translation or that simpler language be used in interventions.

\* \* \*

*Translated and adapted for the most part from "Konsens: Handbuch zur gewaltfreien Entscheidungsfindung" (Werkstatt für gewaltfreie Aktion Baden, 2004) and partially from "Consensus in Large Groups" (Seeds for Change): <http://seedsforchange.org.uk/free/r...>*

# *Boundless Management: "Rational and Nonrational Decision Making: Problems with the Rational Decision-Making Model"*

Compare and contrast Prospect Theory and Bounded Rationality. In your journal, discuss which theory you believe to be more valid and why. Write at least a paragraph.

## Problems with the Rational Decision-Making Model

Critics of the rational model argue that it makes unrealistic assumptions in order to simplify possible choices and predictions.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Summarize the inherent flaws and arguments against the rational model of decision-making within a business context

### KEY POINTS

- Critics of the rational decision-making model say that the model makes unrealistic assumptions, particularly about the amount of information available and an individual's ability to process this information when making decisions.
- Bounded rationality is the idea that an individual's ability to act rationally is constrained by the information they have, the cognitive limitations of their minds, and the finite amount of time and resources they have to make a decision.
- Because decision-makers lack the ability and resources to arrive at optimal solutions, they often seek a satisfactory solution rather than the optimal one.

### TERMS

- Rational choice theory

A framework for understanding and often formally modeling social and economic behavior.

- bounded rationality

The idea that decision-making is limited by the information available, the decision-maker's cognitive limitations, and the finite amount of time available to make a decision.

- satisficer

One who seeks a satisfactory solution rather than an optimal one.

## Critiques of the Rational Model

Critics of rational choice theory—or the rational model of decision-making—claim that this model makes unrealistic and over-simplified assumptions. Their objections to the rational model include:

- People rarely have full (or perfect) information. For example, the information might not be available, the person might not be able to access it, or it might take too much time or too many resources to acquire. More complex models rely on probability in order to describe outcomes rather than the assumption that a person will always know all outcomes.
- Individual rationality is limited by their ability to conduct analysis and think through competing alternatives. The more complex a decision, the greater the limits are to making completely rational choices.
- Rather than always seeking to optimize benefits while minimizing costs, people are often willing to choose an acceptable option rather than the optimal one. This is especially true when it is difficult to precisely measure and assess factors among the selection criteria.

## Alternative Theories of Decision-Making

### Prospect Theory

Alternative theories of how people make decisions include Amos Tversky's and Daniel Kahneman's prospect theory. *Prospect theory* reflects the empirical finding that, contrary to rational choice theory, people fear losses more than they value gains, so they weigh the probabilities of negative outcomes more heavily than their actual potential cost. For instance, Tversky's and Kahneman's studies suggest that people would rather accept a deal that offers a 50% probability of gaining \$2 over one that has a 50% probability of losing \$1.

### Bounded Rationality

Other researchers in the field of behavioral economics have also tried to explain why human behavior often goes against pure economic rationality. The theory of *bounded rationality* holds that an individual's rationality is limited by the information they have, the cognitive limitations of their minds, and the finite amount of time they have to make a decision. This theory was proposed by Herbert A. Simon as a more holistic way of understanding decision-making. Bounded rationality shares the view that decision-making is a fully rational process; however, it adds the condition that people act on the basis of limited information. Because decision-makers lack the ability and resources to arrive at the optimal solution, they instead apply their rationality to a set of choices that have already been narrowed down by the absence of complete information and resources.

# *Boundless Management: "Rational and Nonrational Decision Making: Non-Rational Decision Making"*

Read this article and explain what you think is the role of emotion in decision making. Describe what you feel and why in a detailed essay of 350-500 words.

## Non-Rational Decision Making

People frequently employ alternative, non-rational techniques in their decision making processes.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Examine alternative perspectives on decision making, such as that of Herbert Simon and Gerd Gigerenzer, which outline non-rational decision-making factors

### KEY POINTS

- The rationality of individuals is limited by the information they have, the cognitive limitations of their minds, and the finite amount of time they have to make a decision.
- Simon defined two cognitive styles: maximizers and satisficers. Maximizers try to make an optimal decision, whereas satisficers simply try to find a solution that is "good enough" for the situation.
- Some research has shown that simple heuristics frequently lead to better decisions than the theoretically optimal procedure.
- Emotion appears to aid the decision-making process; decisions often occur in the face of uncertainty about whether one's choices will lead to benefit or harm.
- Robust Decision Making (RDM) is a particular set of methods and tools that is designed to support decision making under conditions of uncertainty.

### TERMS

- cognitive

The part of mental functions that deals with logic, as opposed to affective functions, which deal with emotion.

- rational

Logically sound; not contradictory or otherwise absurd.

- heuristic

An experience-based technique for problem solving, learning, and discovery; examples include using a rule of thumb, an educated guess, an intuitive judgment, or common sense.

The rational model of decision making holds that people have complete information and can objectively evaluate alternatives to select the optimal choice. The rationality of individuals is limited, however, by the information they have, the cognitive limitations of their minds, and the finite amount of time they have to make a decision. To account for these limitations, alternative models of decision making offer different views of how people make choices.

Herbert A. Simon

American psychology and economics researcher Herbert A. Simon defined two cognitive styles: maximizers and satisficers. *Maximizers* try to make an optimal decision, whereas *satisficers* simply try to find a solution that is "good enough." Maximizers tend to take longer making decisions due to the need to maximize performance across all variables and make trade-offs carefully. They also tend to regret their decisions more often (perhaps because they are more able than satisficers to recognize when a decision has turned out to be sub-optimal). On the other hand, satisficers recognize that decision makers lack the ability and resources to arrive at an optimal solution. They instead apply their rationality only after they greatly simplify the choices available. Thus, a satisficer seeks a satisfactory solution rather than an optimal one.

Gerd Gigerenzer

German psychologist Gerd Gigerenzer goes beyond Simon in dismissing the importance of optimization in decision making. He argues that simple heuristics—experience-based techniques for problem-solving—can lead to better decision outcomes than more thorough, theoretically optimal processes that consider vast amounts of information. Where an exhaustive search is impractical, heuristic methods are used to speed up the process of finding a satisfactory solution.

The Role of Emotion

Emotion is a factor that is typically left out of the rational model; however, it has been shown to have an influential role in the decision-making process. Because decisions often

involve uncertainty, individual tolerance for risk becomes a factor. Thus, fear of a negative outcome might prohibit a choice whose benefits far outweigh the chances of something going wrong.

Robust Decision Making

### **The Brain's Heuristics for Emotions**

#### **Emotions appear to aid the decision-making process.**

Robust decision making (RDM) is a particular set of methods and tools developed over the last decade—primarily by researchers associated with the RAND Corporation—that is designed to support decision making and policy analysis under conditions of deep uncertainty. RDM focuses on helping decision makers identify and develop alternatives through an iterative process. This process takes into account new information and considers multiple scenarios of how the future will evolve.

## Polly LaBarre's "What's Your Default?"

Explain whether organizations should depend more on their leader's strength of conviction or leaders' overall competency to lead others.

### What's your default?

As dispiriting as the recent debt ceiling dysfunction drama has been, the most disturbing plot point is not that our leaders can't seem to compromise—but that they are *so compromised*. While the pundits continue to parse the no-win "deal" and the bloviators bemoan the failures of leadership, the rest of us might take the opportunity to consider the benefits of being *uncompromising*.

The most winning and progressive organizations depend less on the strength of their leaders than on the strength of their convictions (which should never be confused with political positions). Instead of putting people on pedestals (from which they are invariably knocked down), the focus is on putting stakes in the ground (from which they will never deviate).

This is no small thing—matching up behavior to belief day in and day out. But it is precisely the thing that separates the best of us from the rest of us. What organization today doesn't have a soaring vision, lofty values, and towering ambition? But how many of them make good on their intentions in every interaction with their people, their customers, their wider community (or are even honest about the challenges and failures they inevitably meet in the process)? What individual, for that matter, lives up to her highest ideals (or even her most mundane aspirations—to eat well, exercise regularly, meet deadlines) with satisfying regularity? Certainly too few.

But those that do offer two very clear lessons about sticking to your convictions.

First, staying true starts with announcing your intentions in such stark terms it's impossible to back away. Take Australian software company Atlassian's ruling value: "[Open company, no bullshit](#)." No bones. The message couldn't be more clear: "Atlassian embraces transparency wherever at all practical, and sometimes where impractical. All information, both internal and external, is public by default, We are not afraid of being honest with ourselves, our staff, and our customers."

They are also not afraid to draw a line in the sand—to definitively declare what they stand for (and what they won't).

When Rollin King drew a simple triangle on a whiskey-stained cocktail napkin forty-five years ago and labeled the corners “Dallas,” “San Antonio,” and “Houston”—he was drawing such a line and Southwest Airlines’ point-to-point, low-fare, low-cost alternative to flying for the few and the well-to-do was born. That wasn’t just an operational model. [For forty years, Southwest has stood for the “freedom to move about the country,”](#) and every decision—from focusing the fleet on 737s to perfecting the rapid turnaround to choosing the ticker symbol “LUV”—has been judged on the basis of whether it advances the cause of giving regular folks the same freedom and flexibility to travel as the wealthy.

In another business practically synonymous with defaulting on the dreams of its customers, ING Direct grew to be one of the largest and most successful online banks over the last decade on the basis of its zealous advocacy for savings even in the midst of the decade of debt. The simple statement “ING Direct exists to help you save your money,” guides the bank’s unwavering support of the “little guy” all-too-often forgotten by the big banks—whether that takes the form of offering the highest possible interest rates (such as they are these days), adding interest on checking as well as savings accounts, and eradicating fees and minimum deposits. The company’s radical devotion to thrift in a spendthrift world has attracted 7.5 million customers, \$82 billion in deposits—and a \$9 billion offer from Capital One Financial earlier this summer.

These are refreshing and inspiring aspirations in a world of murky and generic mission statements. But just as important, they are a powerful lever for aligning behavior and guiding decisions from micro-choices to sweeping strategic moves. That’s the second lesson of uncompromising companies: they frame their dreams in terms of defaults so individuals don’t have to fight gravity, route around organizational norms, or even think too hard in order to do the right thing. Think of it as the organizational equivalent of a factory pre-set or an “opt-out” check box rather than an “opt-in.”

As John Rotenstein describes in [his story about Atlassian’s “open information culture,”](#) (a finalist for the HBR/McKinsey Management 2.0 Challenge), “information sharing is the norm and information hoarding is a foreign concept.” That’s mostly because there is no place to hide. Inside the company, business plans, sales data, project status, customer feedback, performance reviews, recruitment details, are open to all. More widely, Atlassian shares all of its pricing information, source code, documentation, bug reports and even the contents of its customer support calls.

What’s more, most work and communication takes place in “public”—on the company wiki (there is no “document management” system, person-to-person emails are rare), in personal blogs, via always-on mega-video screens that offer up a window onto the action in Atlassian’s offices around the world. Everything is open for discussion—the strategic plan, HR policy, project plans—and everyone is part of the conversation.

“By default we ask, ‘why would we NOT share it?’ Rather than ‘why would we share it?’” says Joris Luijke, the company’s global head of talent. “It’s beautiful. When people respond to that information, disagree or agree, and openly question things, they take ownership. And when something’s not going well, it doesn’t matter. We don’t try to hide it.” (Which is probably why Luijke was comfortable [putting the company’s approach to performance reviews on public review](#) with a year-long experiment in “ripping apart” the obligatory annual time-sink and sharing the insights along the way.)

“Openness” at Atlassian isn’t dictated by “corporate edict,” according to Rotenstein. Instead, it’s the product of making every person a custodian of shared conviction. The habit at Atlassian is to share, to debate openly, to work out loud—and to reinforce and recognize those behaviors. “If someone does something really cool, people will actually post that on the wiki, says Luijke. “They’ll say, ‘that’s so awesome—it’s really ‘open company, no bullshit.’ Actions and behaviors are basically being tagged with the language of our values all the time.”

What gives convictions force—whether the aim is openness, promoting savings, or democratizing the skies—isn’t rigor, rewards and incentives, or top-down policy, all those creaky mechanisms of control at the heart of most organizations. It’s built-in habit. When things fall apart—when crisis strikes, temptation sets in, the prevailing winds shift, or it just gets hard—force of will caves but habit is unfazed.

An ever expanding body of research supports this notion. In [Nudge](#), Cass Sunstein and Richard Thaler describe how defaults, opt-outs, and tiny design tweaks can create a “choice architecture” that stacks the deck in favor of better decisions when it comes to health, wealth, and happiness (despite our worst tendencies). MIX Maverick [Tony Schwartz writes compellingly](#) about the futility of harnessing will power and the paradoxical power of making the most important things automatic.

So ask yourself: *What’s my default?* In your own life, what are your “pre-sets”—whether it’s diet (plants and whole foods), exercise (move every day, the more vigorously the better), work (do the most important thing first), or attitude (kindness over criticism)? And inside your organization, does everyone know your default? Do people act on it automatically? Can they express it immediately in your own, homegrown language? If you have to think about it, you can be sure that the next crisis, competing priority, aggravation, distraction, or slice of chocolate cake will compromise your convictions.

# The Psychology of Groups

By Donelson R. Forsyth  
University of Richmond

This module assumes that a thorough understanding of people requires a thorough understanding of groups. Each of us is an autonomous individual seeking our own objectives, yet we are also members of groups—groups that constrain us, guide us, and sustain us. Just as each of us influences the group and the people in the group, so, too, do groups change each one of us. Joining groups satisfies our need to belong, gain information and understanding through social comparison, define our sense of self and social identity, and achieve goals that might elude us if we worked alone. Groups are also practically significant, for much of the world's work is done by groups rather than by individuals. Success sometimes eludes our groups, but when group members learn to work together as a cohesive team their success becomes more certain. People also turn to groups when important decisions must be made, and this choice is justified as

long as groups avoid such problems as group polarization and groupthink.

## Learning Objectives

- Review the evidence that suggests humans have a fundamental need to belong to groups.
- Compare the sociometer model of self-esteem to a more traditional view of self-esteem.
- Use theories of social facilitation to predict when a group will perform tasks slowly or quickly (e.g., students eating a meal as a group, workers on an assembly line, or a study group).
- Summarize the methods used by Latané, Williams, and Harkins to identify the relative impact of social loafing and coordination problems on group performance.
- Describe how groups change over time.
- Apply the theory of groupthink to a well-known decision-making group, such as the group of advisors responsible for planning the Bay of Pigs operation.
- List and discuss the factors that facilitate and impede group performance and decision making.
- Develop a list of recommendations that, if followed, would minimize the possibility of groupthink developing in a group.

# The Psychology of Groups



A group is two or more individuals coming together. So, the next time you throw a party and only one person shows up you can confidently say that you had a whole group at your home.

[Image: Christian Guthier]

Psychologists study groups because nearly all human activities—working, learning, worshipping, relaxing, playing, and even sleeping—occur in groups. The lone individual who is cut off from all groups is a rarity. Most of us live out our lives in groups, and these groups have a profound impact on our thoughts, feelings, and actions. Many psychologists focus their attention on single individuals, but social psychologists expand their analysis to include groups, organizations, communities, and even cultures.

This module examines the psychology of groups and group membership. It begins with a basic question: What is the psychological significance of groups? People are, undeniably, more often in groups rather than alone. What accounts for this marked gregariousness and what does it say about our psychological makeup? The module then reviews some of the key findings from studies of groups. Researchers have asked many questions about people and groups: Do people work as hard as they can when they are in groups? Are groups more cautious than individuals?

Do groups make wiser decisions than single individuals? In many cases the answers are not what common sense and folk wisdom might suggest.

## The Psychological Significance of Groups

Many people loudly proclaim their autonomy and independence. Like Ralph Waldo Emerson, they avow, “I must be myself. I will not hide my tastes or aversions . . . I will seek my own” (1903/2004, p. 127). Even though people are capable of living separate and apart from others, they join with others because groups meet their psychological and social needs.

### The Need to Belong



The need to belong is a strong psychological motivation. [Image: Keith DeBetham]  
Across individuals, societies, and even eras, humans consistently seek inclusion over exclusion, membership over isolation, and acceptance over rejection. As Roy Baumeister and Mark Leary conclude, humans have a *need to belong*: “a pervasive drive to form and maintain at least a

minimum quantity of lasting, positive, and impactful interpersonal relationships” (1995, p. 497). And most of us satisfy this need by joining groups. When surveyed, 87.3% of Americans reported that they lived with other people, including family members, partners, and roommates (Davis & Smith, 2007). The majority, ranging from 50% to 80%, reported regularly doing things in groups, such as attending a sports event together, visiting one another for the evening, sharing a meal together, or going out as a group to see a movie (Putnam, 2000).

People respond negatively when their need to belong is unfulfilled. For example, college students often feel homesick and lonely when they first start college, but not if they belong to a cohesive, socially satisfying group (Buote et al., 2007). People who are accepted members of a group tend to feel happier and more satisfied. But should they be rejected by a group, they feel unhappy, helpless, and depressed. Studies of **ostracism**—the deliberate exclusion from groups—indicate this experience is highly stressful and can lead to depression, confused thinking, and even aggression (Williams, 2007). When researchers used a functional magnetic resonance imaging scanner to track neural responses to exclusion, they found that people who were left out of a group activity displayed heightened cortical activity in two specific areas of the brain—the dorsal anterior cingulate cortex and the anterior insula. These areas of the brain are associated with the experience of physical pain sensations (Eisenberger, Lieberman, & Williams, 2003). It hurts, quite literally, to be left out of a group.

## Affiliation in Groups

Groups not only satisfy the need to belong, they also provide members with information, assistance, and social support. Leon Festinger’s theory of **social comparison** (1950, 1954) suggested that in many cases people join with others to evaluate the accuracy of their personal beliefs and attitudes. Stanley Schachter (1959) explored this process by putting individuals in ambiguous, stressful situations and asking them if they wished to wait alone or with others. He found that people *affiliate* in such situations—they seek the company of others.

Although any kind of companionship is appreciated, we prefer those who provide us with reassurance and support as well as accurate information. In some cases, we also prefer to join with others who are even worse off than we are. Imagine, for example, how you would respond when the teacher hands back the test and yours is marked 85%. Do you want to affiliate with a friend who got a 95% or a friend who got a 78%? To maintain a sense of self-worth, people seek out and compare themselves to the less fortunate. This process is known as *downward social comparison*.

## Identity and Membership

Groups are not only founts of information during times of ambiguity, they also help us answer the existentially significant question, “Who am I?” Common sense tells us that our sense of self

is our private definition of who we are, a kind of archival record of our experiences, qualities, and capabilities. Yet, the self also includes all those qualities that spring from memberships in groups. People are defined not only by their traits, preferences, interests, likes, and dislikes, but also by their friendships, social roles, family connections, and group memberships. The self is not just a “me,” but also a “we.”

Even demographic qualities such as sex or age can influence us if we categorize ourselves based on these qualities. **Social identity theory**, for example, assumes that we don’t just classify *other* people into such social categories as man, woman, Anglo, elderly, or college student, but we also categorize ourselves. Moreover, if we strongly identify with these categories, then we will ascribe the characteristics of the typical member of these groups to ourselves, and so stereotype ourselves. If, for example, we believe that college students are intellectual, then we will assume we, too, are intellectual if we identify with that group (Hogg, 2001).

Groups also provide a variety of means for maintaining and enhancing a sense of self-worth, as our assessment of the quality of groups we belong to influences our **collective self-esteem** (Crocker & Luhtanen, 1990). If our self-esteem is shaken by a personal setback, we can focus on our group’s success and prestige. In addition, by comparing our group to other groups, we frequently discover that we are members of the better group, and so can take pride in our superiority. By denigrating other groups, we elevate both our personal and our collective self-esteem (Crocker & Major, 1989).

Mark Leary’s **sociometer model** goes so far as to suggest that “self-esteem is part of a sociometer that monitors peoples’ relational value in other people’s eyes” (2007, p. 328). He maintains self-esteem is not just an index of one’s sense of personal value, but also an indicator of acceptance into groups. Like a gauge that indicates how much fuel is left in the tank, a dip in self-esteem indicates exclusion from our group is likely. Disquieting feelings of self-worth, then, prompt us to search for and correct characteristics and qualities that put us at risk of social exclusion. Self-esteem is not just high self-regard, but the self-approbation that we feel when included in groups (Leary & Baumeister, 2000).

## Evolutionary Advantages of Group Living

Groups may be humans’ most useful invention, for they provide us with the means to reach goals that would elude us if we remained alone. Individuals in groups can secure advantages and avoid disadvantages that would plague the lone individuals. In his theory of social integration, Moreland concludes that groups tend to form whenever “people become dependent on one another for the satisfaction of their needs” (1987, p. 104). The advantages of group life may be so great that humans are biologically prepared to seek membership and avoid isolation. From an evolutionary psychology perspective, because groups have increased humans’ overall fitness for countless generations, individuals who carried genes that promoted solitude-seeking were less likely to survive and procreate compared to those with genes that prompted them to join groups

(Darwin, 1859/1963). This process of natural selection culminated in the creation of a modern human who seeks out membership in groups instinctively, for most of us are descendants of “joiners” rather than “loners.”

## Motivation and Performance

Groups usually exist for a reason. In groups, we solve problems, create products, create standards, communicate knowledge, have fun, perform arts, create institutions, and even ensure our safety from attacks by other groups. But do groups always outperform individuals?

## Social Facilitation in Groups

Do people perform more effectively when alone or when part of a group? Norman Triplett (1898) examined this issue in one of the first empirical studies in psychology. While watching bicycle races, Triplett noticed that cyclists were faster when they competed against other racers than when they raced alone against the clock. To determine if the presence of others leads to the psychological stimulation that enhances performance, he arranged for 40 children to play a game that involved turning a small reel as quickly as possible (see Figure 1). When he measured how quickly they turned the reel, he confirmed that children performed slightly better when they played the game in pairs compared to when they played alone (see Stroebe, 2012; Strube, 2005).

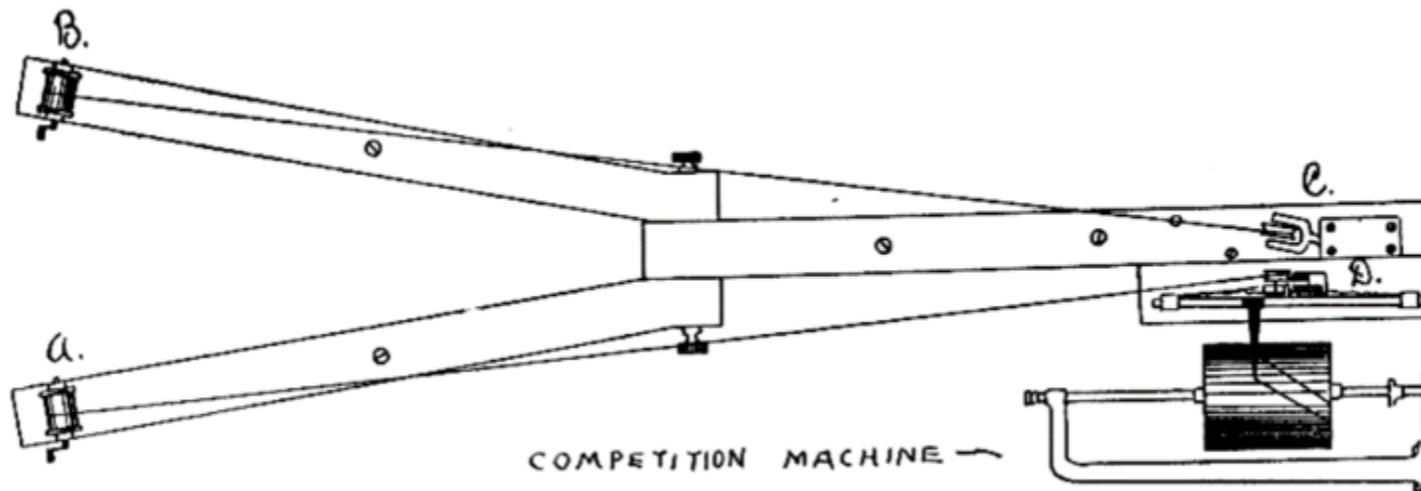


Figure 1: The "competition machine" Triplett used to study the impact of competition on performance. Triplett's study was one of the first laboratory studies conducted in the field of social psychology. Triplett, N. (1898)

Triplett succeeded in sparking interest in a phenomenon now known as **social facilitation**: the enhancement of an individual's performance when that person works in the presence of other

people. However, it remained for Robert Zajonc (1965) to specify when social facilitation does and does not occur. After reviewing prior research, Zajonc noted that the facilitating effects of an audience usually only occur when the task requires the person to perform dominant responses, i.e., ones that are well-learned or based on instinctive behaviors. If the task requires nondominant responses, i.e., novel, complicated, or untried behaviors that the organism has never performed before or has performed only infrequently, then the presence of others inhibits performance. Hence, students write poorer quality essays on complex philosophical questions when they labor in a group rather than alone (Allport, 1924), but they make fewer mistakes in solving simple, low-level multiplication problems with an audience or a coactor than when they work in isolation (Dashiell, 1930).

Social facilitation, then, depends on the task: other people facilitate performance when the task is so simple that it requires only dominant responses, but others interfere when the task requires nondominant responses. However, a number of psychological processes combine to influence when social facilitation, not social interference, occurs. Studies of the challenge-threat response and brain imaging, for example, confirm that we respond physiologically and neurologically to the presence of others (Blascovich, Mendes, Hunter, & Salomon, 1999). Other people also can trigger *evaluation apprehension*, particularly when we feel that our individual performance will be known to others, and those others might judge it negatively (Bond, Atoum, & VanLeeuwen, 1996). The presence of other people can also cause perturbations in our capacity to concentrate on and process information (Harkins, 2006). Distractions due to the presence of other people have been shown to improve performance on certain tasks, such as the *Stroop task*, but undermine performance on more cognitively demanding tasks (Huguet, Galvaing, Monteil, & Dumas, 1999).

## Social Loafing

Groups usually outperform individuals. A single student, working alone on a paper, will get less done in an hour than will four students working on a group project. One person playing a tug-of-war game against a group will lose. A crew of movers can pack up and transport your household belongings faster than you can by yourself. As the saying goes, “Many hands make light the work” (Littlepage, 1991; Steiner, 1972).

Groups, though, tend to be underachievers. Studies of social facilitation confirmed the positive motivational benefits of working with other people on well-practiced tasks in which each member’s contribution to the collective enterprise can be identified and evaluated. But what happens when tasks require a truly collective effort? First, when people work together they must coordinate their individual activities and contributions to reach the maximum level of efficiency—but they rarely do (Diehl & Stroebe, 1987). Three people in a tug-of-war competition, for example, invariably pull and pause at slightly different times, so their efforts are uncoordinated. The result is *coordination loss*: the three-person group is stronger than a single person, but not three times as strong. Second, people just don’t exert as much effort when

working on a collective endeavor, nor do they expend as much cognitive effort trying to solve problems, as they do when working alone. They display **social loafing** (Latané, 1981).

Bibb Latané, Kip Williams, and Stephen Harkins (1979) examined both coordination losses and social loafing by arranging for students to cheer or clap either alone or in groups of varying sizes. The students cheered alone or in 2- or 6-person groups, or they were lead to believe they were in 2- or 6-person groups (those in the “pseudo-groups” wore blindfolds and headsets that played masking sound). As Figure 2 indicates, groups generated more noise than solitary subjects, but the productivity dropped as the groups became larger in size. In dyads, each subject worked at only 66% of capacity, and in 6-person groups at 36%. Productivity also dropped when subjects merely believed they were in groups. If subjects thought that one other person was shouting with them, they shouted 82% as intensely, and if they thought five other people were shouting, they reached only 74% of their capacity. These loses in productivity were not due to coordination problems; this decline in production could be attributed only to a reduction in effort—to social loafing (Latané et al., 1979, Experiment 2).

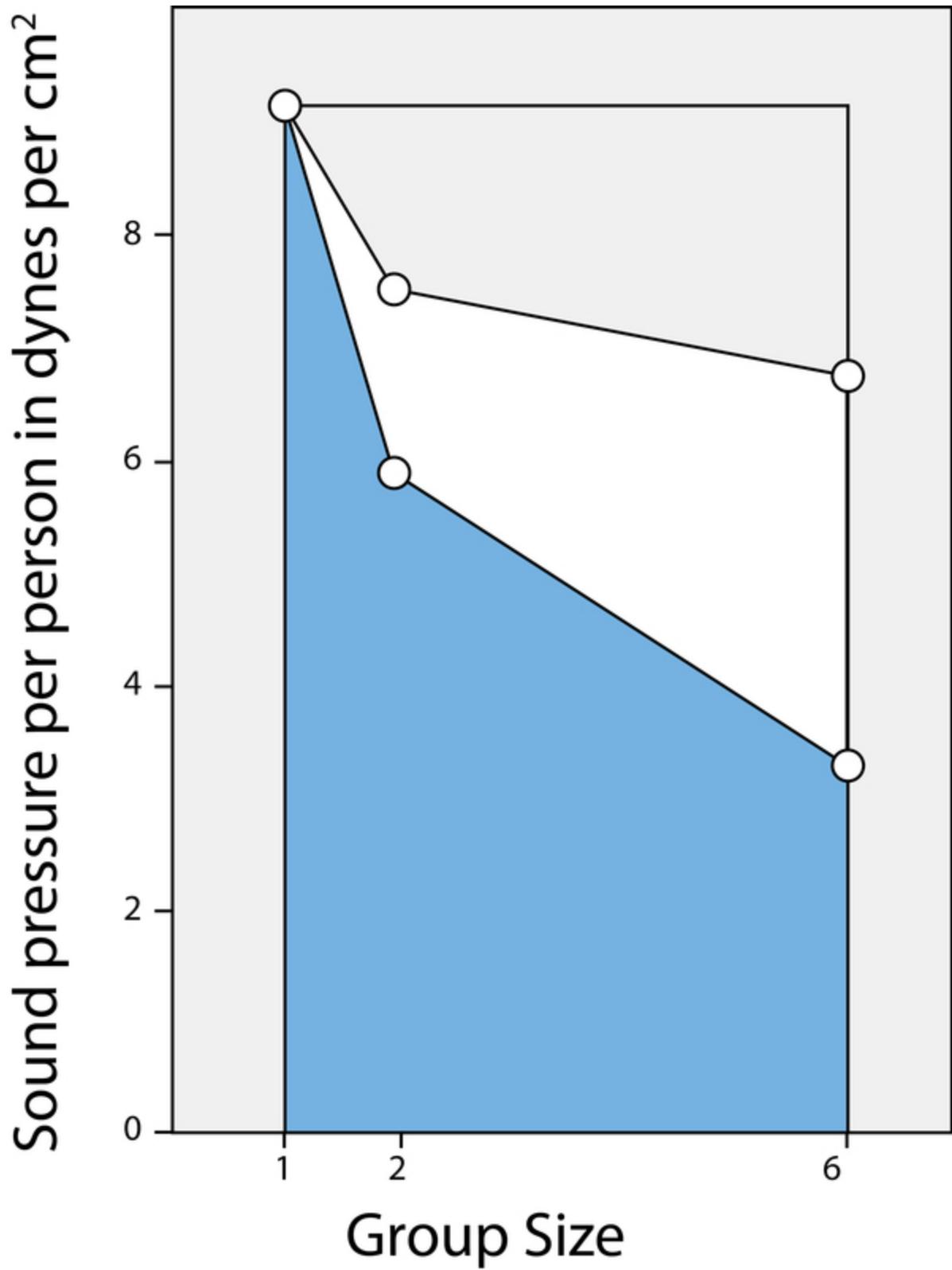


Figure 2: Sound pressure per person as a function of group or pseudo group size. Latane, B. (1981)

## Teamwork



Social loafing can be a problem. One way to overcome it is by recognizing that each group member has an important part to play in the success of the group. [Image: Christopher Schmidt]

Social loafing is no rare phenomenon. When sales personnel work in groups with shared goals, they tend to “take it easy” if another salesperson is nearby who can do their work (George, 1992). People who are trying to generate new, creative ideas in group brainstorming sessions usually put in less effort and are thus less productive than people who are generating new ideas individually (Paulus & Brown, 2007). Students assigned group projects often complain of inequity in the quality and quantity of each member’s contributions: Some people just don’t

work as much as they should to help the group reach its learning goals (Neu, 2012). People carrying out all sorts of physical and mental tasks expend less effort when working in groups, and the larger the group, the more they loaf (Karau & Williams, 1993).

Groups can, however, overcome this impediment to performance through **teamwork**. A group may include many talented individuals, but they must learn how to pool their individual abilities and energies to maximize the team's performance. Team goals must be set, work patterns structured, and a sense of group identity developed. Individual members must learn how to coordinate their actions, and any strains and stresses in interpersonal relations need to be identified and resolved (Salas, Rosen, Burke, & Goodwin, 2009).

Researchers have identified two key ingredients to effective teamwork: a shared mental representation of the task and group unity. Teams improve their performance over time as they develop a shared understanding of the team and the tasks they are attempting. Some semblance of this **shared mental model** is present nearly from its inception, but as the team practices, differences among the members in terms of their understanding of their situation and their team diminish as a consensus becomes implicitly accepted (Tindale, Stawiski, & Jacobs, 2008).

Effective teams are also, in most cases, cohesive groups (Dion, 2000). **Group cohesion** is the integrity, solidarity, social integration, or unity of a group. In most cases, members of cohesive groups like each other and the group and they also are united in their pursuit of collective, group-level goals. Members tend to enjoy their groups more when they are cohesive, and cohesive groups usually outperform ones that lack cohesion.

This cohesion-performance relationship, however, is a complex one. Meta-analytic studies suggest that cohesion improves teamwork among members, but that performance quality influences cohesion more than cohesion influences performance (Mullen & Copper, 1994; Mullen, Driskell, & Salas, 1998; see Figure 3). Cohesive groups also can be spectacularly unproductive if the group's norms stress low productivity rather than high productivity (Seashore, 1954).

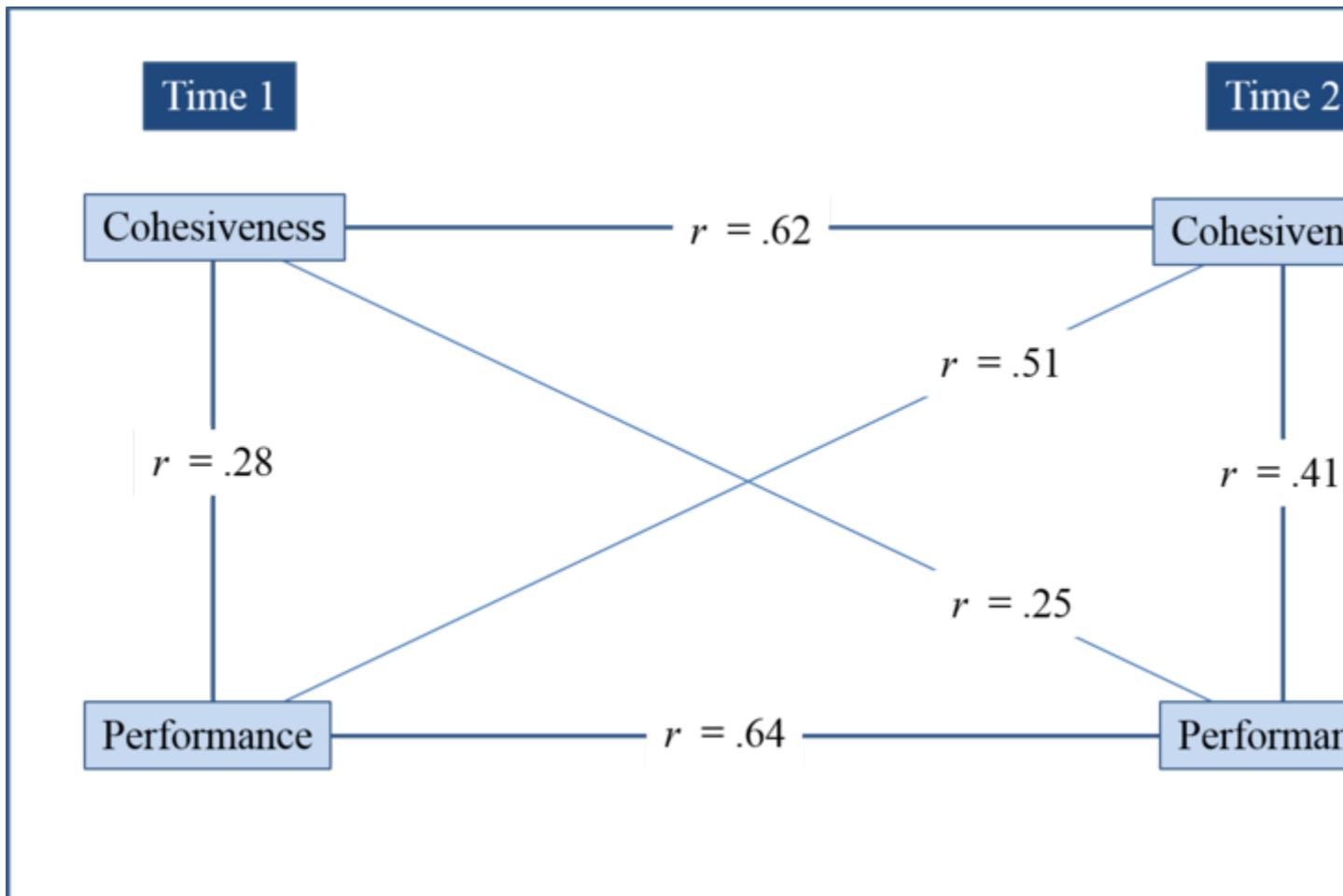


Figure 3: The relationship between group cohesion and performance over time. Groups that are cohesive do tend to perform well on tasks now (Time1) and in the future (Time 2). Notice, though, that the relationship between Performance at Time 1 and Cohesiveness at Time 2 is greater ( $r=.51$ ) than the relationship between Cohesion at Time 1 and Performance at Time 2 ( $r=.25$ ). These findings suggest that cohesion improves performance, but that a group that performs well is likely to also become more cohesive. Mullen, Driskell, & Salas (1998)

## Group Development

In most cases groups do not become smooth-functioning teams overnight. As Bruce Tuckman's (1965) theory of group development suggests, groups usually pass through several stages of development as they change from a newly formed group into an effective team. As noted in Table 1, in the *forming* phase, the members become oriented toward one another. In the *storming* phase, the group members find themselves in conflict, and some solution is sought to improve the group environment. In the *norming*, phase standards for behavior and roles develop that regulate behavior. In the *performing*, phase the group has reached a point where it can work as a unit to achieve desired goals, and the *adjourning* phase ends the sequence of development; the group disbands. Throughout these stages groups tend to oscillate between the task-oriented issues and the relationship issues, with members sometimes working hard but at other times strengthening their interpersonal bonds (Tuckman & Jensen, 1977).

Stage	Characteristics
Forming	Members disclose information about themselves in polite but tentative interactions. They explore the purposes of the group and gather information about each other's interests, skills, and personal tendencies.
Storming	Disagreements about procedures and purposes surface, so criticism and conflict increase. Much of the conflict stems from the challenges between members who are seeking to increase their status and control the group.
Norming	Once the group agrees on its goal, procedures, and leadership, norms and social relationships develop that increase the group's stability and cohesiveness.
Performing	The group focuses its energies and attention on its goals, displaying high rates of task orientation, decision making, and problem solving.
Adjourning	The group prepares to disband by completing its tasks, reduces levels of dependency among members, and dealing with any unresolved issues.

Table 1: Sources based on Tuckman (1965) and Tuckman & Jensen (1977)

We also experience change as we pass through a group, for we don't become full-fledged members of a group in an instant. Instead, we gradually become a part of the group and remain in the group until we leave it. Richard Moreland and John Levine's (1982) model of group socialization describes this process, beginning with initial entry into the group and ending when the member exits it. For example, when you are thinking of joining a new group—a social club, a professional society, a fraternity or sorority, or a sports team—you investigate what the group has to offer, but the group also investigates you. During this investigation stage you are still an outsider: interested in joining the group, but not yet committed to it in any way. But once the group accepts you and you accept the group, socialization begins: you learn the group's norms and take on different responsibilities depending on your role. On a sports team, for example, you may initially hope to be a star who starts every game or plays a particular position, but the team may need something else from you. In time, though, the group will accept you as a full-fledged member and both sides in the process—you and the group itself—increase their commitment to one another. When that commitment wanes, however, your membership may come to an end as well.

## Making Decisions in Groups

Groups are particularly useful when it comes to making a decision, for groups can draw on more resources than can a lone individual. A single individual may know a great deal about a problem and possible solutions, but his or her information is far surpassed by the combined knowledge of a group. Groups not only generate more ideas and possible solutions by discussing the problem, but they can also more objectively evaluate the options that they generate during discussion. Before accepting a solution, a group may require that a certain number of people favor it, or that it meets some other standard of acceptability. People generally feel that a group's decision will be superior to an individual's decision.

Groups, however, do not always make good decisions. Juries sometimes render verdicts that run counter to the evidence presented. Community groups take radical stances on issues before thinking through all the ramifications. Military strategists concoct plans that seem, in retrospect, ill-conceived and short-sighted. Why do groups sometimes make poor decisions?

## Group Polarization

Let's say you are part of a group assigned to make a presentation. One of the group members suggests showing a short video that, although amusing, includes some provocative images. Even though initially you think the clip is inappropriate, you begin to change your mind as the group discusses the idea. The group decides, eventually, to throw caution to the wind and show the clip—and your instructor is horrified by your choice.

This hypothetical example is consistent with studies of groups making decisions that involve risk. Common sense notions suggest that groups exert a moderating, subduing effect on their members. However, when researchers looked at groups closely, they discovered many groups shift toward more extreme decisions rather than less extreme decisions after group interaction. Discussion, it turns out, doesn't moderate people's judgments after all. Instead, it leads to **group polarization**: judgments made after group discussion will be more extreme in the same direction as the average of individual judgments made prior to discussion (Myers & Lamm, 1976). If a majority of members feel that taking risks is more acceptable than exercising caution, then the group will become riskier after a discussion. For example, in France, where people generally like their government but dislike Americans, group discussion improved their attitude toward their government but exacerbated their negative opinions of Americans (Moscovici & Zavalloni, 1969). Similarly, prejudiced people who discussed racial issues with other prejudiced individuals became even more negative, but those who were relatively unprejudiced exhibited even more acceptance of diversity when in groups (Myers & Bishop, 1970).

## Common Knowledge Effect

One of the advantages of making decisions in groups is the group's greater access to information. When seeking a solution to a problem, group members can put their ideas on the table and share

their knowledge and judgments with each other through discussions. But all too often groups spend much of their discussion time examining common knowledge—information that two or more group members know in common—rather than unshared information. This **common knowledge effect** will result in a bad outcome if something known by only one or two group members is very important.

Researchers have studied this bias using the *hidden profile task*. On such tasks, information known to many of the group members suggests that one alternative, say Option A, is best. However, Option B is definitely the better choice, but all the facts that support Option B are only known to individual groups members—they are not common knowledge in the group. As a result, the group will likely spend most of its time reviewing the factors that favor Option A, and never discover any of its drawbacks. In consequence, groups often perform poorly when working on problems with nonobvious solutions that can only be identified by extensive information sharing (Stasser & Titus, 1987).

## Groupthink



Groupthink helps us blend in and feel accepted and validated but it can also lead to problems.

[Image: Anne Santos]

Groups sometimes make spectacularly bad decisions. In 1961, a special advisory committee to President John F. Kennedy planned and implemented a covert invasion of Cuba at the Bay of Pigs that ended in total disaster. In 1986, NASA carefully, and incorrectly, decided to launch the Challenger space shuttle in temperatures that were too cold.

Irving Janis (1982), intrigued by these kinds of blundering groups, carried out a number of case studies of such groups: the military experts that planned the defense of Pearl Harbor; Kennedy's Bay of Pigs planning group; the presidential team that escalated the war in Vietnam. Each group, he concluded, fell prey to a distorted style of thinking that rendered the group members incapable of making a rational decision. Janis labeled this syndrome **groupthink**: "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise alternative courses of action" (p. 9).

Janis identified both the telltale symptoms that signal the group is experiencing groupthink and the interpersonal factors that combine to cause groupthink. To Janis, groupthink is a disease that infects healthy groups, rendering them inefficient and unproductive. And like the physician who

searches for symptoms that distinguish one disease from another, Janis identified a number of symptoms that should serve to warn members that they may be falling prey to groupthink. These symptoms include overestimating the group's skills and wisdom, biased perceptions and evaluations of other groups and people who are outside of the group, strong conformity pressures within the group, and poor decision-making methods.

Janis also singled out four group-level factors that combine to cause groupthink: cohesion, isolation, biased leadership, and decisional stress.

- *Cohesion*: Groupthink only occurs in cohesive groups. Such groups have many advantages over groups that lack unity. People enjoy their membership much more in cohesive groups, they are less likely to abandon the group, and they work harder in pursuit of the group's goals. But extreme cohesiveness can be dangerous. When cohesiveness intensifies, members become more likely to accept the goals, decisions, and norms of the group without reservation. Conformity pressures also rise as members become reluctant to say or do anything that goes against the grain of the group, and the number of internal disagreements—necessary for good decision making—decreases.
- *Isolation*. Groupthink groups too often work behind closed doors, keeping out of the limelight. They isolate themselves from outsiders and refuse to modify their beliefs to bring them into line with society's beliefs. They avoid leaks by maintaining strict confidentiality and working only with people who are members of their group.
- *Biased leadership*. A biased leader who exerts too much authority over group members can increase conformity pressures and railroad decisions. In groupthink groups, the leader determines the agenda for each meeting, sets limits on discussion, and can even decide who will be heard.
- *Decisional stress*. Groupthink becomes more likely when the group is stressed, particularly by time pressures. When groups are stressed they minimize their discomfort by quickly choosing a plan of action with little argument or dissension. Then, through collective discussion, the group members can rationalize their choice by exaggerating the positive consequences, minimizing the possibility of negative outcomes, concentrating on minor details, and overlooking larger issues.

## You and Your Groups



Some TV show feature an unlikely group of friends. Despite differences it feels great to be a part of a group! [Image: エンバルドマン]

Most of us belong to at least one group that must make decisions from time to time: a community group that needs to choose a fund-raising project; a union or employee group that must ratify a new contract; a family that must discuss your college plans; or the staff of a high school discussing ways to deal with the potential for violence during football games. Could these kinds of groups experience groupthink? Yes they could, if the symptoms of groupthink discussed above are present, combined with other contributing causal factors, such as cohesiveness, isolation, biased leadership, and stress. To avoid polarization, the common knowledge effect, and groupthink, groups should strive to emphasize open inquiry of all sides of the issue while admitting the possibility of failure. The leaders of the group can also do much to limit groupthink by requiring full discussion of pros and cons, appointing devil's advocates, and breaking the group up into small discussion groups.

If these precautions are taken, your group has a much greater chance of making an informed, rational decision. Furthermore, although your group should review its goals, teamwork, and decision-making strategies, the human side of groups—the strong friendships and bonds that make group activity so enjoyable—shouldn't be overlooked. Groups have instrumental, practical value, but also emotional, psychological value. In groups we find others who appreciate and value us. In groups we gain the support we need in difficult times, but also have the opportunity to influence others. In groups we find evidence of our self-worth, and secure ourselves from the threat of loneliness and despair. For most of us, groups are the secret source of well-being.

## Outside Resources

Audio: This American Life. Episode 109 deals with the motivation and excitement of joining with others at summer camp.

<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/109/notes-on-camp>

Audio: This American Life. Episode 158 examines how people act when they are immersed in a large crowd.

<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/158/mob-mentality>

Audio: This American Life. Episode 61 deals with fiascos, many of which are perpetrated by groups.

<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/61/fiasco>

Audio: This American Life. Episode 74 examines how individuals act at conventions, when they join with hundreds or thousands of other people who are similar in terms of their avocations or employment.

<http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/74/conventions>

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<http://teachpsych.org/ebooks/pse2011/vol2/index.php>

Forsyth, D.R. (n.d.) Group Dynamics: Instructional Resources.

<https://facultystaff.richmond.edu/~dforsyth/gd/GDResources2014.pdf>

Journal Article: The Dynamogenic Factors in Pacemaking and Competition presents Norman Triplett's original paper on what would eventually be known as social facilitation.

<http://psychclassics.yorku.ca/Triplett/>

Resources for the Teaching of Social Psychology.

<http://jfmueLLer.faculty.noctrl.edu/crow/group.htm>

Social Psychology Network Student Activities

<http://www.socialpsychology.org/teaching.htm#student-activities>

Society for Social and Personality Psychology

<http://www.spsp.org>

Tablante, C. B., & Fiske, S. T. (2015). Teaching social class. *Teaching of Psychology*, 42, 184-190. doi:10.1177/0098628315573148 The abstract to the article can be found at the following link, however your library will likely provide you access to the full text version.

<http://top.sagepub.com/content/42/2/184.abstract>

Video: Flash mobs illustrate the capacity of groups to organize quickly and complete complex tasks. One well-known example of a pseudo-flash mob is the rendition of “Do Re Mi” from the *Sound of Music* in the Central Station of Antwerp in 2009.

Web: Group Development - This is a website developed by James Atherton that provides detailed information about group development, with application to the lifecycle of a typical college course.

[http://www.learningandteaching.info/teaching/group\\_development.htm](http://www.learningandteaching.info/teaching/group_development.htm)

Web: Group Dynamics- A general repository of links, short articles, and discussions examining groups and group processes, including such topics as crowd behavior, leadership, group structure, and influence.

<http://donforsythgroups.wordpress.com/>

Web: Stanford Crowd Project - This is a rich resource of information about all things related to crowds, with a particular emphasis on crowds and collective behavior in literature and the arts.

<http://press-media.stanford.edu/crowds/main.html>

Working Paper: Law of Group Polarization, by Cass Sunstein, is a wide-ranging application of the concept of polarization to a variety of legal and political decisions.

[http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract\\_id=199668](http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=199668)

## Discussion Questions

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of sociality? Why do people often join groups?
2. Is self-esteem shaped by your personality qualities or by the value and qualities of groups to which you belong?
3. In what ways does membership in a group change a person's self-concept and social identity?
4. What steps would you take if you were to base a self-esteem enrichment program in schools on the sociometer model of self-worth?
5. If you were a college professor, what would you do to increase the success of in-class learning teams?
6. What are the key ingredients to transforming a working group into a true team?
7. Have you ever been part of a group that made a poor decision and, if so, were any of the symptoms of groupthink present in your group?

## Vocabulary

### **Collective self-esteem**

Feelings of self-worth that are based on evaluation of relationships with others and membership in social groups.

### **Common knowledge effect**

The tendency for groups to spend more time discussing information that all members know (shared information) and less time examining information that only a few members know (unshared).

### **Group cohesion**

The solidarity or unity of a group resulting from the development of strong and mutual interpersonal bonds among members and group-level forces that unify the group, such as shared commitment to group goals.

### **Group polarization**

The tendency for members of a deliberating group to move to a more extreme position, with the direction of the shift determined by the majority or average of the members' predeliberation preferences.

### **Groupthink**

A set of negative group-level processes, including illusions of vulnerability, self-censorship, and pressures to conform, that occur when highly cohesive groups seek concurrence when making a decision.

### **Ostracism**

Excluding one or more individuals from a group by reducing or eliminating contact with the person, usually by ignoring, shunning, or explicitly banishing them.

### **Shared mental model**

Knowledge, expectations, conceptualizations, and other cognitive representations that members of a group have in common pertaining to the group and its members, tasks, procedures, and resources.

### **Social comparison**

The process of contrasting one's personal qualities and outcomes, including beliefs, attitudes, values, abilities, accomplishments, and experiences, to those of other people.

### **Social facilitation**

Improvement in task performance that occurs when people work in the presence of other people.

### **Social identity theory**

A theoretical analysis of group processes and intergroup relations that assumes groups influence their members' self-concepts and self-esteem, particularly when individuals categorize themselves as group members and identify with the group.

### **Social loafing**

The reduction of individual effort exerted when people work in groups compared with when they work alone.

### **Sociometer model**

A conceptual analysis of self-evaluation processes that theorizes self-esteem functions to psychologically monitor of one's degree of inclusion and exclusion in social groups.

### **Teamwork**

The process by which members of the team combine their knowledge, skills, abilities, and other resources through a coordinated series of actions to produce an outcome.

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## Authors



### **Donelson R. Forsyth**

Donelson R. Forsyth, a social and personality psychologist, holds the Colonel Leo K. and Gaylee Thorsness Endowed Chair in Ethical Leadership at the Jepson School of Leadership Studies at the University of Richmond. A fellow of the American Psychological Association, he researches and writes about ethics, groups, and related topics.

*Theories of Knowledge: "Selectivity of Perception"*

## Selectivity of Perception

What we notice depends on a number of factors. We tend to *notice and group information based on what we are interested in or what is important* and push everything else to the background. Our emotions can also "color" what we perceive or direct our attentions. Our culture, personal and professional knowledge and beliefs can also determine what we see and what we don't see. (see Van de Lagemaat p.p. 91-92)

## Exercise

We are all very familiar with a one Lira coin and also with a one Euro coin. Without looking at an example, quickly draw both sides of a one Turkish Lira coin and one side of a Euro coin (the one that is the same everywhere or include a variant). Click on the chart to check your drawing. Where were you accurate? What did you include? What did you leave out? Why might your memory and perception be selective?

We see these coins in our daily lives but do we really notice all the details or just what is most important? Examples of people misinterpreting, failing to notice, or misremembering what they believe they perceive, abound.

## Change Blindness

This is not so surprising when we look at the extent to which people miss change that occurs. The video below dramatically illustrates change blindness.

The video below demonstrates how people sometimes notice very few details that we would expect to be easy to recall.

Do you think that you would do better? Perhaps if you were consciously trying to be attentive you would do better. Consider the implications of people's generally poor ability to accurately recall details, to the high regard courts of law hold eye-witness testimony: Can you spot the murderer?

## Influence of emotion?

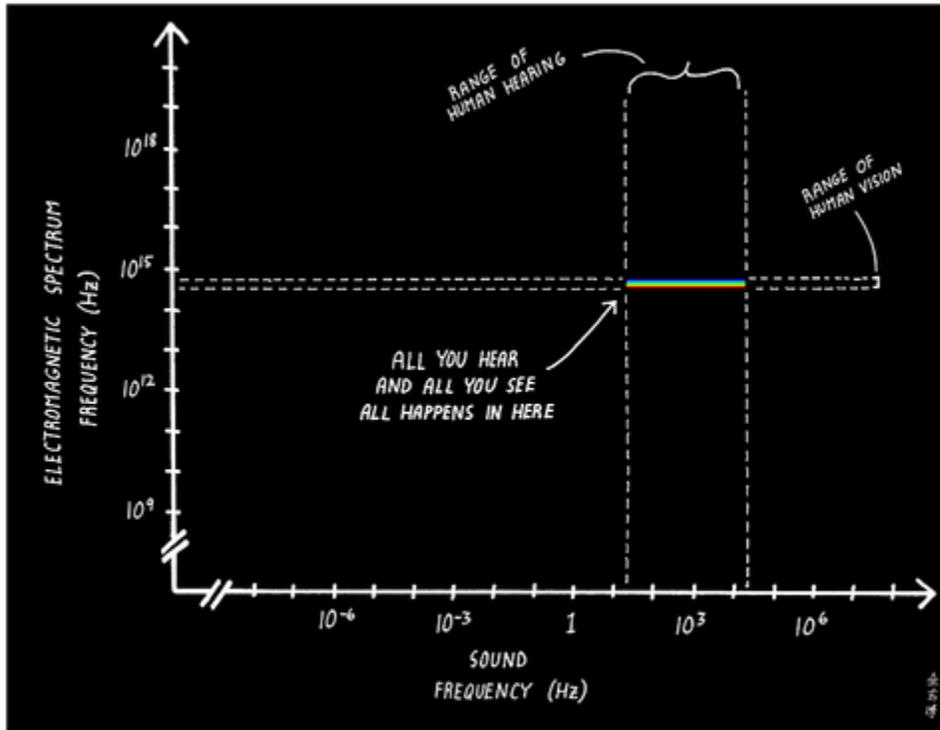
How do our senses interact with each other and does an emotional state select or influence our understanding of the world or at least a glass of wine?

## Appearance or Reality?

Reasons for caution are:

- misinterpretation
- failure to notice something

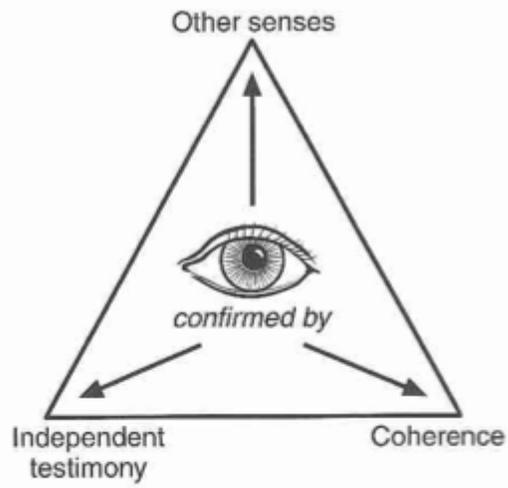
- misremembering
- selective Interpretation
- knowledge our senses have limits



In the grand scheme of things,  
we're all pretty much blind and deaf.

## Three Confirmation Tests

- Confirmation by another sense-touching is believing
- coherence-something fits in with our overall experience
- Independent testimony-other witnesses see the same thing



**Figure 4.10** Checking evidence

# Unit 4: Leading Without Formal Authority

## *Boundless Management: "Defining Leadership: Sources of Power"*

Re-read this short segment on power. This time, read with a focus of being able to discuss which form of power do you believe to be the most effective overall and why.

### Sources of Power

Power is the ability to influence the behavior of others with or without resistance by using a variety of tactics to push or prompt action.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Identify the six different sources of power available to organizational leaders and how leaders can employ these sources of power and influence in a meaningful and ethical way

#### KEY POINTS

- Power is the ability to get things done, sometimes over the resistance of others.
- Leaders have a number of sources of power, including legitimate power, referent power, expert power, reward power, coercive power, and informational power.
- All of these sources of power can be used in combination, and people often have access to more than one of them.
- Power tactics fall along three dimensions: behavioral, rational, and structural.

#### TERMS

- power

The ability to influence the behavior of others, with or without resistance.

- Upward Power

When subordinates influence the decisions of the leader.

- Downward Power

When a superior influences subordinates.

## Power in Business

Power is the ability to get things done. Those with power are able to influence the behavior of others to achieve some goal or objective. Sometimes people resist attempts to make them do certain things, but an effective leader is able to overcome that resistance. Although people sometimes regard power as evil or corrupt, power is a fact of organizational life and in itself is neither good nor bad. Leaders can use power to benefit others or to constrain them, to serve the organization's goals or to undermine them.

Another way to view power is as a resource that people use in relationships. When a leader influences subordinates, it is called downward power. We can also think of this as someone having power over someone else. On the other hand, subordinates can also exercise upward power by trying to influence the decisions of their leader. Indeed, leaders depend on their teams to get things done and in that way are subject to the power of team members.

## The Six Sources of Power

Power comes from several sources, each of which has different effects on the targets of that power. Some derive from individual characteristics; others draw on aspects of an organization's structure. Six types of power are *legitimate*, *referent*, *expert*, *reward*, *coercive*, and *informational*.

### Legitimate Power

Also called "positional power," this is the power individuals have from their role and status within an organization. Legitimate power usually involves formal authority delegated to the holder of the position.

### Referent Power

Referent power comes from the ability of individuals to attract others and build their loyalty. It is based on the personality and interpersonal skills of the power holder. A person may be admired because of a specific personal trait, such as charisma or likability, and these positive feelings become the basis for interpersonal influence.

### Expert Power

Expert power draws from a person's skills and knowledge and is especially potent when an organization has a high need for them. Narrower than most sources of power, the power of an expert typically applies only in the specific area of the person's expertise and credibility.

### Reward Power

Reward power comes from the ability to confer valued material rewards or create other positive incentives. It refers to the degree to which the individual can provide external motivation to others through benefits or gifts. In an organization, this motivation may include promotions, increases in pay, or extra time off.

## **Cash reward**

**The ability to reward employees with cash and other incentives is a source of organizational power.**

### Coercive Power

Coercive power is the threat and application of sanctions and other negative consequences. These can include direct punishment or the withholding of desired resources or rewards. Coercive power relies on fear to induce compliance.

### Informational Power

Informational power comes from access to facts and knowledge that others find useful or valuable. That access can indicate relationships with other power holders and convey status that creates a positive impression. Informational power offers advantages in building credibility and rational persuasion. It may also serve as the basis for beneficial exchanges with others who seek that information.

All of these sources and uses of power can be combined to achieve a single aim, and individuals can often draw on more than one of them. In fact, the more sources of power to which a person has access, the greater the individual's overall power and ability to get things done.

### Power Tactics

People use a variety of power tactics to push or prompt others into action. We can group these tactics into three categories: behavioral, rational, and structural.

Behavioral tactics can be soft or hard. Soft tactics take advantage of the relationship between person and the target. These tactics are more direct and interpersonal and can involve collaboration or other social interaction. Conversely, hard tactics are harsh, forceful, and direct and rely on concrete outcomes. However, they are not necessarily more powerful than soft tactics. In many circumstances, fear of social exclusion can be a much stronger motivator than some kind of physical punishment.

Rational tactics of influence make use of reasoning, logic, and objective judgment, whereas nonrational tactics rely on emotionalism and subjectivity. Examples of each include bargaining and persuasion (rational) and evasion and put downs (nonrational).

Structural tactics exploit aspects of the relationship between individual roles and positions. Bilateral tactics, such as collaboration and negotiation, involve reciprocity on the parts of both the person influencing and the target. Unilateral tactics, on the other hand, are enacted without any participation on the part of the target. These tactics include disengagement and *fait accompli*. Political approaches, such as playing two against one, take yet another approach to exert influence.

People tend to vary in their use of power tactics, with different types of people opting for different tactics. For instance, interpersonally-oriented people tend to use soft tactics, while extroverts employ a greater variety of power tactics than do introverts. Studies have shown that men tend to use bilateral and direct tactics, whereas women tend to use unilateral and indirect tactics. People will also choose different tactics based on the group situation and according to whom they are trying to influence. In the face of resistance, people are more likely to shift from soft to hard tactics to achieve their aims.

## Dan Rockwell's "Finding Real Leadership Power"

Read the article and reflect on the following questions: When might power not equate to effective leadership? When is it possible to lead without specific power?

### FINDING REAL LEADERSHIP POWER



Humility is real power, arrogance façade.

#### **15 Ways to be an arrogant leader:**

1. Rush. "Important" people don't have enough time.
2. Look serious. The more important you are the more serious you look.
3. Detach. "Arrogance comes from detachment." [Henry Mintzberg](#).
4. Take calls or text during meetings. Now we know you're important. Ooooo!
5. Know. Act like you know when you don't. Arrogance makes learning difficult.

6. Delegate dirty work.
7. Isolate. Be too good for the "little" people.
8. Insulate. Create protective environments.
9. Interrupt.
10. Blow up. Anger and arrogance are relatives.
11. Gossip.
12. Tell don't ask.
13. Speak don't listen.
14. Complain and blame rather than solve and support.
15. Surround yourself with groveling yes-men.

### **Power:**

Humility requires more confidence than arrogance. Fear makes us pretend we know, when we don't, for example.

Humility is found, expressed, and nurtured in connecting. Arrogance pushes off; humility invites in. Withdrawal suggests independence; connecting expresses interdependence.

Humility builds trust. Trust fuels leadership. But you can't trust arrogant people. They reject what's right for what makes them look good, when necessary.

### **How to be a powerful humble leader:**

1. Stand your ground where values are concerned. Humble leaders submit to noble values.
2. Realize you aren't your title.
3. Demand excellence from yourself, first.
4. Call for, and enable excellence. (Emphasis on enable.)
5. Don't believe your own press. People aren't telling you the full truth.
6. Serve.
7. Sit at the side not the head.
8. Brag about others. Fools make others feel they don't matter.
9. Say thanks. Gratitude softens arrogance.
10. Invite feedback.
11. Ask as well as tell. Curiosity reflects humility. *Warning:* questions may be control-tools. I confess that I use questions to control conversations and divert attention from myself.
12. Do the opposite of the arrogant leader list.

# *Boundless Management: "Defining Leadership: A Leader's Influence"*

By the end of this reading, you should be able to differentiate between the various methods of influencing others and the role of each of these methods in effective leadership.

## A Leader's Influence

Leaders use social influence to maintain support and order with their subordinates.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Differentiate between various methods of influencing others and their role in effective leadership

### KEY POINTS

- Influence occurs when other people affect an individual's emotions, opinions, or behaviors. Leaders use influence to create the behaviors needed to achieve their goal and vision.
- Harvard psychologist Herbert Kelman identified three broad varieties of social influence: compliance, identification, and internalization.
- Compliance is people behaving as others expect.
- Identification happens when people are influenced by someone who is well-liked and respected, such as a celebrity.
- Internalization of values leads to those beliefs being reflected in behavior.

### TERMS

- social influence

When an individual's emotions, opinions, or behaviors are affected by others.

- socialization

The process of inheriting and disseminating norms and customs of behavior along with ideologies and other beliefs.

## The Role of Influence in Leadership

Influence occurs when a person's emotions, opinions, or behaviors are affected by others. It is an important component of a leader's ability to use power and maintain respect in an organization. Influence is apparent in the form of peer pressure, socialization, conformity, obedience, and persuasion. The ability to influence is an important asset for leaders, and it is also an important skill for those in sales, marketing, politics, and law.

In 1958, Harvard psychologist Herbert Kelman identified three broad varieties of social influence: compliance, identification, and internalization. Compliance involves people behaving the way others expect them to whether they agree with doing so or not. Obeying the instructions of a crossing guard or an authority figure is an example of compliance. Identification is when people behave according to what they think is valued by those who are well-liked and respected, such as a celebrity. Status is a key aspect of identification: when people purchase something highly coveted by many others, such as the latest smartphone, they are under the influence of identification. Internalization is when people accept, either explicitly or privately, a belief or set of values that leads to behavior that reflects those values. An example is following the tenets of one's religion.

## **Politics as an Example of Social Influence**

**Leaders, such as politicians, often use identification to gain support for their beliefs on certain issues.**

### How Leaders Use Influence

In an organization, a leader can use these three types of influence to motivate people and achieve objectives. For example, compliance is a means of maintaining order in the workplace, such as when employees are expected to follow the rules set by their supervisors. Similarly, identification happens when people seek to imitate and follow the actions of people they look up to and respect, for example a more experienced co-worker or trusted supervisor. Internalization results when employees embrace the vision and values of a leader and develop a commitment to fulfilling them.

Leaders use these different types of influence to motivate the behaviors and actions needed to accomplish tasks and achieve goals. Individuals differ in how susceptible they are to each type of influence. Some workers may care a great deal about what others think of them and thus be more amenable to identifying the cues for how to behave. Other individuals may want to believe strongly in what they do and so seek to internalize a set of values to guide them. In organizations and in most parts of life, sources of influence are all around us. As a result, our behavior can be shaped by how others communicate with us and how we see them.

# Mediation

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Learn what mediation is.
2. Explore the process of mediation as an alternative dispute resolution (ADR) strategy.
3. Identify disputes suitable to mediation as a form of ADR.
4. Become familiar with the benefits and drawbacks of mediation as a form of ADR.

Mediation is a method of ADR in which parties work to form a mutually acceptable agreement. Like negotiation, parties in mediation do not vest authority to decide the dispute in a neutral third party. Instead, this authority remains with the parties themselves, who are free to terminate mediation if they believe it is not working. Often, when parties terminate mediation, they pursue another form of ADR, such as arbitration, or they choose to litigate their claims in court. Mediation is appropriate only for parties who are willing to participate in the process. Like negotiation, mediation seeks a “win-win” outcome for the parties involved. Additionally, mediation is confidential, which can be an attractive attribute for people who wish to avoid the public nature of litigation. The mediation process is usually much faster than litigation, and the associated costs can be substantially less expensive than litigation.

Unlike in many negotiations, a third party is involved in mediation. Indeed, a neutral mediator is crucial to the mediation process. Mediators act as a go-between for the parties, seeking to facilitate the agreement. Requirements to be a mediator vary by state. See [Note 4.23 "Hyperlink: Mediators"](#) to compare the requirements between states. There are no uniform licensing requirements, but some states require specific training or qualifications for a person to be certified as a mediator. Mediators do not provide advice on the subject matter of the dispute. In fact, the mediators may not possess any subject-matter expertise concerning the nature of the dispute. However, many mediators are trained in conflict resolution, and this allows them to employ methods to discover common goals or objectives, set aside issues that are not relevant, and facilitate an agreement into which the parties will voluntarily enter. Mediators try to find common ground by

identifying common goals or objectives and by asking parties to set aside the sometimes emotionally laden obstacles that are not relevant to the sought-after agreement itself.

## **Hyperlink: Mediators**

<http://www.mediationworks.com/medcert3/staterequirements.htm>

Visit this site to see the various requirements and qualifications to become a mediator in the different states.

Disputants choose their mediator. This choice is often made based on the mediator's reputation as a skilled conflict resolution expert, professional background, training, experience, cost, and availability. After a mediator is chosen, the parties prepare for mediation. For instance, prior to the mediation process, the mediator typically asks the parties to sign a mediation agreement. This agreement may embody the parties' commitments to proceed in good faith, understanding of the voluntary nature of the process, commitments to confidentiality, and recognition of the mediator's role of neutrality rather than one of legal counsel. At the outset, the mediator typically explains the process that the mediation will observe. The parties then proceed according to that plan, which may include opening statements, face-to-face communication, or indirect communication through the mediator. The mediator may suggest options for resolution and, depending on his or her skill, may be able to suggest alternatives not previously considered by the disputants.

Mediation is often an option for parties who cannot negotiate with each other but who could reach a mutually beneficial or mutually acceptable resolution with the assistance of a neutral party to help sort out the issues to find a resolution that achieves the parties' objectives. Sometimes parties in mediation retain attorneys, but this is not required. If parties do retain counsel, their costs for participating in the mediation will obviously increase.

In business, mediation is often the method of ADR used in disputes between employers and employees about topics such as workplace conditions, wrongful discharge, or advancement grievances. Mediation is used in disputes between businesses, such as in contract disputes.

Mediation is also used for disputes arising between businesses and consumers, such as in medical malpractice cases or health care disputes.

Like other forms of dispute resolution, mediation has benefits and drawbacks. Benefits are many. They include the relative expediency of reaching a resolution, the reduced costs as compared to litigation, the ability for parties that are unable to communicate with each other to resolve their dispute using a nonadversarial process, the imposition of rules on the process by the mediator to keep parties “within bounds” of the process, confidentiality, and the voluntary nature of participation. Of course, the potential for a “win-win” outcome is a benefit. Attorneys may or may not be involved, and this can be viewed as either a benefit or a drawback, depending on the circumstances.

Drawbacks to mediation also exist. For example, if disputants are not willing to participate in the mediation process, the mediation will not work. This is because mediation requires voluntary participation between willing parties to reach a mutually agreeable resolution. Additionally, even after considerable effort by the parties in dispute, the mediation may fail. This means that the resolution of the problem may have to be postponed until another form of ADR is used, or until the parties litigate their case in court. Since mediators are individuals, they have different levels of expertise in conflict resolution, and they possess different backgrounds and worldviews that might influence the manner in which they conduct mediation. Parties may be satisfied with one mediator but not satisfied in subsequent mediations with a different mediator. Even if an agreement is reached, the mediation itself is usually not binding. Parties can later become dissatisfied with the agreement reached during mediation and choose to pursue the dispute through other ADR methods or through litigation. For this reason, parties often enter into a legally binding contract that embodies the terms of the resolution of the mediation immediately on conclusion of the successful mediation. Therefore, the terms of the mediation can become binding if they are reduced to such a contract, and some parties may find this to be disadvantageous to their interests. Of course, any party that signs such an agreement would do so voluntarily. However, in some cases, if legal counsel is not involved, parties may not fully understand the implications of the agreement that they are signing.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

Mediation is a method of ADR in which the parties retain power to decide the issue themselves without vesting that power in an outside decision maker. However, mediation relies on neutral mediators who facilitate the mediation process to assist the parties in achieving an acceptable, voluntary agreement. Mediation is more formal than negotiation but less formal than arbitration or litigation. Mediation is relatively inexpensive, fast, and confidential, unlike litigation. Though nonbinding mediation resolutions are not binding on the parties, these resolution agreements may be incorporated into a legally binding contract, which is binding on the parties who execute the contract. Mediation does not follow a uniform set of rules, though mediators typically set forth rules that the mediation will observe at the outset of the process. Successful mediation often reflects not only the parties' willingness to participate but also the mediator's skill. There is no uniform set of rules for mediators to become licensed, and rules vary by state regarding requirements for mediator certification.

# The London School of Economics: Connson Locke's "Actions Speak Louder than Words: Adaptive Non-Verbal Communication is a Key Leadership Skill for Collaborative Teams"

Close your eyes and think of a great leader. What does this person look like? What does this person sound like? What is their dress? How do they carry themselves? In spite of what you may have observed from movies, television, and other media, Locke's research suggests that "there is no one single 'best' way to look and act like a leader". Read on to discover more of Locke's findings for one's non-verbal presentation and leadership.

## Actions speak louder than words: Adaptive non-verbal communication is a key leadership skill for collaborative teams.

*Non-verbal communication is extremely influential in interpersonal encounters, and knowing how to leverage non-verbal signals effectively can be a key leadership skill. **Connson Locke** shares her research findings that suggest displaying an overly-confident and authoritative non-verbal communication can have a damaging effect on a team's sharing of information and collaboration.*

It is widely accepted that non-verbal communication is extremely influential in interpersonal encounters, and non-verbal signals (i.e. everything except the words themselves), including body language, eye contact, tone of voice and rapidity of speech, can have a subtle but significant influence on the dynamic between two people. For leaders in a professional context, there is no exception.

I have recently completed new research exploring non-verbal communication in leadership roles, and the results suggest that contrary to many traditional beliefs, there is no one single 'best' way to look and act like a leader. Instead, three behavioural studies which I conducted point to the fact that leaders should consciously adjust their non-verbal strategy to the specific situation in order to get the best out of their team and make optimum decisions.

In general, the accepted view on non-verbal leadership is that confidence and authority should be conveyed. This means, for example, using upright body posture, direct eye contact, and a confident tone of voice. The results of the first study in my research project reflected exactly this. A pair of participants were assigned roles, where one was 'leader' and the other 'subordinate', and in almost every case the 'leader' participant immediately took on confidence-displaying non-verbal behaviour, such as sitting up straighter, taking up more space, and using more eye contact.

However, my research has exposed the fact that displaying this type of confident and authoritative non-verbal communication is not always the best approach for a leader to take – and in fact in some situations, this can have a damaging effect. Instead, it is crucial for leaders to adjust their non-verbal behaviour according to the specific situation, in order to achieve optimum results.

Leaders often rely on members of their team to collect data, and there will be many cases where a leader needs the insight, knowledge or expertise from a member of their team in order to reach an optimum decision. In situations such as this, displaying a confident and powerful non-verbal demeanour can have a negative impact. My research has shown that a person reporting in to a leader will be much less likely to share information, participate in a collaborative discussion of ideas, and argue their own point of view, when dealing with a leader who is displaying traditional authoritative non-verbal behaviour.

This is not necessarily because the person in the subordinate role feels intimidated by the leader, but rather because they are receiving strong signals that the leader is extremely sure of themselves, and they will therefore assume that their own opinion and knowledge is less valid than that of the leader. For example, they will be less likely to argue for a new approach to an issue, or bring to light relevant facts, if those do not align with the views of the leader. The leader might therefore unwittingly miss out on receiving key information and insight on an issue.

Participants in the second study in my research project were assigned the 'subordinate' role and given the task of communicating information about the best person to hire for an imaginary job to a 'leader' (who, unbeknownst to them, was an actor). When interacting with half the participants, the actor playing the 'leader' was briefed to take on a confident demeanour, including strong posture, confident tone of voice, and direct eye contact. In contrast, with the other half of the participants, the actor displayed a less confident demeanour, including slumped posture, less direct eye contact, and uncertain tone of voice.

In the first case, the 'subordinate' participants failed to share the full information they had been given and did not persist in their arguments when the 'leader' chose to hire the least qualified person for the job. In comparison, the second group of participants shared far more information and argued back strongly when the 'leader' expressed a desire to choose the wrong person for the job.

At first glance, it may seem counterintuitive for leaders to appear timid and uncertain, and of course any non-verbal communication which goes as far as undermining respect and confidence in the leader will be detrimental and is not recommended. However the results of this study bring

to light an extremely important distinction in the type of behaviour appropriate for different leadership situations.

Our standard way of thinking about leadership sees leaders as *influencers*, i.e. influencing people and directing work. But leaders also have a second key role, as *facilitators*. In some situations leaders benefit from stepping out of the *influencer* role, and instead taking on the different non-verbal demeanour of a more neutral listener, in order to facilitate the sharing of information and collaboration in decision-making.

My research explored the non-verbal behaviours which underpin the *facilitator* role, ones that signal 'open' communication, such as uncrossed arms and legs, body oriented toward the other person, and nodding and maintaining eye contact while listening. Participants in my third and final study were again assigned a 'subordinate' role in the same task, helping the 'leader' choose the best candidate for a job. This time, there were four scenarios where the actor was briefed to display four different demeanours to different groups of participants – confident versus non-confident, and 'open' versus 'closed' (i.e., body oriented away from the 'subordinate', arms and legs crossed, minimal eye contact, etc.). The results show that when a 'leader' displayed confident demeanour combined with 'open' characteristics, the 'subordinate' was highly likely to communicate all the relevant information they had been given and participate usefully in the hiring decision.

This means that leaders do not need to display the counterintuitive, and potentially damaging, uncertain and timid non-verbal behaviour as my second study might have initially suggested. Instead, my third study found that the negative effects of confident and authoritative non-verbal communication can be successfully mitigated when an 'open' *facilitator* role is used by a confident leader.

This is a key lesson that I teach in my leadership classes at LSE: effective leadership involves adapting to the situation. This includes adjusting non-verbal demeanour and moving between *influencer* and *facilitator* roles. An outstanding leader is someone who can clearly understand a situation, and adapt their leadership style and behaviour accordingly.

# Ruth Suehle's "Nike Improving the Environment and Communities the Open Source Way"

Read the article and explain why or why not organizations have a responsibility to the community in which they operate. Aside from Nike, can you think of other companies that are demonstrating leadership in your community? Look into at least one other company and describe its efforts to make a positive impact in some way other than its primary business venture. Post your findings to the Discussion Forum.

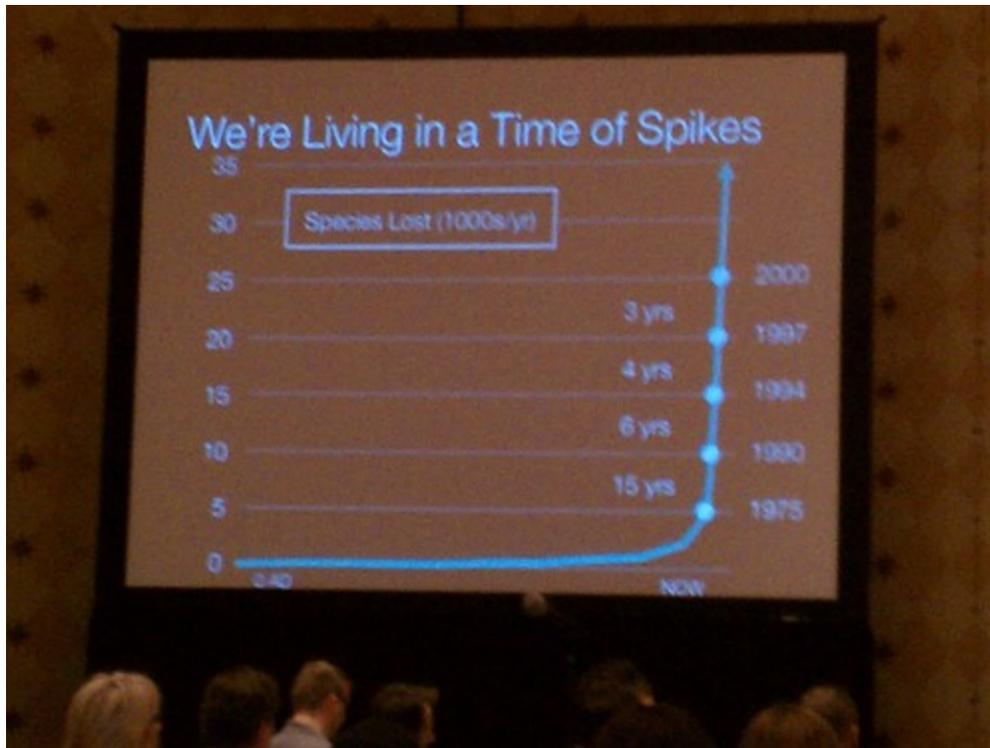
## Nike Improving the Environment and Communities the Open Source Way

This morning at SXSW, Andrew Zolli, curator of PopTech, talked to Hannah Jones, the VP of Sustainable Business at Nike about innovation, design, and sustainability through open data and collaboration.

### **The age of singularities**

Raymond Kurzweil and other technology theorists have promoted the idea that the accelerating rate of technological change will so dramatically change society that forecasting is nearly impossible. Some believe we are in the time immediately preceding a technological singularity. Zolli says we are also almost certainly on the precipice of an ecological singularity.

"We're living in a time of spikes," said Zolli. "We didn't grow [human population] on an S-curve, or a J. We grew on an L." We'll be adding the next billion people to the population in only a decade. You can also see these spikes in various ecological variables. For example, the number of species lost also follows an accelerating L-curve:



Zolli drew further connections between exploding population, resources, and global temperature anomalies. "These forces have a dramatic and direct impact on life today," Zolli continued. And although everyone will be affected by these, not everyone is preparing well. That's where Jones came in--to talk about what Nike is doing through its Sustainable Business and Innovation team.

Nike recognized that these changes will have an impact on their customers and their business model. They've set their sights on how to lead and thrive in a sustainable economy. The team's mission is to help Nike figure out how to disconnect their products and business model from depleting resources. Their goal is that by 2050, Nike products will be completely decoupled from fossil fuels and all water used will be returned to the community.

### **The call for change at Nike**

In 1992, there was hardly such a thing as "corporate responsibility." But that's when Nike found itself in the middle of an anti-globalization movement and at the center of attacks on child labor. Jones described this as "the best thing that ever happened to us," because it forced the company to change. It forced them to open up, learn to listen, and recognize that they would need help to change their system. They recognized that their system was fundamentally flawed, inelegant, wasteful, and vulnerable to big problems in the supply change.

### **The disruptive challenge**

As one example of the ecological issues facing Nike and other companies, it takes 5,700 liters of water to get one t-shirt to a consumer. That's especially stunning at an event like SXSW, where there's someone thrusting a free t-shirt into your hands on every corner. "These t-shirts are being used with substantial amounts of water that could mean the difference for a community having access to food and clean water," said Jones. In the future, Nike (and anyone in the business of making t-shirts) has to rethink how they can share with and give back to those communities they're taking away from.

About five years ago, Nike created "stress indicators"--things like what would happen with unemployment, or if the price of cotton rose. Their big question from these is how fast they can scale change, and how collaboration and new forms of innovation can make that happen.

### **How the open source model can help**

"Based on the success of open source within narrowly defined traditional IT conversations, it's now being adopted by the sustainability community," said Zolli. Global Pulse at the UN is taking all the aggregate data and indices of baseline temperature readings on those stressors and making them available as open data. In one example, he showed Water for People, which allows for real-time efficacy reports for water, now in 60,000 communities. The ability to look at the mashup of data between the UN and how water is being used is increasing effectiveness of wells and other local resources and facilities.

### **Collaboration with the competition**

Jones said that in her industry, there once was a belief you should never reveal the location of your factories. The result was that brands that worked in the same factory or same area weren't collaborating on the working conditions in those factories and communities. Nike chose to release their factory data, which led others to follow suit, now allowing competing companies to work together to improve conditions.

Nike also has released IP data for many of their products, particularly ecologically-related successes, in hopes that someone else can use that work to improve the world for everyone. Through GreenXchange, others are enabled to do the same. Its patent licensing tool lets people and organizations get the rights to patents that help them innovate, and through Creative Commons licenses, the patent owners get credit for their work and, in some cases, licensing payments.

### **Change your culture**

"We're pretty lucky," Jones said. "Our culture has a tendency towards irreverency and risk-taking, and a delight in innovation." Nike's corporate culture rewards collaboration and the freedom to experiment, all because of the crises they faced for not being transparent, for

not collaborating. "The collaboration story is when you mash up different communities, you get the answers."

# Advice from 5 Joomla! Project Leaders, Part 1

Review the article and critique the section on giving advice to someone new in a leadership position. Would you support the comments or add additional thoughts. Discuss your response in an essay of 100–200 words.

## Advice From 5 Joomla! Project Leaders: Part 1

The Joomla! community, inside and outside the company, is diverse and multi-cultural. It is made up of all sorts of people with two things in common: a love for Joomla! and a willingness to reach out and help others on the other side of the keyboard.

[View the complete collection of Women in Open Source articles](#)

The Joomla! project leadership team is comprised of volunteers who are equally as diverse as the community they represent.

So, what makes a good leader at Joomla? Everyone on the leadership team has "been there and done that," and like any great open source project, they have piles of T-shirts to prove it. Here we highlight some of the many women leaders on the Joomla! team. They are inspiring and have unique insights into the community.



Ruth Cheesley

**Leadership role (current):** Community Leadership Team (2013-present), Joomla!Day UK Organiser (2010-present)

**Area contributing to:** I'm the liaison on the Joomla User Groups team, reaching out and supporting local user groups. I am also on the Marketing Working Group which is involved with providing marketing support to all areas of the project.

I co-lead Joomla!Day UK and Joomla User Group Suffolk, write for the Joomla Community Magazine, and try to contribute to the documentation as much as I can!

**Who has contributed to your leadership skills over the years?**

I probably learned the most about myself and my ability to lead from Thomas & Penny Power's Ecademy, the first online business networking platform, and the amazing contacts I made through being a part of it helped create the conditions in which I felt confident to have my voice heard. Yes, believe it or not, there was a time I was quiet! My business mentor Ian Perry has since taught me a lot about leadership in business, he keeps me on the straight and narrow and isn't afraid to tell me off! I'm personally supported immensely by my Buddhist teachers and my long-standing partner John.

### **What is your advice to someone new to a leadership position?**

Keep your inspiration alive, learn how to listen, and leave your personal agendas at the door. I'm still working on all of these!

It's really important as a leader that you keep your inspiration alive. Sometimes you will have to make difficult decisions or face challenging situations, and in these moments it's important to remember what inspires you, what drives you, and what you aspire to.

Listen all the time. And ask for clarification politely and patiently when you need to. Listen with open ears, not with ears that only hear what you want to hear. Expect to be challenged!

Personal agendas will always be there, but in a leadership role you have to learn to side-step them and look at the situation in hand from an objective perspective.

Finally, have somebody who can mentor and support you. Every leader needs a teacher, no matter how high up the chain you are. There will always be times when you need to talk something through with another person and sometimes to blow off steam, and there will always be lessons and skills to be learned. It's easy to put yourself beyond reproach too, and sometimes you need to be nudged back into line!

### **What is something surprising about your life?**

I originally wanted to be a Marine Engineering Officer in the Navy, then I decided to change career path during A-Levels and trained as a sport scientist, going on to get my masters degree in Physiotherapy!

I have always tinkered with computers, and when I graduated I wasn't able to get a job in Physiotherapy, so I applied for some IT temp work—quite literally blagging my way about my ability to communicate and good technical knowledge, having worked on the Computer Services helpdesk and tinkered with Joomla while at university. I spent some time as an IT technician in a school, and then as a Data Analyst for the National Health Service working in Infection Control. I eventually left due to health reasons to start my own business.

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## Dianne Henning

**Leadership role (current):** JCM co-lead Editor (May 2010-present), JWC 2013 and 2014 Team, JoomlaDay Boston Organizer, and JoomStew.com co-host

**Area contributing to:** Joomla! Community Magazine as the co-lead Editor with Alice Grevet, The Joomla! Events Team, The Joomla! World Conference 2014 Team (November 7-9, 2014), JoomlaDay Boston (March 15-16, 2014)

### **Who has contributed to your leadership skills over the years?**

This is easy. My very good friend, Alice Grevet. We met at the American University in Paris back in 2001 in a Website Design and Management course and have been friends ever since. We have worked together in our professional lives and we have served together with a few non-profit organizations, volunteering our time and learning along the way. Alice has a thoughtful way of leading, she is mindful of the issues and outcome involved, as well as the people who contribute to the process, and she thinks through her responses and actions. Alice has a way of keeping things both professional, and human. She inspires me in so many ways. She also taught me how to knit.

### **What is your advice to someone new to a leadership position?**

Stay focused on your goals and grow a thick skin. Not everyone is going to like your idea(s), but they asked you to be on a leadership team for a reason. Learn to listen, and learn to know when to let go of something. Being right may not always be the best solution. Engage others in your discussions and thought processes. Sometimes the best advice or idea comes from the most unlikely places. Lastly, enjoy yourself. Anything done as a volunteer should bring you joy and a sense of accomplishment.

### **What is something surprising about your life?**

Life is unpredictable. I worked for an airline for 10 years and flew around the world. I landed in Paris in 1992 with my French husband and 10-month old son. I never thought I would have lived in a foreign country, especially for so long (France for 20 years). And once there, I never thought I would move back to the US and start over after the age of 50. This *rentrée* has been the best part of my life: I have had the opportunity to do things the way I want to, and I am still in

transition mode. Transition is good. It allows for experimenting and making mistakes and learning from them without regret.

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Chiara Aliotta

**Leadership role (current):** Brand Manager at Joomla! since January 2014

**Area contributing to:** I am an Italian graphic and web designer. Last year, I founded my own creative agency: Until Sunday. And, as of last month, I am actively involved in the Joomla! project as a Brand Manager. It is a wonderful chance to contribute my skills to this active community.

However, I have been designing templates for Joomla! since 2009 when I was working as a web designer for Joomla!works/Nuevvo. Today, as a freelancer, I design creative and functional Joomla! templates for my Joomla! clients and Joomla!hack, a well-known template provider. Since the first edition, I have been involved in the development of the identity and communication materials of J and Beyond, an international Joomla! conference that gathers people from all around the world.

I also attend and speak at different Joomla! conferences, spreading my love for typography and good design throughout the Joomla! community.

**Who has contributed to your leadership skills over the years?**

I have a mentor, Paolo Giorgi, art director at Boutique Creativa, Milano. He taught me how to be confident with my creativity, inspire other people, and get inspired. But mostly, he taught me not to hide my passion for my work. Ever.

Another person is my boyfriend who supports me in every single step, encouraging me to be entrepreneurial and determined.

Of course, I also have some "big names" that I admire and hold up as examples in my everyday life:

- Ray Eames, an American designer that worked with her husband contributing to change the "face" of the modern design.
- Marissa Mayes, CEO of Yahoo! and one of the first female engineers at Google back in 1999.

- Temple Grandin, a person that I immensely admire for overcoming her limits of being an autistic person and a woman, and who today has been listed among the 100 most influential people in the world, actively involved in autism rights and in animal welfare.

### **What is your advice to someone new to a leadership position?**

I am quite new to the role of leadership, but as Junior Art Director at Boutique Creativa I was always leading projects and dealing with clients. As a creative person in a team of technicians, your ideas can be easily diminished. So I say to myself and to everybody in a similar position: "Never give up!" Walt Disney was also refused and his ideas were trashed before he founded what is today the Disney colossus!

Before you speak, learn how to listen. Analyze the situation and give others a chance to express their opinion without the fear of being judged. As a leader, you will be expected to make a lot of decisions: embrace them as an opportunity and don't fear failure. Most of all, love what you do, have lots of enthusiasm, and be inspiring. The team you lead must love working with you!

### **What is something surprising about your life?**

Since I was child I knew I was going to work for something that would always amuse me. My first editorial design was in collaboration with my brother when we were both really small: the magazine was just for my parents (limited edition, as you may understand) and it was entirely handmade using glue and cut out from other magazines and our drawings.

Before studying Design and Communication, I was an industrial designer and passionate about designing furnitures and objects for children. What made me change my mind about my future career was the day that I got in the wrong class and Massimo Pitis, at the time teacher of Communication Design at Politecnico of Milan, was giving a lesson about the history of graphic design. A few years later, I completed my final degree in Communication Design, with full marks with Massimo Pitis as my tutor.

I play the clarinet from the age of 9, and I also took part in various singing competitions as a child. My teenage, secret dream was to be the front-woman in a rock band and sing like Alanis Morissette.



# Alice Grevet

**Leadership role (current):** Secretary, Board of Open Source Matters, Inc. (board member since Oct. 2010-present); Joomla Community Magazine co-lead editor with Dianne Henning (JCM team member since May 2010-present).

**Area contributing to:** Open Source Matters (OSM) provides the legal and financial support for the Joomla Open Source project. Our primary responsibilities are to oversee the budget for the project, handle legal issues/questions that arise, and Trademark usage. OSM also manages the areas not covered by the other two project leadership teams (Community Leadership Team (CLT) and Production Leadership Team (PLT)), such as operations management, events, the Joomla certification program, marketing, and public relations in addition to brand management and licensing issues.

OSM is geographically diverse. We currently have board members in The Netherlands, South Africa, Germany, Israel, Guatemala, Sweden, the US, and Canada. I am American and I live in France.

## **Who has contributed to your leadership skills over the years?**

It is difficult to identify one person. I think the seeds for the leadership roles I have held were planted during my teenage years, when I was elected to be a youth advisory delegate to a (US) national assembly, and at about the same time, I served on a search committee to hire a community leader. The adults who shaped those experiences for me were thoughtful, responsible people with good insight into group dynamics and interpersonal relations. There were several, mostly male, and I learned a lot from them. I have a memory of wishing I could be like them when I grew up, but thought I would never be able to have that kind of impact because I was female.

Then I made the unusual decision at age 18 to attend an all-female university. For four years, every class officer, classmate, dorm mate, and most of my companions were female. I was only competing against my own gender set for class participation, and every day I experienced the message of empowerment and encouragement, strongly communicated by the college, that women can do anything. I have never doubted it since.

## **What is your advice to someone new to a leadership position?**

Depending on the area of leadership, achieving certain goals in an organization with a complex structure can take time. Whether female or male, my advice is the same: be patient, try to be a person others will want to work with, and keep plugging away. Don't let disagreements get personal. Invariably people who end up in leadership positions at Joomla have the common story of loving the Joomla community and this wonderful software that has changed our lives. Keep that sentiment foremost in your mind. Taking on a leadership role is a lot of work, and also very rewarding.

## **What is surprising about your life?**

At age five, I started a long history of music lessons, finally settling on the harp. A six-foot concert harp stands my living room.

I have two children, and I am equally proud of both, but most relevant to this article is my daughter who is pursuing a graduate degree in Computer Science (specifically Human and Computer Interaction), and her research and career are going to help define the future of the Internet. At the same time she is blazing a trail in a highly male-dominated field, and will be an inspiration to this and future generations of women.



Tessa Mero

**Leadership role (current):** Joomla! Extensions Directory Listing Manager (December 2013-present), Joomla! User Group Seattle Organizer (January 2014-present)

**Area contributing to:** I am currently working as the listing manager for the Joomla! [Extensions Directory](#) that is managed under Matthew Baylor. Working with a small team of listing editors, I am in charge of training new team members on the listing process and also with the approval process of all listings being submitted to the Joomla! Extensions Directory. We have also been responsible for writing the new Terms of Service agreement and the Requirements Document for the new JED 3.0. We've recently went through an applicant pile and selected a developer to build the new system. Our next big project is migrating the JED from 1.5 to the latest Joomla version, which will be a major stepping stone for our community.

I've also just recently stepped up as organizer for the Joomla! User Group of Seattle, currently holding a total of 94 members in the meetup group.

### **Who has contributed to your leadership skills over the years?**

My first influence in the community has been OStraining.com, who I previously worked for with Joomla! training, writing tutorials, and helping debug websites. They have taught me so much and introduced me to being an open source contributor. I wouldn't have known how to be involved if it wasn't for them.

My second influence is Gary Brooks, who is CEO of Cloudaccess.net. I met him during my first Joomla! conference in New York City back in 2011 when I just started out working as a developer and using Joomla! He was responsible for introducing me to everyone in the community and always telling me he sees a lot of potential in me and believes I will become a future leader.

Lastly, the entire community has been a big influence on me. Everyone works so hard and does a great job making Joomla! an amazing CMS. I love you all!

### **What is your advice to someone new to a leadership position?**

The best advice I can give to someone is don't be shy and ask questions if you need help. Always believe you can do it. You are truly capable of anything if you put your heart into it. Be involved with things you are interested in, not to just "be involved." If you want to become a leader, put yourself out there and speak up. If you wait around for things to happen or people to offer you something, you will be waiting for a long time. Treat everyone with respect and don't be involved in drama. Speak your opinions wisely. If you are a female, don't feel that you are different from everyone else, because we are all equally just as awesome. Gender should never be a barrier. Don't underestimate your skills and believe you are greater than you really are. Be ambitious and reach towards goals that seem impossible, because it really is possible. Be an inspiration and role model to others. Teach and help others become involved. I can go forever on giving advice, so I'll stop here!

### **What is surprising about your life?**

My biggest hobby most of my life has been gaming. Mostly PC, some console. It all started when my parents bought me an NES system in 1987, then my dad gave me his hand me down Mac computer in 1993 along with 100 "pirated" games. It was a hobby I took very seriously and was involved in the gaming community, including ladders and tournaments. I recently stopped this hobby to concentrate on raising my children and growing in my career. I will definitely learn to make time again for this!

I love playing my clarinet and making music. I was in the International Music Ensemble club while in college, which wasn't too long ago. When I was a teenager I use to go to WBIC every year, which is an international musician conference where the best musicians in every high school gets together and have a week to practice their music and create a CD of classical music. Oh, good memories!

# *Boundless Management: "Other Leadership Perspectives: Emotional Leadership"*

Read the article and journal about how emotional leadership and emotional intelligence are related.

## Emotional Leadership

Emotional leadership is a process that leaders use to influence their followers to pursue a common goal.

### KEY POINTS

- As leadership is all about influencing people to achieve a common goal, an "emotional" approach can be a very important step of the process.
- Leaders in a positive mood can affect their group in a positive way, and vice versa. Charismatic leaders can transmit their emotions and thereby influence followers through the mechanism of "emotional contagion".
- Group affective tone refers to mood at the group level of analysis. Groups with leaders in a positive mood have a more positive affective tone than groups with leaders in a negative mood. Group processes like coordination, effort expenditure, and task strategy also affect followers.
- Public expressions of mood influence how group members think and act relative to other group members. Group members respond to those signals cognitively and behaviorally in ways that are reflected in the group processes.
- Strong emotional leadership depends on having high levels of emotional intelligence (EI).

### TERMS

- Emotional Leadership

Emotional leadership is a process that leaders use to influence their followers in a common goal.

- emotional intelligence

the ability, capacity, or skill to perceive, assess, and manage the emotions of oneself, of others, and of groups

1. tive outlook. For example, a charismatic leader can inspire feelings of confidence in a group's ability to achieve challenging goals.

2. Group affective tone refers to the collective mood of individuals. Groups with leaders in a positive mood have more positive feelings toward each other than groups with leaders who convey the opposite. The perceived efficacy of group processes such as coordination, collaborative effort, and task strategy can also effect the emotions of followers.
3. Public expressions of mood affect how group members think and act in relation to other group members. For example, demonstrating positive emotions such as happiness or satisfaction can signal that leaders acknowledge solid progress toward goals. Those signals influence how followers think about their work, which can benefit their work together.

## Emotional Intelligence

Strong emotional leadership depends on having high levels of emotional intelligence (EI). EI is the ability to identify, assess, and control the emotions of oneself, of others, and of groups. The two most prominent approaches to understanding EI are the ability and trait EI models.

The EI ability model views emotions as useful sources of information that help a person make sense of and navigate the social environment. The model proposes that individuals vary in their ability to process information of an emotional nature and in their ability to connect those emotions to how they think. There are four key emotional skills—perceiving, using, understanding, and managing:

1. Perceiving emotions – The ability to detect and decipher emotions in faces, pictures, voices, and cultural artifacts—including one's own emotions. Perceiving emotions represents a basic aspect of emotional intelligence, as it makes all other processing of emotional information possible.
2. Using emotions – The ability to harness emotions to facilitate various cognitive activities, such as thinking and problem-solving. Emotionally intelligent people can capitalize fully upon their changing moods according to the task at hand.
3. Understanding emotions – The ability to comprehend emotional language and to appreciate complicated relationships among emotions. For example, understanding emotions encompasses the ability to be sensitive to slight variations between emotions, as well as the ability to recognize and describe how emotions evolve over time.
4. Managing emotions – The ability to regulate emotions in both ourselves and in others. The emotionally intelligent person can harness emotions—even negative ones—and manage them to achieve intended goals.

Because the EI ability model focuses on behaviors that can be learned, it is used as the basis of leadership development activities.

The EI trait model focuses not on skills but on personality characteristics and behavioral dispositions such as empathy, consideration, and self-awareness. Trait EI refers to individuals' self-perceptions of their emotional abilities. It is measured by looking at degrees of emotional well-being, self-control, emotionalism, and sociability. EI traits can be challenging to assess accurately because they rely on self-reporting, rather than observations of actual behaviors. Personality traits are generally believed to be resistant to significant change, so the EI trait model is used to help people better manage their emotional abilities within the constraints of existing behavioral tendencies.

### **President Barack Obama**

**Many observers identify President Obama as a good example of an emotional leader.**

# *Boundless Management: "Drivers of Behavior: How Emotion and Mood Influence Behavior"*

Emotion and mood can affect temperament, personality, disposition, motivation, and initial perspectives and reactions. Hence, it is very important to the productivity and culture of a workplace that managers are balancing the mood of the groups they lead.

## How Emotion and Mood Influence Behavior

Emotion and mood can affect temperament, personality, disposition, motivation, and initial perspectives and reactions.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Describe the importance of employee moods and emotions on overall performance from an organizational perspective

### KEY POINTS

- The poor decision-making effects of a given mood can hinder a person's job performance and lead to bad decisions that affect the company.
- Emotion is a subjective lens on an objective world; decision-making should discard emotion whenever possible. This is particularly important for managers, who make significant decisions on a daily basis.
- As emotion is largely a chemical balance (or imbalance) in the mind, emotions can quickly cloud judgment and complicate social interactions without the individual being consciously aware that it is happening.

### TERMS

- emotions

Subjective, conscious experiences that are characterized primarily by psycho-physiological expressions, biological reactions, and mental states.

- mood

A mental or emotional state.

### Emotions in the Workplace

Emotions and mood can affect temperament, personality, disposition, and motivation. They can affect a person's physical well-being, judgement, and perception. Emotions play a critical role in how individuals behave and react to external stimuli; they are often internalized enough for people to fail to notice when they are at work. Emotions and mood can cloud judgment and reduce rationality in decision-making.

## Mood

All moods can affect judgment, perception, and physical and emotional well-being. Long-term exposure to negative moods or stressful environments can lead to illnesses such as heart disease, diabetes, and ulcers. The decision-making effects of any kind of bad mood can hinder a person's job performance and lead to poor decisions that affect the company. In contrast, a positive mood can enhance creativity and problem solving. However, positive moods can also create false optimism and negatively influence decision making.

## Emotion

Emotions are reciprocal with mood, temperament, personality, disposition, and motivation. Emotions can be influenced by hormones and neurotransmitters, such as dopamine and serotonin. Dopamine can affect a person's energy level and mood, while serotonin can affect critical-thinking skills. As emotion is largely a chemical balance (or imbalance) in the mind, emotions can quickly cloud judgment and complicate social interactions without the individual being consciously aware that it is happening.

## Plutchik Wheel

**Emotions are complex and move in various directions. Modeling emotional feelings and considering their behavioral implications are useful in preventing emotions from having a negative effect on the workplace.**

The implication for behavior is important for both managers and subordinates to understand. Workers must try to identify objectively when an emotional predisposition is influencing their behavior and judgement and ensure that the repercussions of the emotion are either positive or neutralized. Positive emotions can be a great thing, producing extroversion, energy and job satisfaction. However, both positive and negative emotions can distort the validity of a decision. Being overconfident, for example, can be just as dangerous as being under-confident.

## Organizational Implications

By encouraging positive employee management relationships and employee dynamics, an organization may be able to balance a person's mood and emotions. Improving the level of job satisfaction for employees is another way that a company can influence an employee's mood. If a person is satisfied at work, that condition may reduce levels of stress and help influence motivation and disposition. Job satisfaction can affect a person's mood and emotional state. Providing organizational benefits, such as a company gym, meditation classes, or company retreats, can likewise influence a person's emotions. An active lifestyle has been shown to produce an increased level of dopamine, which can enhance energy and mood.

Managers are tasked not only with monitoring and controlling their own moods and emotions, but also with recognizing emotional issues in their subordinates. Managers should strive to balance the emotions of their subordinates, ensuring nothing negatively affects their mental well-being. This can be a difficult role for management, as many people display their emotions in different ways (and most tend to hide them, particularly at work). Managers must be both perceptive and strategic in ensuring a mental balance at work.

## Brook Manville: "Should open source leaders go native?"

By the end of this reading, you should be able to explain what is meant by going "native", and why going "native" may be an effective leadership communication strategy. Can you?

### Should Open Source Leaders Go Native?

Anthropologists who traveled to the jungle to study various tribes would debate (half jokingly) whether to "go native"—that is, whether to adopt the lifestyle of the people they were trying to understand, or to keep their distance (and scientific objectivity). It was a research design choice, but also a fundamental choice about one's identity as a more-than-interested visitor.

Leaders in the new world of networks and virtual communities face a similar identity choice. With more leaders taking advantage of informally connected talent, the "wisdom of crowds," and open source innovation, how much should they try to "go native"? Should they operate as members of the networks they want to work with them? Or should they somehow try to manage them from the outside?

## Networks, communities, and Joy's Law

At first, it might seem like a false choice. Common wisdom says networks can't be managed, that they're allergic to leadership of any kind. But today many leaders clearly take advantage of informal and open source networks for achieving their strategic goals. In some cases they take the "native" route and act as "members," using their personal influence or relationships to mobilize other talented "colleagues" to pursue a project with them. In other instances, they stand apart but offer soft and hard incentives to engage a network or community of volunteers to come on board. In both cases, they are (in some sense of the word), leading a network. It's a challenge more and more leaders are taking on, realizing that a decade ago Bill Joy got it right: in the talent-rich but more loosely organized and hyperconnected world, "most of the smartest people don't actually work for you." But as a leader you still have to figure out how to make them part of what you're trying to do.

Red Hat is Exhibit A for Joy's Law. Many of the smartest people in the Linux software movement don't work for Red Hat's CEO, but the company depends on networks of volunteers to pursue its strategy of providing value-added integration products. And that's presumably why Red Hat's culture echoes many of the same freedom-loving, self-governing, open source values of the movement itself. Both movement and corporation are comprised of networks of people with knowledge, experience, and critical relationships keyed to the success of Linux. They share methods for working and seeing the world that old-time anthropologists might call positively tribal.

## Going native (or not) at Red Hat

So unsurprisingly, the question of whether to "go native" was an early threshold choice for Jim Whitehurst, as the Red Hat CEO recounts in his lively new leadership meditation, *The Open Organization*. The book is a fascinating case study of leadership in a network-centric world. From the day Whitehurst started interviewing, he saw that to get the CEO job (and thrive in it) he would have to become part of open source culture—a culture radically different from the one he previously commanded-and-controlled (as COO of Delta Air Lines). Gone were the privileged parking, corner office, and habitual employee deference of the genteel airline company. Welcome to networks of initiative, anywhere/anytime debates, meritocracy regardless of position, and strong community-style values.

And Whitehurst embraced them all with the increasing zeal of a missionary. The book features anecdote after anecdote of the wisdom of going native. It praises the ways opinionated Red Hatters have taught him how a contrarian idea can yield a better result; it reflects on how a deeply experienced engineer persuaded him to reverse a major software decision; it ruminates on how designing programs with mass participant involvement creates more value for all involved. Jim Whitehurst's glass overfloweth with the people-centric Kool-Aid of network and open source thinking: when those with knowledge and stake in a major new direction help design it, the change always goes more smoothly.

The world already contains plenty of management lore about the benefits of "empowered workplaces." The more interesting question is how best to achieve that objective when one is still CEO with a certain obligation to "control" people who do, well, ultimately report to you. How, in fact, does a leader of networks keep from "turning the zoo over to the animals" (to borrow one of Whitehurst's own phrases)? When and how does one need to stop "going native" and return to one's identity as The Boss?

## Experimenting with role and identity

Here Whitehurst's book is less expansive than one might wish. But clearly his leadership journey has involved the constant experimentation with role and identity typical of someone who is sometimes in charge and sometimes only barely so. His stories are full of paradoxical reference to both hierarchical positions in the company (head of this or that function; "senior leadership team") and leadership based on community meritocracy. He sometimes describes himself as CEO and other times simply "a leader" (singular, i.e. one of many at Red Hat); still other times he just seems like one of the crowd.

But *The Open Organization* does offer valuable insights about managing the inevitable native and non-native tensions of someone attempting to foster networks and communities while also leading a public corporation. Sometimes Whitehurst simply has to step out of the

community role and be CEO for reasons of external accountability (e.g., to shareholders or regulators). The "leader," as this CEO also writes, must ensure that all the company's great engagement company gets "scaled up" (e.g., by creating platforms of communication). That leader, more than any member of the community, must also ensure that energetic debates about work don't become personally toxic or chaotically spin out of control; he or she must channel the cultural passion and purpose of the organization in ways that actually drive company success. CEO, not community native, must set limits to how much "creative time" associates spend on "what-if" projects that might not yield real ROI.

This Red Hat leader is most explicit when he discusses the classically hierarchical concept of "setting direction for the organization." Here Whitehurst insists his role is not like Jack Welch at GE (or most other CEOs, for that matter); rather, he acts as a "catalyst: an agent that provokes or speeds change or action." Sometimes he's just one more native helping to foment a productive revolution; other times he's curating and gently controlling the ever-creative crowd.

## Leadership and boundaries

Whitehurst's identity as a leader (one he humbly concedes remains a "work in progress") is full of tension, and the real source of this tension is clear: Though this CEO defines the "open organization" as one that engages "participative communities both inside and out," he still references a boundary between internal and external communities. Even though he embraces open source culture, Whitehurst is actually overseeing one community of networks (Red Hat) within a broader collection of even *more* networks (like the Linux movement, over which he has little control). Both must be engaged—Red Hat services are dependent on the broader "product" of the movement—but the CEO's ultimate loyalty must be to the more immediate stakeholders of the corporation: employees, shareholders, and formal partners of Red Hat. Red Hat (the corporation) ultimately does require more traditional supervision than the open movement would ever allow.

## The high wire act

Judging by the company's performance, Whitehurst must certainly be managing the native/non-native identity question. As an outsider looking in, I'd guess he's finding just the right balance between joining the tribe and making sure it achieves the right kind of accountable collaboration to grow and thrive.

It's a high-wire leadership act that bears further observation. In the new open source and hyperconnected world, leaders must practice managing concentric circles of collective community production—and navigating the balance between "freedom" and "accountability." Joy's Law will become ever more true. The need for leaders to reinvent their

mindsets and behaviors will only become more critical. Network leaders everywhere should hope for a second volume of *The Open Organization*.

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# Aggressive Personality Type

The [interests](#) of the Aggressive Personality Type include (Oldham, pg. 344):

- being the boss
- moving to positions of leadership
- assuming command
- undertaking huge responsibilities
- wielding power
- competing with confidence
- never backing away from a fight

## Main Interests of the Aggressive Personality Type

1. being able to dominate and command others, and exercise power
2. being a part of a traditional power structure
3. being self-disciplined; being able to impose discipline on others
4. accomplishing objectives
5. reaching goals
6. being active and adventurous; being physically assertive and competitive in sports
7. getting people to do what you want them to do

## Characteristic Traits and Behaviors

Dr. John M. Oldham has defined the Aggressive personality style. The

following six characteristic traits and behaviors are listed in his [\*The New Personality Self-Portrait\*](#).

1. **Command.** Aggressive individuals take charge. They are comfortable with power, authority, and responsibility.
2. **Hierarchy.** They operate best within a traditional power structure where everyone knows his or her place and the lines of authority are clear.
3. **Tight ship.** They are highly disciplined and impose rules of order that they expect others in their charge to follow.
4. **Expedience.** Aggressive men and women are highly goal-directed. They take a practical, pragmatic approach to accomplishing their objectives. They do what is necessary to get the job done.
5. **Guts.** They are neither squeamish nor fainthearted. They can function well and bravely in difficult and dangerous situations without being distracted by fear or horror.
6. **The rough-and-tumble.** Aggressive people like action and adventure. They are physically assertive and often participate in or enjoy playing competitive sports, especially contact sports.

**Source:** Oldham, John M., and Lois B. Morris. *The New Personality Self-Portrait: Why You Think, Work, Love, and Act the Way You Do*. Rev. ed. New York: Bantam, 1995.

## Idealized Image

I did conceive of "character strengths and virtues" in a positive way as Martin Seligman does in his *Positive Psychology*, but now see them as images of perfection that inflate the [idealized self](#) theorized by [Karen Horney](#).

**Character Strengths and Virtues (what the Sadistic type is [proud](#) of)**

The "Character Strengths and Virtues" are attributes of the idealized self, or ego ideal. As "conditions of worth" they are idols.

1. Disposition to command, disposition to dominate, leadership, strength, powerfulness, authoritativeness, responsibility.
2. Orderliness, conservatism.
3. Discipline, self-control, self-restraint, craftiness, shrewdness, benevolence, protectiveness, generosity, liberality.
4. Purposefulness, goal-directedness, expediency, practicality, pragmatism, disposition to achieve, disposition to accomplish, productivity.
5. Bravery, fearlessness, fortitude, toughness.
6. Energy, activeness, aggressiveness, adventurousness, assertiveness, confidence, competitiveness.

### Top Strengths\*

**"Leadership**: Encouraging a group of which one is a member to get things done and at the same [time maintain] good relations within the group; organizing group activities and seeing that they happen"

**"Open-mindedness [judgment, critical thinking]**: Thinking things through and examining them from all sides; *Not* jumping to conclusions; being able to change one's mind in light of evidence; weighing all evidence fairly "

**"Perspective [wisdom]**: Being able to provide wise counsel to others; having ways of looking at the world that make sense to oneself and to other people"

**"Bravery [valor]**: *Not* shrinking from threat, challenge, difficulty, or pain; speaking up for what is right even if there is opposition; acting on convictions even if unpopular; includes physical bravery but is not limited to it"

**"Persistence** [**perseverance, industriousness**]: Finishing what one starts; persisting in a course of action in spite of obstacles; "getting it out the door"; taking pleasure in completing tasks"

**"Vitality** [**zest, enthusiasm, vigor, energy**]: Approaching life with excitement and energy; *Not* doing things halfway or halfheartedly; living life as an adventure; feeling alive and activated"

**"Prudence**: Being careful about one's choices; *not* taking undue risks; *not* saying or doing things that might later be regretted"

**"Self-regulation** [**self-control**]: regulating what one feels and does; being disciplined; controlling one's appetites and emotions"

**"Spirituality** [**religiousness, faith, purpose**]: Having coherent beliefs about the higher purpose and meaning of the universe; knowing where one fits within the larger scheme; having beliefs about the meaning of life that shape conduct and provide comfort" (Peterson & Seligman, 29, 30).

\* *Selected from* Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman, (2004). [Character Strengths and Virtues: A Handbook and Classification](#). Oxford: Oxford UP.

## **Aggressiveness**

1. Aggressive: "Inclined to move or act in a hostile fashion." (AHD)

**Synonyms**: "attacking, offensive"

**Analogous**: "invading, encroaching, trespassing"

**Antonyms**: "resisting, repelling" (MW, 30)

**Contrasted**:

2. Aggressive: "Assertive; bold; enterprising." (AHD)

**Synonyms:** "militant, assertive, self-assertive, pushing, pushy"

"**Aggressive, militant, assertive, self-assertive, pushing, pushy** are here compared as applied to persons, their dispositions, or their behavior, and as meaning conspicuously or obtrusively active or energetic. **Aggressive** implies a disposition to assume or maintain leadership or domination, sometimes by bullying, sometimes by indifference to others' rights, but more often by self-confident and forceful prosecution of one's ends ... **Militant**, like *aggressive* implies a fighting disposition but seldom conveys a suggestion of self-seeking. It usually implies extreme devotion to some cause, movement, or institution and energetic and often self-sacrificing prosecution of its ends ... **Assertive** stresses self-confidence and boldness in action or, especially, in the expression of one's opinions. It often implies a determined attempt to make oneself or one's influence felt ... **Self-assertive** usually adds to *assertive* the implication of bumptiousness or undue forwardness ... **Pushing**, when used without any intent to depreciate, comes very close to *aggressive* in the current sense of the latter; however, the word is more commonly derogatory and implies, variously, officiousness, social climbing, or offensive intrusiveness ... **Pushy** is very close in meaning to *pushing* but is more consistently derogatory in connotation ... "

**Analogous:** "energetic, strenuous, vigorous: masterful, domineering, imperious: fighting, combating *or* combative ... " (MW, 30)

**Antonyms:**

**Contrasted:**

[The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language](#) (1981, c.1969). William Morris, Ed. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Merriam-Webster (1984). [Webster's New Dictionary of Synonyms: A Dictionary of Discriminated Synonyms with Antonyms and Analogous and Contrasted Words](#). Springfield, MA: Merriam-Webster.

## **My Web - Aggressiveness**

[Clusty // Clustering aggressiveness](#)

[Google Directory: aggressiveness](#)

## **Careers and Jobs for the Aggressive type**

[Google Answers: selecting the right career for me](#)

This list represents careers and jobs people of the Aggressive type tend to enjoy doing.

program designer  
attorney  
administrator  
office manager  
chemical engineer  
sales manager  
logistics consultant  
franchise owner  
new business developer  
personnel manager  
investment banker  
labor relations  
management trainer  
credit investigator  
mortgage broker  
corporate team trainer  
environmental engineer  
biomedical engineer  
business consultant  
educational consultant  
personal financial planner

network integration  
...specialist  
media planner/buyer

Source: [U.S. Department of Interior, Career Manager](#) - ENTJ.

## Noteworthy examples of the Aggressive personality type

Many people (and not just those of the Aggressive personality type) have aggressive traits or behave in a aggressive manner. But the traits and behaviors of the Aggressive personality type are not so inflexible and maladaptive or the cause of such significant subjective distress or functional impairment as to constitute

### [Sadistic personality disorder.](#)

The noteworthy examples of the Aggressive personality type are examples of a [\\*type\\*](#), not of a disorder. It is my opinion that the ideal type which is described above is best characterized as aggressive, and that the Aggressive personality type represents the pervasive and enduring pattern of the personalities of the people listed below better than any other type.

Famous persons on this list may serve as [ego ideals](#), [idealized images](#), and [idols](#) for individuals of the Aggressive type.

## Noteworthy Examples of the Conscientious Personality Type

Noteworthy examples of the Conscientious personality type are: [Index of noteworthy examples](#)

Bella Abzug | Alexander the Great | Bruno Bettelheim | Al Capone | Fidel Castro | "Sgt. Sam Croft" | "General Cummings" | Jeffrey Dahmer | Bette Davis | Hans Eysenck | Betty Friedan | Indira Gandhi | George Gurdjieff | Saddam Hussein | Lyndon B. Johnson | Jim Jones | Martin Luther Jr. King | Norman Mailer | Mao Zedong | Golda Meir | Robert Moses | Napoleon Bonaparte | Pablo Picasso | Mario Puzo | Frank Sinatra | Joseph Stalin |

Power is the intentional influence over the beliefs, emotions, and behaviors of people. Potential power is the capacity to do so, but kinetic power is the act of doing so. If you made Jimmy believe, feel, or do what you had wanted him to believe, feel, or do, or prevented him from what he had wanted to believe, feel, or do, you would have then exercised power over him in that particular episode. One person exerts power over another to the degree that he is able to exact compliance as desired. No power is exhibited without an empowering response. The techniques of eliciting empowering responses of the kind and at the same time desired from targeted individuals constitute the craft of power.

R. G. H. Siu, *The Craft of Power*.

## Weblogs

- [bitchcakes!](#) - Music reviews, movie reviews, cultural drift.
- [Jilly](#)
- [Southern Appeal](#): The random musings of a Southern Federalist - ENTJ!!!

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"Gradually it has become clear to me what every great philosophy so far has been: namely, the personal confession of its author and a kind of involuntary and unconscious memoir" - Friedrich Nietzsche.

I hypothesize that the personality theories of personality theorists best describe themselves and those of their own type.

### **Bruno Bettelheim**

[Bruno Bettelheim](#): Austrian-born American psychologist known for his work in treating and educating emotionally disturbed children.

From *Madness on the couch: blaming the victim in the heyday of psychoanalysis* by Edward Dolnick:

The whole idea behind the school was to take the lessons Bettelheim had learned from the concentration camps and invert them by substituting kindness for cruelty. "He turned it upside down when he started his school for disturbed children," explained Rudolf Ekstein, a psychoanalyst and one of Bettelheim's closest friends. "It was a protected, caring environment, the mirror opposite of the camps."

Physical discipline was the great taboo. "Punishment teaches a child that those who have power can force others to do their will," Bettelheim had written, "And when the child is old enough and able, he will try to use such force himself." He invoked Shakespeare: "They that have power to hurt and will do none...They rightly do inherit heaven's graces."

Still, there had been clues over the years that philosophy was one thing and practice another. In 1983, for example, an ex-student named Tom Lyons wrote a thinly disguised novel about the Orthogenic School (and dedicated it, "with gratitude and affection," to Bettelheim). In one representative scene, Lyons described an encounter between "Dr. V" (Bettelheim was known as Dr. B) and a boy named Ronny, who had hit a classmate during a game of dodgeball:

"Since ven do ve hit people in zhe eye?" The question that broke the silence was soft and menacing.

"I didn't *mean* to," Ronny's voice was a subdued, protesting whine. Tony winced as Dr. V's left hand caught Ronny on one side of the face, then returned with a swift backhand across the other. SMACK! SMACK! SMACK! SMACK! SMACK! Dr. V's left hand moved quickly, methodically back and forth across Ronny's face. Then: SMACK! SMACK! SMACK! SMACK! with both hands on the back of the head as Ronny ducked forward. Dr. V grabbed a small tuft of his hair and shook. And with both hands he caught Ronny by the shirt and hauled him halfway out of his chair.

"Vhy did you hit her in zhe eye?"

Tony realized that he felt helplessly, humbly subdued before Dr. V's thundering anger.

"It was an accident," Ronny's voice was distinctly tearful.

Dr. V stepped back; he watched Ronny while the latter sniffled once or twice. Suddenly he extended his hands, palms up, in grandiose gesticulation. "I didn't mean to! It vas an accident!" he shrilled mockingly. This made him appear less frightening. In his more normal, but still menacing voice, he asked, "Does zat make it feel any better?" Ronny shook his head. "All right, zhen, remember zat ven you have accidents, I vill have zem also. Is zat clear?"

Such hints went largely unheeded while Bettelheim was alive. But soon after his death, one former student and counselor after another came forward to confirm the rumors. Today, Bettelheim supporters as well as his critics concede that the beatings took place. (pp. 214-215)

According to Richard Pollak in *The creation of Dr. B: a biography of Bruno Bettelheim*, a paper by Eric Schopler (who became a leading authority on autism), "Parents of Psychotic Children as Scapegoats," casts some light on the personality and behavior of Bruno Bettelheim:

Reviewing the motives and conditions that Allport said led to scapegoating, Schopler reminded his audience that one of the chief frustrations in the field of mental health was the lack of any clear understanding of what caused mysterious disorders like autism, an opacity that often made clinicians feel

guilty about their inability to help their patients. This left the therapists prone to projecting their guilt onto the child himself; but this would not do, since he was, after all, the patient, so his mother and father became the convenient substitutes for the therapists' **aggression**. Such parents were almost always confused and desperate, which allowed the clinician to maintain his role as powerful authority and to keep his sense of self-enhancement intact, though his progress with their child was uneven at best and sometimes nonexistent. For the psychoanalytically oriented therapist, there was also the comfort of conformity, of knowing that in emphasizing parental pathology he was striding safely along a popular therapeutic trail. Bruno Bettelheim's personality and behavior can be seen to some degree in all these aspects of scapegoating, and in particular in what Allport called tabloid thinking: the inclination to give complex subjects easy explanations, to oversimplify by blaming the snafu at the motor pool on the brass hats, the high cost of the social safety net on welfare queens, the greed in Wall Street on money-grubbing Jews, autism on mothers. (pg. 283)

- [Google Directory - Society > Issues > Health > Conditions and Diseases > Autism > Psychoanalytic Model](#)

Dolnick, Edward. *Madness on the couch: blaming the victim in the heyday of psychoanalysis*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1998.

Pollak, Richard. *The creation of Dr. B: a biography of Bruno Bettelheim*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997.

## **Michael Stone**

- [Mental Illness and Violent Acts: Protecting the Patient and the Public](#)

"The Murderous Personality" - Michael Stone, M.D.

Sadistic personality disorder was eliminated as a diagnosis from *DSM-IV*, after having been relegated to an appendix in *DSM-III* (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Association; 1980) and *DSM-III-R* (Washington, DC: American Psychiatric

Association; 1987). "But," Stone asserted, "it is still alive in the USA." Psychopathic murderers, he said, are more likely to be sadistic than nonpsychopathic murderers; their goal is complete mastery of others.

- [Amazon.com: buying info: Abnormalities of Personality : Within and Beyond the Realm of Treatment](#)

## **Norman Mailer**

- Mailer's theory of man (ergo of himself, and, in my theory, the Aggressive type) is that man is a combination of the visionary and the beast.

[The Naked and the Dead: The Beast and the Seer in Man](#) - Robert Merrill

As noted previously, Mailer is often criticized for refusing to create ideologically satisfying characters. The assumption here is that Mailer wrote his book to "defend liberalism," to warn against the antiliberal forces within the American system. But Mailer has made it clear that he "intended" something quite different-- something that might even require the treatment of character we find in *The Naked and the Dead*. Mailer says that he conceived the book as "a parable about the movement of man through history"; he defines its basic theme as "the conflict between the beast and the seer in man" (Current Biography). It would seem that for Mailer the movement of man through history is an ongoing struggle between the bestial and the visionary forces in man himself. This idea is not terribly original, of course, but the power of *The Naked and the Dead* depends not on the originality of its ideas but on how well they are embodied in the novel's characters and events.

- [Salon Books | Punch drunk](#)

An old enemy looks over Norman Mailer's collected essays and finds, to her startled sorrow, a man who couldn't stop fighting.

To read this book through from beginning to end is to be made sharply aware of how compelled Norman Mailer has been by an **aggression** that speaks directly to the feeling of having been left out, dismissed and discounted: a condition common to many writers who successfully turn early grievance to writerly effect, and a thing Mailer himself did brilliantly and repeatedly in his prime.

What is curious is how little affect his confessionalism achieves. "Himself" is nothing he confesses to. Himself is the driving quality of the prose. It's the rhetoric that is the compulsive confessor, the finger pointer come alive in the jabbing, prodding, taunting feel -- not the substance, the *feel* -- of the sentences. The way those sentences are accumulating, *that* is Mailer's self on the page, and the **aggression** in them never lets up. It contains all his intelligence, all his bravado, all his shrewdness and insight. Literally: contains it. *It* -- the **aggression** -- is never changed by the subject, never influenced, never deflected. It does the changing.

- [Adele Mailer - The Last Party](#) - American Legends Bookstore.

On the surface, he was the man who had everything: famous in his twenties as the author of *The Naked and the Dead*, co-founder of *The Village Voice*, Norman Mailer appeared to be a Prince of the City-- someone whose promise was boundless. But, according to Adele Mailer, who has written a riveting memoir of their stormy marriage (*The Last Party*, Barricade Books/ hardcover, 377 pages), beneath the cool image, Norman Mailer was insecure, sadistic, twisted, a spoiled mama's boy who was troubled by his background and wanted to have been born a rich WASP.

- [The Naked and the Dead, by Norman Mailer](#) - commentarymagazine.com

Yet it is in struggles, ideological and personal, between the general and his aide that the novel's central theme is given its most explicit expression. War, Mailer appears to think, is made by evil,

sadistic men, who might happen to be sergeants like Croft or generals like Cummings. Men like these provide the motor power that drives the war-making machine; the others—the fools, the sentimentalists, the good, the honest, and the brave—are lashed ahead by these demoniac taskmasters.

- [Norman Mailer on what it means to be macho](#) - Guardian Unlimited Books.

War is the subject that made Mailer; in 1945, aged 21, he was drafted to fight in the Philippines, and the novel he wrote on his return, *The Naked and the Dead*, catapulted him to disorienting celebrity. It is a pounding, unflinching study of men in war; of strength and sadism and masculine rivalry amid the colossal waste of conflict. It was also, according to the *Sunday Times*, a book that "no decent man could leave... lying about the house, or know without shame that his womenfolk were reading it." It was energetically obscene - even though, at the publisher's behest, it was full of "fugs" and "fugging" - and that was what made its heroes heroic, Mailer argued. "What none of the editorial writers ever mentioned," he later wrote, "is that the noble common man is as obscene as an old goat, and his obscenity was what saved him. The sanity... was in his humour; his humour was in his obscenity."

- [The Beleaguered Individual III](#): A study of twentieth-century American war novels.

## Mario Puzo

- [The Official Mario Puzo Library](#) [via [Google](#)]
- [I]n most of **Puzo's** best-selling fiction, the story is dominated by strong male characters and vivid depictions of treachery, betrayal, and **sadistic acts of violence** that illustrate the excesses of ambition, wealth, and power beneath the placid surface of mainstream American society.

-*Contemporary Literary Criticism*, 107:173.

- [The Last Don by Mario Puzo](#) - Random House Inc. | Books@Random.
- [The Godfather: Screenplay by Mario Puzo and Francis Ford Coppola](#)
- [Ebert's Great Movies: The Godfather](#)
- [The Godfather: a film review by James Kendrick](#)

# Working with Individuals

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Describe emotional intelligence.
2. Describe personality types and tools used to describe them.
3. Describe the relationship between leadership style and personality types.
4. Describe people skills that are necessary for negotiation and conflict resolution.
5. Describe how work is delegated.
6. Describe individual goals that are related to personality types.

Working with other people involves dealing with them both logically and emotionally. A successful working relationship between individuals begins with appreciating the importance of emotions and how they relate to personality types, leadership styles, negotiations, and setting goals.

## Emotional Intelligence

Emotions are neither positive nor negative. Emotions are both a mental and physiological response to environmental and internal stimuli. Leaders need to understand and value their emotions to appropriately respond to the client, project team, and project environment. Daniel Goleman, *Emotional Intelligence* (New York: Bantam Books, 1995), discussed emotional intelligence quotient (EQ) as a factor more important than IQ in predicting leadership success. According to Robert Cooper and Ayman Sawaf, “Emotional intelligence is the ability to sense, understand, and effectively apply the power and acumens of emotions as a source of human energy, information, connection, and influence.” Robert K. Cooper and Ayman Sawaf, *Executive EQ, Emotional Intelligence in Leadership and Organizations* (New York: Perigree Book, 1997), xiii.

Emotional intelligence includes the following:

- Self-awareness

- Self-regulation
- Empathy
- Relationship management

Emotions are important to generating energy around a concept, to building commitment to goals, and to developing high-performing teams. Emotional intelligence is an important part of the project manager's ability to build trust among the team members and with the client. It is an important factor in establishing credibility and an open dialogue with project stakeholders. Emotional intelligence is a critical ability for project managers, and the more complex the project profile, the more important the project manager's EQ becomes to project success.

## **Personality Types**

Personality types refer to the difference among people. Understanding your personality type as a project manager will assist you in understanding your tendencies and strengths in different situations. Understanding personality types can also help you understand the contributions of various members of your team and the various needs of your client.

There are a number of tools for helping people assess personality types, such as the DISC acronym, which stands for the following:

- **Dominance**—relates to control, power, and assertiveness
- **Influence**—relates to social situations and communication
- **Steadiness**—relates to patience, persistence, and thoughtfulness
- **Conscientiousness**—relates to structure and organization

These four dimensions are then grouped to represent various personality types.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) is one of most widely used tools for exploring personal preference, with more than two million people taking the MBTI each year. The MBTI is often referred to as simply the Myers-Briggs. It is a tool that can be used in

project management training to develop awareness of preferences for processing information and relationships with other people.

Based on the theories of psychologist Carl Jung, the Myers-Briggs uses a questionnaire to gather information on the ways individuals prefer to use their perception and judgment. Perception represents the way people become aware of people and their environment. Judgment represents the evaluation of what is perceived. People perceive things differently and reach different conclusions based on the same environmental input. Understanding and accounting for these differences is critical to successful project leadership.

The Myers-Briggs identifies sixteen personality types based on four preferences derived from the questionnaire. The preferences are between pairs of opposite characteristics and include the following:

- Extroversion (E)-Introversion (I)
- Sensing (S)-Intuition (N)
- Thinking (T)-Feeling (F)
- Judging (J)-Perceiving (P)

Sixteen Myers-Briggs types can be derived from the four dichotomies. Each of the sixteen types describes a preference: for focusing on the inner or outer world (E-I), for approaching and internalizing information (S-I), for making decisions (T-F), and for planning (J-P). For example, an ISTJ is a Myers-Briggs type who prefers to focus on the inner world and basic information, prefers logic, and likes to decide quickly.

It is important to note that there is no best type and that effective interpretation of the Myers-Briggs requires training. The purpose of the Myers-Briggs is to understand and appreciate the differences among people. This understanding can be helpful in building the project team, in developing common goals, and communicating with project stakeholders. For example, different people process information differently. Extraverts

prefer face-to-face meetings as the primary means of communicating, while introverts prefer written communication. Sensing types focus on facts, and intuitive types want the big picture.

On larger, more complex projects, some project managers will use the Myers-Briggs as a team-building tool during project start-up. This is typically a facilitated work session where team members take the Myers-Briggs and share with the team how they process information, what communication approaches they prefer, and what decision-making preferences they have. This allows the team to identify potential areas of conflict, develop communication strategies, and build an appreciation for the diversity of the team.

## **Personality Type Badges**

One project team in South Carolina used color-coded badges for the first few weeks of the project to indicate Myers-Briggs type. For this team, this was a way to explore how different team members processed information, made decisions, and took action.

Some people use a description of personality types that is based on research that shows that some functions of thinking and perception are localized on the left or right side of the brain. In this system, the left side of the brain is associated with recalling specific facts and definitions and performing calculations, while the right side of the brain is associated with emotions, estimates, and comparisons. The attraction of this system is that it categorizes people into just two categories—left or right brain dominance—but it should be used cautiously to avoid oversimplification.

Understanding the differences among people is a critical leadership skill. This includes understanding how people process information, how different experiences will influence the way people perceive the environment, and how people develop filters that allow certain information to be incorporated while other information is excluded. The more

complex the project, the more important the understanding of how people process information, make decisions, and deal with conflict.

## Leadership Styles

Leadership is a function of both the personal characteristics of the leader and the environment in which the leadership must occur. Several researchers have attempted to understand leadership from the perspective of the characteristics of the leader and the environment of the situation. Robert Tannenbaum and Warren Schmidt Robert Tannenbaum and Warren Schmidt, “How to Choose a Leadership Pattern,” *Harvard Business Review* 36 (1958): 95–101. described leaders as either autocratic or democratic. Harold Leavitt Harold Leavitt, *Corporate Pathfinders* (New York: Dow-Jones-Irwin and Penguin Books, 1986). described leaders as pathfinders (visionaries), problem solvers (analytical), or implementers (team oriented). James MacGregor Burns James MacGregor Burns, *Leadership* (New York: Harper & Row, 1978). conceived leaders as either transactional (focused on actions and decisions) or transformational (focused on the long-term needs of the group and organization).

Fred Fiedler Fred E. Fiedler, “Validation and Extension of the Contingency Model of Leadership Effectiveness,” *Psychological Bulletin* 76, no. 2 (1971): 128–48. introduced contingency theory and the ability of leaders to adapt their leadership approach to the environment. Most leaders have a dominant leadership style that is most comfortable. For example, most engineers spend years training in analytical problem solving and often develop an analytical approach to leadership.

A leadership style reflects personal characteristics and life experiences. Although a project manager’s leadership style may be predominantly a pathfinder (using Leavitt’s taxonomy), most project managers become problem solvers or implementers when they perceive the need for these leadership approaches. The leadership approach

incorporates the dominant leadership style and Fiedler's contingency focus on adapting to the project environment.

No particular leadership approach is specifically appropriate for managing a project. Each project has a unique set of circumstances because, by definition, projects are unique endeavors. The leadership approach and the management skills required to be successful vary depending on the complexity profile of the project. The Project Management Institute published research that studied project management leadership skills Qian Shi and Jianguo Chen, *The Human Side of Project Management: Leadership Skills* (Newtown Square, PA: Project Management Institute, Inc., 2006), 4–11. and concluded that project managers needed good communication skills and the ability to build harmonious relationships and motivate others. Beyond this broad set of leadership skills, the successful leadership approach will depend of the profile of the project.

A transactional project manager with a strong command and control leadership approach may be very successful on a small software development project or a construction project, where tasks are clear, roles are well understood, and the project environment is cohesive. This same project manager is less likely to be successful on a larger, more complex project with a diverse project team and complicated work processes.

Matching the appropriate leadership style and approach to the complexity profile of the project is a critical element of project success. Even experienced project managers are less likely to be successful if their leadership approach does not match the complexity profile of the project.

Each project phase may also require a different leadership approach. During the start-up phase of a project, when new team members are first assigned to the project, the project may require a command and control leadership approach. Later, as the project moves into the conceptual development phase, creativity becomes important, and the

project management takes on a more transformational type leadership approach. Most experienced project managers are able to adjust their leadership approach to the needs of the project phase. Occasionally, on very large, complex projects, some companies will change project managers after the conceptual phase of the project to bring in a different project leadership approach or change project managers to manage the closeout of a project. Changing project managers may bring the right level of experience and the appropriate leadership approach but is also disruptive to a project. Senior management must balance the benefit of matching the right leadership approach with the cost of disrupting the project.

## **Multinational Chemical Plant Project**

On a project to build a new chemical plant that produced dyes for paint, the project manager led a team that included members from partners that were included in a joint venture. The design manager was Greek, the construction manager was German, and other members of the team were from various locations in the United States and Europe. In addition to the traditional potential for conflict that arises from team members from different cultures, the design manager and construction manager were responsible for protecting the interest of their company in the joint venture.

The project manager held two alignment or team-building meetings. The first was a two-day meeting held at a local resort and included only the members of the project leadership team. An outside facilitator was hired to facilitate discussion, and the topic of cultural conflict and organizational goal conflict quickly emerged. The team discussed several methods for developing understanding and addressing conflicts that would increase the likelihood of finding mutual agreement.

The second team-building session was a one-day meeting that included the executive sponsors from the various partners in the joint venture. With the project team aligned, the project manager was able to develop support for the project's strategy and

commitment from the executives of the joint venture. In addition to building processes that would enable the team to address difficult cultural differences, the project manager focused on building trust with each of the team members. The project manager knew that building trust with the team was as critical to the success of the project as the technical project management skills and devoted significant management time to building and maintaining this trust.

## **Negotiation and Conflict Resolution**

Einsiedel Albert A. Einsiedel, “Profile of Effective Project Managers,” *Project Management Journal* 18 (1987): 5. discussed qualities of successful project managers. The project manager must be perceived to be credible by the project team and key stakeholders. The project manager can solve problems. A successful project manager has a high degree of tolerance for ambiguity. On projects, the environment changes frequently, and the project manager must apply the appropriate leadership approach for each situation.

The successful project manager must have good communication skills. Barry Posner Barry Z. Posner, “What It Takes to Be a Good Project Manager,” *Project Management Journal* 18 (1987): 32–46. connected project management skills to solving problems. All project problems were connected to skills needed by the project manager:

- Breakdown in communication represented the lack of communication skills.
- Uncommitted team members represented the lack of team-building skills.
- Role confusion represented the lack of organizational skills.

The research indicates that project managers need a large numbers of skills. These skills include administrative skills, organizational skills, and technical skills associated with the technology of the project. The types of skills and the depth of the skills needed are closely connected to the complexity profile of the project. Typically on smaller, less complex projects, project managers need a greater degree of technical skills. On larger,

more complex projects, project managers need more organizational skills to deal with the complexity. On smaller projects, the project manager is intimately involved in developing the project schedule, cost estimates, and quality standards. On larger projects, functional managers are typically responsible for managing these aspects of the project, and the project manager provides the organizational framework for the work to be successful.

## **Listening**

One of the most important communication skills of the project manager is the ability to actively listen. Active listening takes focus and practice to become effective. Active listening is placing yourself in the speaker's position as much as possible, understanding the communication from the point of view of the speaker, listening to the body language and other environmental cues, and striving not just to hear, but to understand.

Active listening enables a project manager to go beyond the basic information that is being shared and to develop a more complete understanding of the information.

### **Client's Body Language Indicates Problems at a Board Meeting**

A client just returned from a trip to Australia where he reviewed the progress of the project with his company's board of directors. The project manager listened and took notes on the five concerns expressed by the board of directors to the client.

The project manager observed that the client's body language showed more tension than usual. This was a cue to listen very carefully. The project manager nodded occasionally and clearly demonstrated he was listening through his posture, small agreeable sounds, and body language. The project manager then began to provide feedback on what was said using phrases like "What I hear you say is..." or "It sounds like...." The project manager was clarifying the message that was communicated by the client.

The project manager then asked more probing questions and reflected on what was said. “It sounds as if it was a very tough board meeting.” “Is there something going on beyond the events of the project?” From these observations and questions, the project manager discovered that the board of directors meeting did not go well. The company had experienced losses on other projects, and budget cuts meant fewer resources for the project and an expectation that the project would finish earlier than planned. The project manager also discovered that the client’s future with the company would depend on the success of the project. The project manager asked, “Do you think we will need to do things differently?” They began to develop a plan to address the board of directors’ concerns.

Through active listening, the project manager was able to develop an understanding of the issues that emerged from the board meeting and participate in developing solutions. Active listening and the trusting environment established by the project manager enabled the client to safely share information he had not planned on sharing and to participate in creating a workable plan that resulted in a successful project.

The project manager used the following techniques:

1. Listening intently to the words of the client and observing the client’s body language
2. Nodding and expressing interest in the client without forming rebuttals
3. Providing feedback and asking for clarity while repeating a summary of the information back to the client
4. Expressing understanding and empathy for the client

The active listening was important to establishing a common understanding from which an effective project plan could be developed.

## **Negotiation**

Negotiation is a process for developing a mutually acceptable outcome when the desired outcome for parties in the negotiation is sufficiently different that both cannot achieve the desired outcome. A project manager will often negotiate with a client, with team members, with vendors, and with other project stakeholders. A larger and more complex project will have a large number of stakeholders, often with conflicting desired outcomes. Negotiation is an important skill in developing support for the project and preventing frustration among stakeholders, which could delay or cause project failure.

Vijay Verma Vijay K. Verma, *Human Resource Skills for the Project Manager* (Sylvia, NC: PMI Publications, 1996), 145–75. suggests that negotiations involve four principles:

1. The first principle is to separate people from the problem. If the person is seen as the problem, then finding a mutually acceptable solution will be difficult. Framing the discussions in terms of desired outcomes enables the negotiations to focus on finding new outcomes.
2. The second principle is to focus on common interests. By avoiding the focus on differences, both parties are more open to finding solutions that are acceptable.
3. The third principle is to generate options that advance shared interests. Once the common interests are understood, solutions that do not match with either party's interests can be discarded, and solutions that may serve both parties' interests can be more deeply explored.
4. Verma's final principle is to develop results based on standard criteria. The standard criterion is the success of the project. This implies that the parties develop a common definition of project success.

For the project manager to successfully negotiate issues on the project, he or she should first seek to understand the position of the other party. If negotiating with a client, what is the concern or desired outcome of the client? What are the business drivers and personal drivers that are important to the client? Without this understanding, it is difficult to find a solution that will satisfy the client. The project manager should also

seek to understand what outcomes are desirable to the project. Typically, more than one outcome is acceptable. Without knowing what outcomes are acceptable, it is difficult to find a solution that will produce that outcome.

One of the most common issues in formal negotiations is finding a mutually acceptable price for a service or product. Understanding the market value for a product or service will provide a range for developing a negotiations strategy. The price paid on the last project or similar projects provides information on the market value. Seeking expert opinions from sources who would know the market is another source of information. Based on this information, the project manager can then develop an expected range from the lowest price that would be expected within the current market to the highest price.

Additional factors will also affect the negotiated price. The project manager may be willing to pay a higher price to assure an expedited delivery or a lower price if delivery can be made at the convenience of the supplier or if payment is made before the product is delivered. Developing as many options as possible provides a broader range of choices and increases the possibility of developing a mutually beneficial outcome.

The goal of negotiations is not to achieve the lowest costs, although that is a major consideration, but to achieve the greatest value for the project. If the supplier believes that the negotiations process is fair and the price is fair, the project is more likely to receive higher value from the supplier. The relationship with the supplier can be greatly influenced by the negotiation process and a project manager that attempts to drive the price unreasonably low or below the market value will create an element of distrust in the relationship that may have negative consequences for the project. A positive negotiation experience may create a positive relationship that may be beneficial, especially if the project begins to fall behind schedule and the supplier is in a position to help keep the project on schedule.

## Negotiation on a Construction Project

After difficult negotiations on a construction project in Indiana, the project management team met with a major project supplier and asked, “Now that the negotiations are complete, what can we do to help you make more profit?” Although this question surprised the supplier, the team had discussed how information would flow, and confusion in expectations and unexpected changes always cost the supplier more money. The team developed mechanisms for assuring good information and providing early information on possible changes and tracked the effect of these efforts during the life of the project.

These efforts and the increased trust did enable the supplier to increase profits on the project, and the supplier made special efforts to meet every project expectation. During the life of the project, the supplier brought several ideas on how to reduce total project costs and increase efficiency. The positive outcome was the product of good supplier management by the project team, but the relationship could not have been successful without good faith negotiations.

## Conflict Resolution

Conflict on a project is to be expected because of the level of stress, lack of information during early phases of the project, personal differences, role conflicts, and limited resources. Although good planning, communication, and team building can reduce the amount of conflict, conflict will still emerge. How the project manager deals with the conflict results in the conflict being destructive or an opportunity to build energy, creativity, and innovation.

David Whetton and Kim CameronDavid Whetton and Kim Cameron, *Developing Management Skills* (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Education, 2005). developed a response-to-conflict model that reflected the importance of the issue balanced against the importance of the relationship. The model presented five responses to conflict:

1. Avoiding
2. Forcing
3. Collaborating
4. Compromising
5. Accommodating

Each of these approaches can be effective and useful depending on the situation. Project managers will use each of these conflict resolution approaches depending on the project manager's personal approach and an assessment of the situation.

Most project managers have a default approach that has emerged over time and is comfortable. For example, some project managers find the use of the project manager's power the easiest and quickest way to resolve problems. "Do it because I said to" is the mantra for project managers who use forcing as the default approach to resolve conflict. Some project managers find accommodating with the client the most effective approach to dealing with client conflict.

The effectiveness of a conflict resolution approach will often depend on the situation. The forcing approach often succeeds in a situation where a quick resolution is needed, and the investment in the decision by the parties involved is low.

## **Resolving an Office Space Conflict**

Two senior managers both want the office with the window. The project manager intercedes with little discussion and assigns the window office to the manager with the most seniority. The situation was a low-level conflict with no long-range consequences for the project and a solution all parties could accept.

Sometimes office size and location is culturally important, and this situation would take more investment to resolve.

## **Conflict Over a Change Order**

In another example, the client rejected a request for a change order because she thought the change should have been foreseen by the project team and incorporated into the original scope of work. The project controls manager believed the client was using her power to avoid an expensive change order and suggested the project team refuse to do the work without a change order from the client.

This is a more complex situation, with personal commitments to each side of the conflict and consequences for the project. The project manager needs a conflict resolution approach that increases the likelihood of a mutually acceptable solution for the project.

One conflict resolution approach involves evaluating the situation, developing a common understanding of the problem, developing alternative solutions, and mutually selecting a solution. Evaluating the situation typically includes gathering data. In our example of a change order conflict, gathering data would include a review of the original scope of work and possibly of people's understandings, which might go beyond the written scope.

The second step in developing a resolution to the conflict is to restate, paraphrase, and reframe the problem behind the conflict to develop a common understanding of the problem. In our example, the common understanding may explore the change management process and determine that the current change management process may not achieve the client's goal of minimizing project changes. This phase is often the most difficult and may take an investment of time and energy to develop a common understanding of the problem.

After the problem has been restated and agreed on, alternative approaches are developed. This is a creative process that often means developing a new approach or changing the project plan. The result is a resolution to the conflict that is mutually agreeable to all team members. If all team members believe every effort was made to

find a solution that achieved the project charter and met as many of the team member's goals as possible, there will be a greater commitment to the agreed-on solution.

## **Project Goals Accomplished**

In our example, the project team found a new way to accomplish the project goals without a change to the project scope. On this project, the solution seemed obvious after some creative discussions, but in most conflict situations, even the most obvious solutions can be elusive.

## **Delegation**

Delegating responsibility and work to others is a critical project management skill. The responsibility for executing the project belongs to the project manager. Often other team members on the project will have a functional responsibility on the project and report to a functional manager in the parent organization. For example, the procurement leader for a major project may also report to the organization's vice president for procurement. Although the procurement plan for the project must meet the organization's procurement policies, the procurement leader on the project will take day-to-day direction from the project manager. The amount of direction given to the procurement leader, or others on the project, is the decision of the project manager.

If the project manager delegates too little authority to others to make decisions and take action, the lack of a timely decision or lack of action will cause delays on the project. Delegating too much authority to others who do not have the knowledge, skills, or information will typically cause problems that result in delay or increased cost to the project. Finding the right balance of delegation is a critical project management skill.

When developing the project team, the project manager selects team members with the knowledge, skills, and abilities to accomplish the work required for the project to be successful. Typically, the more knowledge, skills, abilities, and experience a project team

member brings to the project, the more that team member will be paid. To keep the project personnel costs lower, the project manager will develop a project team with the level of experience and the knowledge, skills, and abilities to accomplish the work.

On smaller, less complex projects, the project manager can provide daily guidance to project team members and be consulted on all major decisions. On larger, more complex projects, there are too many important decisions made every day for the project manager to be involved at the same level, and project team leaders are delegated decision-making authority. Larger projects, with a more complex profile will typically pay more because of the need for the knowledge and experience. On larger, more complex project, the project manager will develop a more experienced and knowledgeable team that will enable the project manager to delegate more responsibility to these team members.

## **Construction Project in Peru**

A construction project in Peru was falling behind schedule, and the project manager decided to assign a new construction manager for the construction site that was the most behind schedule. An experienced project manager from the United States with a reputation for meeting aggressive schedules was assigned to the construction site and delegated the authority to meet scheduled milestones.

The construction manager did not have experience outside the United States and began making decisions that would have worked in the United States but met cultural resistance in Peru. The project began falling further behind and another construction manager was assigned to the site.

The project manager must have the skills to evaluate the knowledge, skills, and abilities of project team members and evaluate the complexity and difficulty of the project assignment. Often project managers want project team members they have worked with in the past. Because the project manager knows the skill level of the team member,

project assignments can be made quickly with less supervision than with a new team member with whom the project manager has little or no experience.

Delegation is the art of creating a project organizational structure with the work organized into units that can be managed. Delegation is the process of understanding the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to manage that work and then matching the team members with the right skills to do that work. Good project managers are good delegators.

## Setting Individual Goals

The Myers-Briggs rates an individual's preferences—not their limitations. It is important to understand that each individual can still function in situations for which they are not best suited. For example, a project leader who is more Thinking (T) than Feeling (F) would need to work harder to be considerate of how a team member who is more Feeling (F) might react if they were singled out in a meeting because they were behind schedule. If a person knows their preferences and which personality types are most successful in each type of project or project phase, they can set goals for improvement in their ability to perform in those areas that are not their natural preference.

Another individual goal is to examine which conflict resolution styles are least comfortable and work to improve those styles so that they can be used when they are more appropriate than your default style.

### KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Emotional intelligence is the ability to sense, understand, and effectively apply emotions.
- Two common tools for describing personality types are DISC (Dominance, Influence, Steadiness, and Conscientiousness) and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). The MBTI is the most common. It rates personalities on the position between extremes of

four paired terms: Extroversion (E)-Introversion (I), Sensing (S)-Intuition (I), Thinking (T)-Feeling (F), and Judging (J)-Perceiving (P).

- Leadership styles are usually related to the personality of the leader. The type of leadership style that is most effective depends on the complexity and the phase of the project.
- Negotiation and conflict resolution require skill at listening and an understanding of emotional intelligence and personality types.
- Delegation is the art of creating a project organizational structure that can be managed and then matching the team members with the right skills to do that work.
- Individual goals can be set for improving abilities that are not natural personality strengths to deal with projects and project phases.

# Unit 5: Managing Groups and Teams

## Managing Demographic and Cultural Diversity

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

After reading this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

1. Understand what constitutes diversity.
2. Explain the benefits of managing diversity.
3. Describe challenges of managing a workforce with diverse demographics.
4. Describe the challenges of managing a multicultural workforce.
5. Understand diversity and ethics.
6. Understand cross-cultural issues regarding diversity.

Around the world, the workforce is becoming diverse. In 2007, women constituted 46% of the workforce in the United States. In the same year, 11% of the workforce was African American, 14% were of Hispanic origin, and 5% were Asian. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2007). *Employed persons by detailed occupation, gender, race, and Hispanic or Latino ethnicity*. Retrieved November 4, 2008, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Web site: <ftp://ftp.bls.gov/pub/special.requests/lf/aat11.txt>. Employees continue to work beyond retirement, introducing age diversity to the workforce. Regardless of your gender, race, and age, it seems that you will need to work with, communicate with, and understand people different from you at school as well as at work. Understanding cultures different from your own is also becoming increasingly important due to the globalization of business. In the United States, 16% of domestic employees were foreign born, indicating that even those of us who are not directly involved in international business may benefit from developing an appreciation for the differences and similarities between cultures. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2007). *Labor force characteristics of foreign-born workers*. Retrieved November 4, 2008, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Web site: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/forbrn.nro.htm>. In this chapter, we will examine

particular benefits and challenges of managing a diverse workforce and discuss ways in which you can increase your effectiveness when working with diversity.

As we discuss differing environments faced by employees with different demographic traits, we primarily concentrate on the legal environment in the United States. Please note that the way in which demographic diversity is treated legally and socially varies around the globe. For example, countries such as Canada and the United Kingdom have their own versions of equal employment legislation. Moreover, how women, employees of different races, older employees, employees with disabilities, and employees of different religions are viewed and treated shows much variation based on the societal context.

## **2.1 Doing Good as a Core Business Strategy: The Case of Goodwill Industries**

Goodwill Industries International has been an advocate of diversity for over 100 years. In 1902, in Boston, Massachusetts, a young missionary set up a small operation enlisting struggling immigrants in his parish to clean and repair clothing and goods to later sell. This provided workers with the opportunity for basic education and language training. His philosophy was to provide a “hand up,” not a “hand out.” Although today you can find retail stores in over 2,300 locations worldwide, and in 2009 more than 64 million people in the United States and Canada donated to Goodwill, the organization has maintained its core mission to respect the dignity of individuals by eliminating barriers to opportunity through the power of work. Goodwill accomplishes this goal, in part, by putting 84% of its revenue back into programs to provide employment, which in 2008 amounted to \$3.23 billion. As a result of these programs, every 42 seconds of every business day, someone gets a job and is one step closer to achieving economic stability.

Goodwill is a pioneer of social enterprise and has managed to build a culture of respect through its diversity programs. If you walk into a local Goodwill retail store you are likely to see employees from all walks of life, including differences in gender and race, physical ability, sexual orientation, and age. Goodwill provides employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities, lack of education, or lack of job experience. The company has created programs for individuals with criminal backgrounds who might otherwise be unable to find employment, including basic work skill development, job placement assistance, and life skills. In 2008, more than 172,000 people obtained employment, earning \$2.3 billion in wages and gaining tools to be productive members of their community. Goodwill has established diversity as an organizational norm, and as a result, employees are comfortable addressing issues of stereotyping and discrimination. In an organization of individuals with such wide-ranging backgrounds, it is not surprising that there are a wide range of values and beliefs.

Management and operations are decentralized within the organization with 166 independent community-based Goodwill stores. These regional businesses are independent, not-for-profit human services organizations. Despite its decentralization, the company has managed to maintain its core values. Seattle's Goodwill is focused on helping the city's large immigrant population and those individuals without basic education and English language skills. And at Goodwill Industries of Kentucky, the organization recently invested in custom software to balance daily sales at stores to streamline operations so managers can spend less time on paperwork and more time managing employees.

Part of Goodwill's success over the years can be attributed to its ability to innovate. As technology evolves and such skills became necessary for most jobs, Goodwill has developed training programs to ensure that individuals are fully equipped to be productive members of the workforce, and in 2008 Goodwill was able to provide 1.5 million people with career services. As an organization, Goodwill itself has entered into

the digital age. You can now find Goodwill on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Goodwill's business practices encompass the values of the triple bottom line of people, planet, and profit. The organization is taking advantage of new green initiatives and pursuing opportunities for sustainability. For example, at the beginning of 2010, Goodwill received a \$7.3 million grant from the U.S. Department of Labor, which will provide funds to prepare individuals to enter the rapidly growing green industry of their choice. Oregon's Goodwill Industries has partnered with the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality and its Oregon E-Cycles program to prevent the improper disposal of electronics. Goodwill discovered long ago that diversity is an advantage rather than a hindrance.

Case written by [citation redacted per publisher request]. Based on information from Goodwill Industries of North Central Wisconsin. (2009). A brief history of Goodwill Industries International. Retrieved March 3, 2010, from <http://www.goodwillncw.org/goodwillhistory1.htm>; Walker, R. (2008, November 2). Consumed: Goodwill hunting. *New York Times Magazine*, p. 18; Tabafunda, J. (2008, July 26). After 85 years, Seattle Goodwill continues to improve lives. *Northwest Asian Weekly*. Retrieved March 1, 2010, from <http://www.nwasianweekly.com/old/2008270031/goodwill20082731.htm>; Slack, E. (2009). Selling hope. *Retail Merchandiser*, 49(1), 89–91; Castillo, L. (2009, February 24). Goodwill Industries offers employment programs. *Clovis News Journal*. Retrieved April 22, 2010, from <http://www.cnjonline.com/news/industries-32474-goodwill-duttweiler.html>; Information retrieved April 22, 2010, from the Oregon E-Cycles Web site: <http://www.deq.state.or.us/lq/ecycle>.

## 2.2 Demographic Diversity

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain the benefits of managing diversity effectively.
2. Explain the challenges of diversity management.
3. Describe the unique environment facing employees with specific traits such as gender, race, religion, physical disabilities, age, and sexual orientation.

Diversity refers to the ways in which people are similar or different from each other. It may be defined by any characteristic that varies within a particular work unit such as gender, race, age, education, tenure, or functional background (such as being an engineer versus being an accountant). Even though diversity may occur with respect to any characteristic, our focus will be on diversity with respect to demographic, relatively stable, and visible characteristics: specifically gender, race, age, religion, physical abilities, and sexual orientation. Understanding how these characteristics shape organizational behavior is important. While many organizations publicly rave about the benefits of diversity, many find it challenging to manage diversity effectively. This is evidenced by the number of complaints filed with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) regarding discrimination. In the United States, the Age Discrimination Act of 1975 and Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlaw discrimination based on age, gender, race, national origin, or religion. The 1990 Americans with Disabilities Act prohibits discrimination of otherwise capable employees based on physical or mental disabilities. In 2008, over 95,000 individuals filed a complaint claiming that they were discriminated based on these protected characteristics. Of course, this number represents only the most extreme instances in which victims must have received visibly discriminatory treatment to justify filing a complaint. It is reasonable to assume that many instances of discrimination go unreported because they are more subtle and employees may not even be aware of inconsistencies such as pay discrimination. Before the passing of antidiscrimination

laws in the United States, many forms of discrimination were socially acceptable. This acceptance of certain discrimination practices is more likely to be seen in countries without similar employment laws. It seems that there is room for improvement when it comes to benefiting from diversity, understanding its pitfalls, and creating a work environment where people feel appreciated for their contributions regardless of who they are.

## **Benefits of Diversity**

What is the business case for diversity? Having a diverse workforce and managing it effectively have the potential to bring about a number of benefits to organizations.

### **Higher Creativity in Decision Making**

An important potential benefit of having a diverse workforce is the ability to make higher quality decisions. In a diverse work team, people will have different opinions and perspectives. In these teams, individuals are more likely to consider more alternatives and think outside the box when making decisions. When thinking about a problem, team members may identify novel solutions. Research shows that diverse teams tend to make higher quality decisions. McLeod, P., Lobel, S., & Cox, T. H. (1996). Ethnic diversity and creativity in small groups. *Small Group Research*, 27, 248–264. Therefore, having a diverse workforce may have a direct impact on a company's bottom line by increasing creativity in decision making.

### **Better Understanding and Service of Customers**

A company with a diverse workforce may create products or services that appeal to a broader customer base. For example, PepsiCo Inc. planned and executed a successful diversification effort in the recent past. The company was able to increase the percentage of women and ethnic minorities in many levels of the company, including management. The company points out that in 2004, about 1% of the company's 8%

revenue growth came from products that were inspired by the diversity efforts, such as guacamole-flavored Doritos chips and wasabi-flavored snacks. Similarly, Harley-Davidson Motor Company is pursuing diversification of employees at all levels because the company realizes that they need to reach beyond their traditional customer group to stay competitive. Hymowitz, C. (2005, November 14). The new diversity: In a global economy, it's no longer about how many employees you have in this group and that group; It's a lot more complicated—and if you do it right, a lot more effective. *Wall Street Journal*, p. R1. Wal-Mart Stores Inc. heavily advertises in Hispanic neighborhoods between Christmas and The Epiphany because the company understands that Hispanics tend to exchange gifts on that day as well. Slater, S. F., Weigand, R. A., & Zwirlein, T. J. (2008). The business case for commitment to diversity. *Business Horizons*, 51, 201–209. A company with a diverse workforce may understand the needs of particular groups of customers better, and customers may feel more at ease when they are dealing with a company that understands their needs.

### **More Satisfied Workforce**

When employees feel that they are fairly treated, they tend to be more satisfied. On the other hand, when employees perceive that they are being discriminated against, they tend to be less attached to the company, less satisfied with their jobs, and experience more stress at work. Sanchez, J. I., & Brock, P. (1996). Outcomes of perceived discrimination among Hispanic employees: Is diversity management a luxury or necessity? *Academy of Management Journal*, 39, 704–719. Organizations where employees are satisfied often have lower turnover.

### **Higher Stock Prices**

Companies that do a better job of managing a diverse workforce are often rewarded in the stock market, indicating that investors use this information to judge how well a company is being managed. For example, companies that receive an award from the

U.S. Department of Labor for their diversity management programs show increases in the stock price in the days following the announcement. Conversely, companies that announce settlements for discrimination lawsuits often show a decline in stock prices afterward. Wright, P., Ferris, S. P., Hiller, J. S., & Kroll, M. (1995). Competitiveness through management of diversity: Effects on stock price valuation. *Academy of Management Journal*, 30, 272–287.

### **Lower Litigation Expenses**

Companies doing a particularly bad job in diversity management face costly litigations. When an employee or a group of employees feel that the company is violating EEOC laws, they may file a complaint. The EEOC acts as a mediator between the company and the person, and the company may choose to settle the case outside the court. If no settlement is reached, the EEOC may sue the company on behalf of the complainant or may provide the injured party with a right-to-sue letter. Regardless of the outcome, these lawsuits are expensive and include attorney fees as well as the cost of the settlement or judgment, which may reach millions of dollars. The resulting poor publicity also has a cost to the company. For example, in 1999, the Coca-Cola Company faced a race discrimination lawsuit claiming that the company discriminated against African Americans in promotions. The company settled for a record \$192.5 million. Lovel, J. (2003, May 2). Race discrimination suit targets Coke bottler CCE. *Atlanta Business Chronicle*. Retrieved January 29, 2009, from <http://atlanta.bizjournals.com/atlanta/stories/2003/05/05/story1.html>. In 2004, the clothing retailer Abercrombie & Fitch faced a race discrimination lawsuit that led to a \$40 million settlement and over \$7 million in legal fees. The company had constructed a primarily Caucasian image and was accused of discriminating against Hispanic and African American job candidates, steering these applicants to jobs in the back of the store. As part of the settlement, the company agreed to diversify its workforce and catalog, change its image to promote diversity, and stop recruiting employees primarily from college fraternities and sororities. Greenhouse, S. (2004, November 17).

Abercrombie & Fitch bias case is settled. *New York Times*. Retrieved January 29, 2009, from <http://www.nytimes.com/2004/11/17/national/17settle.html>. In 2007, the new African American district attorney of New Orleans, Eddie Jordan, was accused of firing 35 Caucasian employees and replacing them with African American employees. In the resulting reverse-discrimination lawsuit, the office was found liable for \$3.7 million, leading Jordan to step down from his office in the hopes of preventing the assets of the office from being seized. After \$3.7 million reverse discrimination lawsuit, the New Orleans district attorney resigns. (2007, October 31). *DiversityInc Magazine*. Retrieved November 18, 2008, from <http://www.diversityinc.com/public/2668.cfm>. As you can see, effective management of diversity can lead to big cost savings by decreasing the probability of facing costly and embarrassing lawsuits.

### **Higher Company Performance**

As a result of all these potential benefits, companies that manage diversity more effectively tend to outperform others. Research shows that in companies pursuing a growth strategy, there was a positive relationship between racial diversity of the company and firm performance. Richard, O. C. (2000). Racial diversity, business strategy, and firm performance: A resource-based view. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43, 164–177. Companies ranked in the Diversity 50 list created by *DiversityInc* magazine performed better than their counterparts. Slater, S. F., Weigand, R. A., & Zwirlein, T. J. (2008). The business case for commitment to diversity. *Business Horizons*, 51, 201–209. And, in a survey of 500 large companies, those with the largest percentage of female executives performed better than those with the smallest percentage of female executives. Weisul, K. (2004, January 28). The bottom line on women at the top. *Business Week Online*. Retrieved November 14, 2008, from <http://www.businessweek.com/>.

### **Challenges of Diversity**

If managing diversity effectively has the potential to increase company performance, increase creativity, and create a more satisfied workforce, why aren't all companies doing a better job of encouraging diversity? Despite all the potential advantages, there are also a number of challenges associated with increased levels of diversity in the workforce.

### **Similarity-Attraction Phenomenon**

One of the commonly observed phenomena in human interactions is the tendency for individuals to be attracted to similar individuals. Riordan, C. M., & Shore, L. M. (1997). Demographic diversity and employee attitudes: An empirical examination of relational demography within work units. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 82*, 342–358. Research shows that individuals communicate less frequently with those who are perceived as different from themselves. Chatman, J. A., Polzer, J. T., Barsade, S. G., & Neale, M. A. (1998). Being different yet feeling similar: The influence of demographic composition and organizational culture on work processes and outcomes. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 43*, 749–780. They are also more likely to experience emotional conflict with people who differ with respect to race, age, and gender. Jehn, K. A., Northcraft, G. B., & Neale, M. A. (1999). Why differences make a difference: A field study of diversity, conflict, and performance in workgroups. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44*, 741–763; Pelled, L. H., Eisenhardt, K. M., & Xin, K. R. (1999). Exploring the black box: An analysis of work group diversity, conflict, and performance. *Administrative Science Quarterly, 44*, 1–28. Individuals who are different from their team members are more likely to report perceptions of unfairness and feel that their contributions are ignored. Price, K. H., Harrison, D. A., & Gavin, J. H. (2006). Withholding inputs in team contexts: Member composition, interaction processes, evaluation structure, and social loafing. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 91*, 1375–1384.

The similarity-attraction phenomenon may explain some of the potentially unfair treatment based on demographic traits. If a hiring manager chooses someone who is

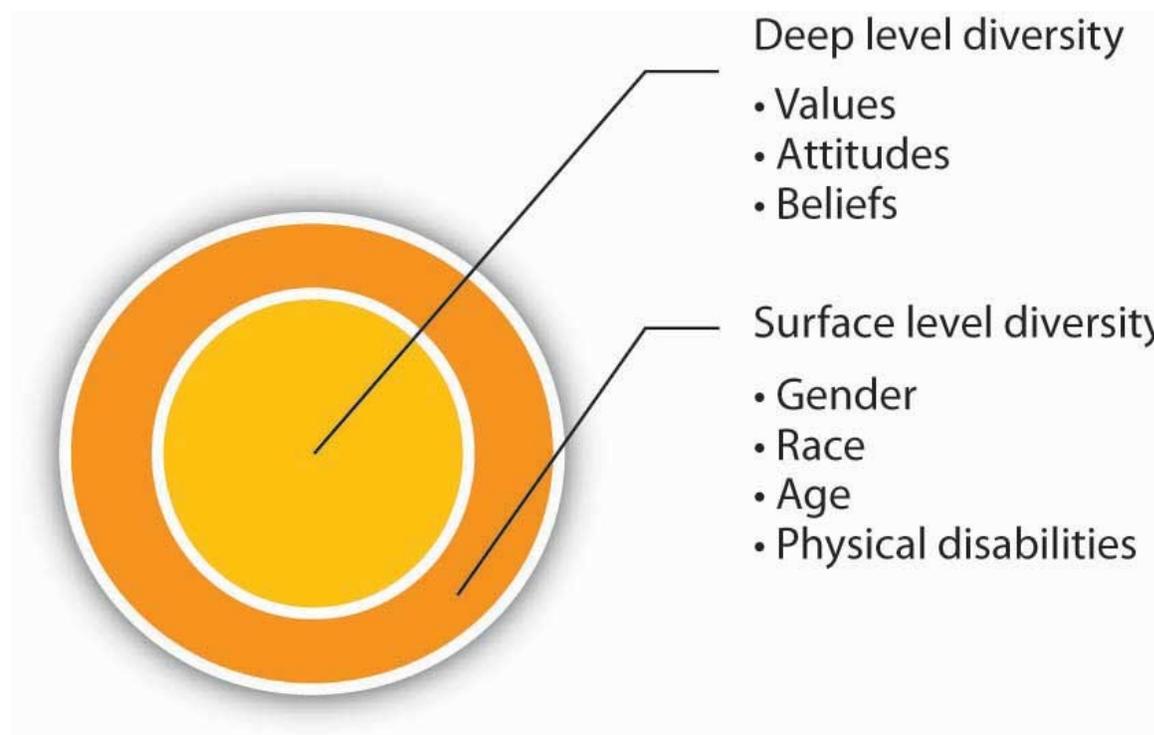
racially similar over a more qualified candidate from a different race, the decision will be ineffective and unfair. In other words, similarity-attraction may prevent some highly qualified women, minorities, or persons with disabilities from being hired. Of course, the same tendency may prevent highly qualified Caucasian and male candidates from being hired as well, but given that Caucasian males are more likely to hold powerful management positions in today's U.S.-based organizations, similarity-attraction may affect women and minorities to a greater extent. Even when candidates from minority or underrepresented groups are hired, they may receive different treatment within the organization. For example, research shows that one way in which employees may get ahead within organizations is through being mentored by a knowledgeable and powerful mentor. Yet, when the company does not have a formal mentoring program in which people are assigned a specific mentor, people are more likely to develop a mentoring relationship with someone who is similar to them in demographic traits. Dreher, G. F., & Cox, T. H. (1996). Race, gender and opportunity: A study of compensation attainment and the establishment of mentoring relationships. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 81*, 297–308. This means that those who are not selected as protégés will not be able to benefit from the support and advice that would further their careers. Similarity-attraction may even affect the treatment people receive daily. If the company CEO constantly invites a male employee to play golf with him while a female employee never receives the invitation, the male employee may have a serious advantage when important decisions are made.

Why are we more attracted to those who share our demographic attributes?

Demographic traits are part of what makes up surface-level diversity. Surface-level diversity includes traits that are highly visible to us and those around us, such as race, gender, and age. Researchers believe that people pay attention to surface diversity because they are assumed to be related to deep-level diversity, which includes values, beliefs, and attitudes. We want to interact with those who share our values and attitudes, but when we meet people for the first time, we have no way of knowing

whether they share similar values. As a result, we tend to use surface-level diversity to make judgments about deep-level diversity. Research shows that surface-level traits affect our interactions with other people early in our acquaintance with them, but as we get to know people, the influence of surface-level traits is replaced by deep-level traits such as similarity in values and attitudes. Harrison, D. A., Price, K. H., Gavin, J. H., & Florey, A. T. (2002). Time, teams, and task performance: Changing effects of surface- and deep-level diversity on group functioning. *Academy of Management Journal*, 45, 1029–1045. Age, race, and gender dissimilarity are also stronger predictors of employee turnover during the first few weeks or months within a company. It seems that people who are different from others may feel isolated during their early tenure when they are dissimilar to the rest of the team, but these effects tend to disappear as people stay longer and get to know other employees.

*Figure 2.3*



*Individuals often initially judge others based on surface-level diversity. Over time, this effect tends to fade and is replaced by deep-level traits such as similarity in values and attitudes.*

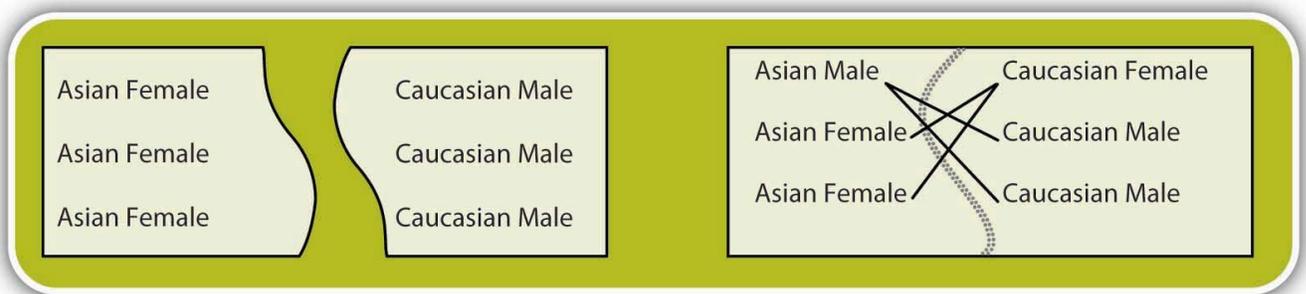
As you may see, while similarity-attraction may put some employees at a disadvantage, it is a tendency that can be managed by organizations. By paying attention to employees early in their tenure, having formal mentoring programs in which people are assigned mentors, and training managers to be aware of the similarity-attraction tendency, organizations can go a long way in dealing with potential diversity challenges.

## **Faultlines**

A faultline is an attribute along which a group is split into subgroups. For example, in a group with three female and three male members, gender may act as a faultline because the female members may see themselves as separate from the male members. Now imagine that the female members of the same team are all over 50 years old and the male members are all younger than 25. In this case, age and gender combine to further divide the group into two subgroups. Teams that are divided by faultlines experience a number of difficulties. For example, members of the different subgroups may avoid communicating with each other, reducing the overall cohesiveness of the team. Research shows that these types of teams make less effective decisions and are less creative. Pearsall, M. J., Ellis, A. P. J., & Evans, J. M. (2008). Unlocking the effects of gender faultlines on team creativity: Is activation the key? *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*, 225–234; Sawyer, J. E., Houlette, M. A., & Yeagley, E. L. (2006). Decision performance and diversity structure: Comparing faultlines in convergent, crosscut, and racially homogeneous groups. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 99*, 1–15. Faultlines are more likely to emerge in diverse teams, but not all diverse teams have faultlines. Going back to our example, if the team has three male and three female members, but if two of the female members are older and one of the male members is also older, then the composition of the team will have much different effects on the team's processes. In this case, age could be a bridging characteristic that brings together people divided across gender.

Research shows that even groups that have strong faultlines can perform well if they establish certain norms. When members of subgroups debate the decision topic among themselves before having a general group discussion, there seems to be less communication during the meeting on pros and cons of different alternatives. Having a norm stating that members should not discuss the issue under consideration before the actual meeting may be useful in increasing decision effectiveness. Sawyer, J. E., Houlette, M. A., & Yeagley, E. L. (2006). Decision performance and diversity structure: Comparing faultlines in convergent, crosscut, and racially homogeneous groups. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 99, 1–15.

Figure 2.4



*The group on the left will likely suffer a strong faultline due to the lack of common ground. The group to the right will likely only suffer a weak faultline because the men and women of the different groups will likely identify with each other.*

## Stereotypes

An important challenge of managing a diverse workforce is the possibility that stereotypes about different groups could lead to unfair decision making. Stereotypes are generalizations about a particular group of people. The assumption that women are more relationship oriented, while men are more assertive, is an example of a stereotype. The problem with stereotypes is that people often use them to make decisions about a particular individual without actually verifying whether the assumption holds for the

person in question. As a result, stereotypes often lead to unfair and inaccurate decision making. For example, a hiring manager holding the stereotype mentioned above may prefer a male candidate for a management position over a well-qualified female candidate. The assumption would be that management positions require assertiveness and the male candidate would be more assertive than the female candidate. Being aware of these stereotypes is the first step to preventing them from affecting decision making.

## **Specific Diversity Issues**

Different demographic groups face unique work environments and varying challenges in the workplace. In this section, we will review the particular challenges associated with managing gender, race, religion, physical ability, and sexual orientation diversity in the workplace.

### **Gender Diversity in the Workplace**

In the United States, two important pieces of legislation prohibit gender discrimination at work. The Equal Pay Act (1963) prohibits discrimination in pay based on gender. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964) prohibits discrimination in all employment-related decisions based on gender. Despite the existence of strong legislation, women and men often face different treatment at work. The earnings gap and the glass ceiling are two of the key problems women may experience in the workplace.

### **Earnings Gap**

An often publicized issue women face at work is the earnings gap. The median earnings of women who worked full time in 2008 was 79% of men working full time. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2008). *Usual weekly earnings*. Retrieved November 4, 2008, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Web site: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/wkyeng.nro.htm>. There are many potential explanations for the earnings gap that is often reported in the popular media. One

explanation is that women are more likely to have gaps in their résumés because they are more likely to take time off to have children. Women are still the primary caregiver for young children in many families and career gaps tend to affect earnings potential because it prevents employees from accumulating job tenure. Another potential explanation is that women are less likely to pursue high-paying occupations such as engineering and business.

In fact, research shows that men and women have somewhat different preferences in job attributes, with women valuing characteristics such as good hours, an easy commute, interpersonal relationships, helping others, and opportunities to make friends more than men do. In turn, men seem to value promotion opportunities, freedom, challenge, leadership, and power more than women do. Konrad, A. M., Ritchie, J. E., Lieb, P., & Corrigan, E. (2000). Sex differences and similarities in job attribute preferences: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin*, *126*, 593–641. These differences are relatively small, but they could explain some of the earnings gap. Finally, negotiation differences among women are often cited as a potential reason for the earnings gap. In general, women are less likely to initiate negotiations. Babcock, L., & Laschever, S. (2003). *Women don't ask*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Moreover, when they actually negotiate, they achieve less favorable outcomes compared to men. Stuhlmacher, A. F., & Walters, A. E. (1999). Gender differences in negotiation outcome: A meta-analysis. *Personnel Psychology*, *52*, 653–677. Laboratory studies show that female candidates who negotiated were more likely to be penalized for their attempts to negotiate and male evaluators expressed an unwillingness to work with a female who negotiated. Bowles, H. R., & Babcock, L., & Lai, L. (2007). Social incentives for gender differences in the propensity to initiate negotiations: Sometimes it does hurt to ask. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *103*, 84–103. The differences in the tendency to negotiate and success in negotiating are important factors contributing to the earnings gap. According to one estimate, as much as 34% of the differences between women's and men's pay can be explained by their starting

salaries. Gerhart, B. (1990). Gender differences in current and starting salaries: The role of performance, college major, and job title. *Industrial & Labor Relations Review*, 43, 418–434. When differences in negotiation skills or tendencies affect starting salaries, they tend to have a large impact over the course of years.

If the earnings gap could be traced only to résumé gaps, choice of different occupations, or differences in negotiation behavior, the salary difference might be viewed as legitimate. Yet, these factors fail to completely account for gender differences in pay, and lawsuits about gender discrimination in pay abound. In these lawsuits, stereotypes or prejudices about women seem to be the main culprit. In fact, according to a Gallup poll, women are over 12 times more likely than men to perceive gender-based discrimination in the workplace. Avery, D. R., McKay, P. F., & Wilson, D. C. (2008). What are the odds? How demographic similarity affects prevalence of perceived employment discrimination. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 93, 235–249. For example, Wal-Mart Stores Inc. was recently sued for alleged gender-discrimination in pay. One of the people who initiated the lawsuit was a female assistant manager who found out that a male assistant manager with similar qualifications was making \$10,000 more per year. When she approached the store manager, she was told that the male manager had a “wife and kids to support.” She was then asked to submit a household budget to justify a raise. Daniels, C. (2003, July 21). Women vs. Wal-Mart. *Fortune*, 148, 78–82. Such explicit discrimination, while less frequent, contributes to creating an unfair work environment.

## **Glass Ceiling**

Another issue that provides a challenge for women in the workforce is the so-called glass ceiling. While women may be represented in lower level positions, they are less likely to be seen in higher management and executive suites of companies. In fact, while women constitute close to one-half of the workforce, men are four times more likely to reach the highest levels of organizations. Umphress, E. E., Simmons, A. L., Boswell, W. R., &

Triana, M. C. (2008). Managing discrimination in selection: The influence of directives from an authority and social dominance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*, 982–993. In 2008, only 12 of the *Fortune* 500 companies had female CEOs, including Xerox Corporation, PepsiCo, Kraft Foods Inc., and Avon Products Inc. The absence of women in leadership is unfortunate, particularly in light of studies that show the leadership performance of female leaders is comparable to, and in some dimensions such as transformational or change-oriented leadership, superior to, the performance of male leaders. Eagly, A. H., Karau S. J., & Makhijani, M. G. (1995). Gender and effectiveness of leaders: A meta-analysis. *Psychological Bulletin, 117*, 125–145; Eagly, A. H., Johannesen-Schmidt, M. C., & Van Engen, M. L. (2003). *Psychological Bulletin, 129*, 569–591.

*Figure 2.5*



*Ursula Burns became president of Xerox Corporation in 2007. She is responsible for the company's global R&D, engineering, manufacturing, and marketing.*

*Used by permission of Xerox Corporation.*

One explanation for the glass ceiling is the gender-based stereotypes favoring men in managerial positions. Traditionally, men have been viewed as more assertive and confident than women, while women have been viewed as more passive and submissive. Studies show that these particular stereotypes are still prevalent among male college students, which may mean that these stereotypes may be perpetuated among the next generation of managers. Duehr, E. E., & Bono, J. E. (2006). Men, women and managers: Are stereotypes finally changing? *Personnel Psychology*, 59, 815–846. Assumptions such as these are problematic for women's advancement because stereotypes associated with men are characteristics often associated with being a manager. Stereotypes are also found to influence how managers view male versus female employees' work accomplishments. For example, when men and women work together in a team on a "masculine" task such as working on an investment portfolio and it is not clear to management which member has done what, managers are more likely to attribute the team's success to the male employees and give less credit to the female employees. Heilman, M. E., & Haynes, M. C. (2005). No credit where credit is due: Attributional rationalization of women's success in male-female teams. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 90, 905–916. It seems that in addition to working hard and contributing to the team, female employees should pay extra attention to ensure that their contributions are known to decision makers.

There are many organizations making the effort to make work environments more welcoming to men and women. For example, IBM is reaching out to female middle school students to get them interested in science, hoping to increase female presence in the field of engineering. Thomas, D. A. (2004). Diversity as strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, 82, 98–108. Companies such as IBM, Booz Allen Hamilton Inc., Ernst & Young Global Ltd., and General Mills Inc. top the 100 Best Companies list created by *Working Mother* magazine by providing flexible work arrangements to balance work and family demands. In addition, these companies provide employees of both sexes with learning,

development, and networking opportunities. 2007 100 Best companies. (2007). Retrieved November 4, 2008, from the *Working Mother* Web site: <http://www.workingmother.com/?service=vpage/859>.

## **Race Diversity in the Workplace**

Race is another demographic characteristic that is under legal protection in the United States. Title VII of the Civil Rights Act (1964) prohibits race discrimination in all employment-related decisions. Yet race discrimination still exists in organizations. In a Korn-Ferry/Columbia University study of 280 minority managers earning more than \$100,000, 60% of the respondents reported that they had seen discrimination in their work assignments and 45% have been the target of racial or cultural jokes. The fact that such discrimination exists even at higher levels in organizations is noteworthy. Allers, K. L. (2005). Won't it be grand when we don't need diversity lists? *Fortune*, 152(4), 101; Mehta, S. N., Chen, C. Y., Garcia, F., & Vella-Zarb, K. (2000). What minority employees really want. *Fortune*, 142(2), 180–184. In a different study of over 5,500 workers, only 32% reported that their company did a good job hiring and promoting minorities. Fisher, A. (2004). How you can do better on diversity. *Fortune*, 150(10), 60. One estimate suggests that when compared to Caucasian employees, African Americans are four times more likely and Hispanics are three times more likely to experience discrimination. Avery, D. R., McKay, P. F., Wilson, D. C., & Tonidandel, S. (2007). Unequal attendance: The relationships between race, organizational diversity cues, and absenteeism. *Personnel Psychology*, 60, 875–902.

Ethnic minorities experience both an earnings gap and a glass ceiling. In 2008, for every dollar a Caucasian male employee made, African American males made around 79 cents while Hispanic employees made 64 cents. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2008). *Usual weekly earnings summary*. Retrieved November 4, 2008, from the Bureau of Labor Statistics Web site: <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/wkyeng.nro.htm>. Among *Fortune* 500

companies, only three (American Express Company, Aetna Inc., and Darden Restaurants Inc.) have African American CEOs. It is interesting that while ethnic minorities face these challenges, the demographic trends are such that by 2042, Caucasians are estimated to constitute less than one-half of the population in the United States. This demographic shift has already taken place in some parts of the United States such as the Los Angeles area where only 30% of the population is Caucasian. Dougherty, C. (2008, August 14). Whites to lose majority status in US by 2042. *Wall Street Journal*, p. A3.

Unfortunately, discrimination against ethnic minorities still occurs. One study conducted by Harvard University researchers found that when Chicago-area companies were sent fictitious résumés containing identical background information, résumés with “Caucasian” sounding names (such as Emily and Greg) were more likely to get callbacks compared to résumés with African American sounding names (such as Jamal and Lakisha). Bertrand, M., & Mullainathan, S. (2004). Are Emily and Greg more employable than Lakisha and Jamal? A field experiment on labor market discrimination. *American Economic Review*, 94, 991–1013.

Studies indicate that ethnic minorities are less likely to experience a satisfying work environment. One study found that African Americans were more likely to be absent from work compared to Caucasians, but this trend existed only in organizations viewed as not valuing diversity. Avery, D. R., McKay, P. F., Wilson, D. C., & Tonidandel, S. (2007). Unequal attendance: The relationships between race, organizational diversity cues, and absenteeism. *Personnel Psychology*, 60, 875–902. Similarly, among African Americans, the perception that the organization did not value diversity was related to higher levels of turnover. McKay, P. F., Avery, D. R., Tonidandel, S., Morris, M. A., Hernandez, M., & Hebl, M. R. (2007). Racial differences in employee retention: Are diversity climate perceptions the key? *Personnel Psychology*, 60, 35–62. Another study found differences in the sales performance of Hispanic and Caucasian employees, but again this difference disappeared when the organization was viewed as valuing

diversity. McKay, P., Avery, D. R., & Morris, M. A. (2008). Mean racial-ethnic differences in employee sales performance: The moderating role of diversity climate. *Personnel Psychology, 61*, 349–374. It seems that the *perception* that the organization does not value diversity is a fundamental explanation for why ethnic minorities may feel alienated from coworkers. Creating a fair work environment where diversity is valued and appreciated seems to be the key.

Organizations often make news headlines for alleged or actual race discrimination, but there are many stories involving complete turnarounds, suggesting that conscious planning and motivation to improve may make organizations friendlier to all races. One such success story is Denny's Corporation. In 1991, Denny's restaurants settled a \$54 million race discrimination lawsuit. In 10 years, the company was able to change the situation completely. Now, women and minorities make up half of their board and almost half of their management team. The company started by hiring a chief diversity officer who reported directly to the CEO. The company implemented a diversity-training program, extended recruitment efforts to diverse colleges, and increased the number of minority-owned franchises. At the same time, customer satisfaction among African Americans increased from 30% to 80%. Speizer, I. (2004). Diversity on the menu. *Workforce Management, 83*(12), 41–45.

### **Age Diversity in the Workplace**

The workforce is rapidly aging. By 2015, those who are 55 and older are estimated to constitute 20% of the workforce in the United States. The same trend seems to be occurring elsewhere in the world. In the European Union, employees over 50 years of age are projected to increase by 25% in the next 25 years. Avery, D. R., McKay, P. F., & Wilson, D. C. (2007). Engaging the aging workforce: The relationship between perceived age similarity, satisfaction with coworkers, and employee engagement. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*, 1542–1556. According to International Labor Organization (ILO), out of the world's working population, the largest group is those between 40 and

44 years old. In contrast, the largest segment in 1980 was the 20- to 24-year-old group. International Labor Organization. (2005). *Yearly statistics*. Geneva, Switzerland: ILO. In other words, age diversity at work will grow in the future.

What happens to work performance as employees get older? Research shows that age is correlated with a number of positive workplace behaviors, including higher levels of citizenship behaviors such as volunteering, higher compliance with safety rules, lower work injuries, lower counterproductive behaviors, and lower rates of tardiness or absenteeism. Ng, T. W. H., & Feldman, D. C. (2008). The relationship of age to ten dimensions of job performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 93*, 392–423. As people get older, they are also less likely to want to quit their job when they are dissatisfied at work. Hellman, C. M. (1997). Job satisfaction and intent to leave. *Journal of Social Psychology, 137*, 677–689.

Despite their positive workplace behaviors, employees who are older often have to deal with age-related stereotypes at work. For example, a review of a large number of studies showed that those between 17 and 29 years of age tend to rate older employees more negatively, while younger employees were viewed as more qualified and having higher potential. Finkelstein, L. M., Burke, M. J., & Raju, N. S. (1995). Age discrimination in simulated employment contexts: An integrative analysis. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 80*, 652–663. However, these stereotypes have been largely refuted by research. Another review showed that stereotypes about older employees—they perform on a lower level, they are less able to handle stress, or their performance declines with age—are simply inaccurate. Posthuma, R. A., & Campion, M. A. (in press). Age stereotypes in the workplace: Common stereotypes, moderators, and future research directions. *Journal of Management*. The problem with these stereotypes is that they may discourage older workers from remaining in the workforce or may act as a barrier to their being hired in the first place.

In the United States, age discrimination is prohibited by the Age Discrimination in Employment Act of 1967, which made it illegal for organizations to discriminate against employees over 40 years of age. Still, age discrimination is prevalent in workplaces. For example, while not admitting wrongdoing, Honeywell International Inc. recently settled an age discrimination lawsuit for \$2.15 million. A group of older sales representatives were laid off during company reorganization while younger employees with less experience were kept in their positions. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2004). Honeywell International to pay \$2.15 million for age discrimination in EEOC settlement. Retrieved November 7, 2008, from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Web site: <http://www.eeoc.gov/press/10-4-04a.html>. Older employees may also face discrimination because some jobs have a perceived “correct age.” This was probably the reason behind the lawsuit International Creative Management Inc. faced against 150 TV writers. The lawsuit claimed that the talent agency systematically prevented older workers from getting jobs at major networks. TV writers settle age discrimination lawsuit. (2008, August 20). Retrieved November 7, 2008, from International Business Times Web site: <http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/20080820/tv-writers-settle-age-discrimination-lawsuit.htm>.

What are the challenges of managing age diversity beyond the management of stereotypes? Age diversity within a team can actually lead to higher team performance. In a simulation, teams with higher age diversity were able to think of different possibilities and diverse actions, leading to higher performance for the teams. Kilduff, M., Angelmar, R., & Mehra, A. (2000). Top management-team diversity and firm performance: Examining the role of cognitions. *Organization Science*, 11, 21–34. At the same time, managing a team with age diversity may be challenging because different age groups seem to have different opinions about what is fair treatment, leading to different perceptions of organizational justice. Colquitt, J. A., Noe, R. A., & Jackson, C. L. (2002). Justice in teams: Antecedents and consequences of procedural justice

climate. *Personnel Psychology*, 55, 83–109. Age diversity also means that the workforce will consist of employees from different generations. Some organizations are noticing a generation gap and noting implications for the management of employees. For example, the pharmaceutical company Novo Nordisk Inc. noticed that baby boomers (those born between 1946 and 1964) were competitive and preferred individual feedback on performance, while Generation Y workers (born between 1979 and 1994) were more team oriented. This difference led one regional manager to start each performance feedback e-mail with recognition of team performance, which was later followed by feedback on individual performance. Similarly, Lockheed Martin Corporation noticed that employees from different generations had different learning styles, with older employees preferring PowerPoint presentations and younger employees preferring more interactive learning. White, E. (2008, June 30). Age is as age does: Making the generation gap work for you. *Wall Street Journal*, p. B6. Paying attention to such differences and tailoring various aspects of management to the particular employees in question may lead to more effective management of an age-diverse workforce.

### **Religious Diversity in the Workplace**

In the United States, employers are prohibited from using religion in employment decisions based on Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Moreover, employees are required to make reasonable accommodations to ensure that employees can practice their beliefs unless doing so provides an unreasonable hardship on the employer. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2007). Religious discrimination. Retrieved November 7, 2008, from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Web site: <http://www.eeoc.gov/types/religion.html>. After September 11, cases involving religion and particularly those involving Muslim employees have been on the rise. Bazar, E. (2008, October 16). Prayer leads to work disputes. *USA Today*. Retrieved January 29, 2009, from [http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-10-15-Muslim\\_N.htm](http://www.usatoday.com/news/nation/2008-10-15-Muslim_N.htm). Religious discrimination often occurs because the religion necessitates modifying the employee's schedule. For example, devout Muslim employees may want

to pray five times a day with each prayer lasting 5 to 10 minutes. Some Jewish employees may want to take off Yom Kippur and Rosh Hashanah, although these days are not recognized as holidays in the United States. These situations pit employers' concerns for productivity against employees' desires to fulfill religious obligations.

Accommodating someone's religious preferences may also require companies to relax their dress code to take into account religious practices such as wearing a turban for Sikhs or covering one's hair with a scarf for Muslim women. In these cases, what matters most is that the company makes a good faith attempt to accommodate the employee. For example, in a recent lawsuit that was decided in favor of Costco Wholesale Corporation, the retailer was accused of religious discrimination. A cashier who belonged to the Church of Body Modification, which is a church with about 1,000 members worldwide, wanted to be able to display her tattoos and facial piercings, which was against the dress code of Costco. Costco wanted to accommodate the employee by asking the individual to cover the piercings with skin-colored Band-Aids, which the employee refused. This is likely the primary reason why the case was decided in favor of Costco. Wellner, A. S. (2005). Costco piercing case puts a new face on the issue of wearing religious garb at work. *Workforce Management*, 84(6), 76–78.

### **Employees with Disabilities in the Workplace**

Employees with a wide range of physical and mental disabilities are part of the workforce. In 2008 alone, over 19,000 cases of discrimination based on disabilities have been filed with the EEOC. The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination in employment against individuals with physical as well as mental disabilities if these individuals are otherwise qualified to do their jobs with or without reasonable accommodation. For example, an organization may receive a job application from a hearing impaired candidate whose job responsibilities will include talking over the phone. With the help of a telephone amplifier, which costs around \$50, the employee will be able to perform the job; therefore, the company cannot use the hearing

impairment as a reason not to hire the person, again, as long as the employee is otherwise qualified. In 2008, the largest groups of complaints were cases based on discrimination related to disabilities or illnesses such as cancer, depression, diabetes, hearing impairment, manic-depressive disorder, and orthopedic impairments, among others. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission. (2008). ADA charge data by impairments/bases—merit factor resolutions. FY 1997–FY 2007. Retrieved November 10, 2008, from the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Web site: <http://www.eeoc.gov/stats/ada-merit.html>. Particularly employees suffering from illnesses that last for a long time and require ongoing care seem to be at a disadvantage, because they are more likely to be stereotyped, locked into dead-end jobs, and employed in jobs that require substantially lower skills and qualifications than they possess. They also are more likely to quit their jobs. Beatty, J. E., & Joffe, R. (2006). An overlooked dimension of diversity: The career effects of chronic illness. *Organizational Dynamics*, 35, 182–195.

What can organizations do to create a better work environment for employees with disabilities? One legal requirement is that, when an employee brings up a disability, the organization should consider reasonable accommodations. This may include modifying the employee's schedule and reassigning some nonessential job functions. Organizations that offer flexible work hours may also make it easier for employees with disabilities to be more effective. Finally, supportive relationships with others seem to be the key for making these employees feel at home. Particularly, having an understanding boss and an effective relationship with supervisors are particularly important for employees with disabilities. Because the visible differences between individuals may act as an initial barrier against developing rapport, employees with disabilities and their managers may benefit from being proactive in relationship development. Colella, A., & Varma A. (2001). The impact of subordinate disability on leader-member exchange relationships. *Academy of Management Journal*, 44, 302–315.

## **Sexual Orientation Diversity in the Workplace**

Lesbian, bisexual, gay, and transgender (LBGT) employees in the workplace face a number of challenges and barriers to employment. There is currently no federal law in the United States prohibiting discrimination based on sexual orientation, but as of 2008, 20 states as well as the District of Columbia had laws prohibiting discrimination in employment based on sexual orientation. Human Rights Campaign. (2008). Working for gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender equal rights. Retrieved November 7, 2008, from the Human Rights Campaign Web site: [http://www.hrc.org/issues/workplace/workplace\\_laws.asp](http://www.hrc.org/issues/workplace/workplace_laws.asp).

Research shows that one of the most important issues relating to sexual orientation is the disclosure of sexual identity in the workplace. According to one estimate, up to one-third of lesbian, gay, and bisexual employees do not disclose their sexual orientation at work. Employees may fear the reactions of their managers and coworkers, leading to keeping their sexual identity a secret. In reality though, it seems that disclosing sexual orientation is not the key to explaining work attitudes of these employees—it is whether or not they are *afraid* to disclose their sexual identity. In other words, those employees who fear that full disclosure would lead to negative reactions experience lower job satisfaction, reduced organizational commitment, and higher intentions to leave their jobs. Ragins, B. R., Singh, R., & Cornwell, J. M. (2007). Making the invisible visible: Fear and disclosure of sexual orientation at work. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 92*, 1103–1118. Creating an environment where all employees feel welcome and respected regardless of their sexual orientation is the key to maintaining a positive work environment.

How can organizations show their respect for diversity in sexual orientation? Some companies start by creating a written statement that the organization will not tolerate discrimination based on sexual orientation. They may have workshops addressing issues relating to sexual orientation and facilitate and create networking opportunities for lesbian and gay employees. Perhaps the most powerful way in which companies show respect for sexual orientation diversity is by extending benefits to the partners of same-

sex couples. In fact, more than half of *Fortune* 500 companies currently offer health benefits to domestic partners of same-sex couples. Research shows that in companies that have these types of programs, discrimination based on sexual orientation is less frequent, and the job satisfaction and commitment levels are higher. Button, S. (2001). Organizational efforts to affirm sexual diversity: A cross-level examination. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86, 17–28.

## **OB Toolbox: I think I am being asked illegal interview questions. What can I do?**

In the United States, demographic characteristics such as race, gender, national origin, age, and disability status are protected by law. Yet according to a survey of 4,000 job seekers, about one-third of job applicants have been asked illegal interview questions. How can you answer such questions?

Here are some options.

- *Refuse to answer.* You may point out that the question is illegal and refuse to answer. Of course, this may cost you the job offer, because you are likely to seem confrontational and aggressive.
- *Answer shortly.* Instead of giving a full answer to a question such as “are you married,” you could answer the question briefly and change the subject. In many cases, the interviewer may be trying to initiate small talk and may be unaware that the question is potentially illegal.
- *Answer the intent.* Sometimes, the illegal question hides a legitimate concern. When you are being asked where you are from, the potential employer might be concerned that you do not have a work permit. Addressing the issue in your answer may be better than answering the question you are being asked.
- *Walk away from the interview.* If you feel that the intent of the question is discriminatory, and if you feel that you would rather not work at a company that would ask such questions, you can always walk away from the interview. If you

feel that you are being discriminated against, you may also want to talk to a lawyer later on.

Sources: Cottle, M. (1999, April 25). Too personal at the interview. *New York Times*, p. 10; Thomas, J. (1999, July–August). Beware of illegal interview questions. *Women in Business*, 51(4), 14.

## Suggestions for Managing Demographic Diversity

What can organizations do to manage diversity more effectively? In this section, we review research findings and the best practices from different companies to create a list of suggestions for organizations.

### Build a Culture of Respecting Diversity

*Figure 2.8*



*UPS operates in 200 countries, including Italy where a boat is carrying packages on the Canal Grande in Venice. At UPS, 58% of all senior officers are women or minorities.*

*Source: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Venezia0750UPS.jpg>.*

In the most successful companies, diversity management is not the responsibility of the human resource department. Starting from top management and including the lowest levels in the hierarchy, each person understands the importance of respecting others. If this respect is not part of an organization's culture, no amount of diversity training or other programs are likely to be effective. In fact, in the most successful companies, diversity is viewed as everyone's responsibility. The United Parcel Service of America Inc. (UPS), the international shipping company, refuses to hire a diversity officer, underlining that it is not one person's job. Companies with a strong culture—where people have a sense of shared values, loyalty to the organization is rewarded, and team performance is celebrated—enable employees with vastly different demographics and backgrounds to feel a sense of belonging. Chatman, J. A., Polzer, J. T., Barsade, S. G., & Neale, M. A. (1998). Being different yet feeling similar: The influence of demographic composition and organizational culture on work processes and outcomes. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 43, 749–780; Fisher, A. (2004). How you can do better on diversity. *Fortune*, 150(10), 60.

### **Make Managers Accountable for Diversity**

People are more likely to pay attention to aspects of performance that are measured. In successful companies, diversity metrics are carefully tracked. For example, in PepsiCo, during the tenure of former CEO Steve Reinemund, half of all new hires had to be either women or minorities. Bonuses of managers partly depended on whether they had met their diversity-related goals. Yang, J. L. (2006). Pepsi's diversity push pays off. *Fortune*, 154(5), 15. When managers are evaluated and rewarded based on how

effective they are in diversity management, they are more likely to show commitment to diversity that in turn affects the diversity climate in the rest of the organization.

### **Diversity Training Programs**

Many companies provide employees and managers with training programs relating to diversity. However, not all diversity programs are equally successful. You may expect that more successful programs are those that occur in companies where a culture of diversity exists. A study of over 700 companies found that programs with a higher perceived success rate were those that occurred in companies where top management believed in the importance of diversity, where there were explicit rewards for increasing diversity of the company, and where managers were required to attend the diversity training programs. Rynes, S., & Rosen, B. (1995). A field survey of factors affecting the adoption and perceived success of diversity training. *Personnel Psychology*, 48, 247–270.

### **Review Recruitment Practices**

Companies may want to increase diversity by targeting a pool that is more diverse. There are many minority professional groups such as the National Black MBA Association or the Chinese Software Professionals Association. By building relations with these occupational groups, organizations may attract a more diverse group of candidates to choose from. The auditing company Ernst & Young Global Ltd. increases diversity of job candidates by mentoring undergraduate students. Nussenbaum, E. (2003). The lonely recruiter. *Business 2.0*, 4(9), 132. Companies may also benefit from reviewing their employment advertising to ensure that diversity is important at all levels of the company. Avery, D. R. (2003). Reactions to diversity in recruitment advertising: Are differences black and white? *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 88, 672–679.

### **Affirmative Action Programs**

Policies designed to recruit, promote, train, and retain employees belonging to a protected class are referred to as affirmative action. Based on Executive order 11246 (1965), federal contractors are required to use affirmative action programs. In addition, the federal government, many state and local governments, and the U.S. military are required to have affirmative action plans. An organization may also be using affirmative action as a result of a court order or due to a past history of discrimination. Affirmative action programs are among the most controversial methods in diversity management because some people believe that they lead to an unfair advantage for minority members.

In many cases, the negative perceptions about affirmative action can be explained by misunderstandings relating to what such antidiscrimination policies entail. Moreover, affirmative action means different things to different people and therefore it is inaccurate to discuss affirmative action as a uniform package.

Four groups of programs can be viewed as part of affirmative action programs: Cropanzano, R., Slaughter, J. E., & Bachiochi, P. D. (2005). Organizational justice and black applicants' reactions to affirmative action. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 90*, 1168–1184; Kravitz, D. A. (2008). The diversity-validity dilemma: Beyond selection—The role of affirmative action. *Personnel Psychology, 61*, 173–193; Voluntary diversity plans can lead to risk. (2007). *HR Focus, 84*(6), 2.

1. **Simple elimination of discrimination.** These programs are the least controversial and are received favorably by employees.
2. **Targeted recruitment.** These affirmative action plans involve ensuring that the candidate pool is diverse. These programs are also viewed as fair by most employees.
3. **Tie-breaker.** In these programs, if all other characteristics are equal, then preference may be given to a minority candidate. In fact, these programs are not widely used and their use needs to be justified by organizations. In other words,

organizations need to have very specific reasons for why they are using this type of affirmative action, such as past illegal discrimination. Otherwise, their use may be illegal and lead to reverse discrimination. These programs are viewed as less fair by employees.

4. **Preferential treatment.** These programs involve hiring a less-qualified minority candidate. Strong preferential treatment programs are illegal in most cases.

It is plausible that people who are against affirmative action programs may have unverified assumptions about the type of affirmative action program the company is using. Informing employees about the specifics of how affirmative action is being used may be a good way of dealing with any negative attitudes. In fact, a review of the past literature revealed that when specifics of affirmative action are not clearly defined, observers seem to draw their own conclusions about the particulars of the programs. Harrison, D. A., Kravitz D. A., Mayer, D. M., Leslie, L. M., & Lev-Arey D. (2006). Understanding attitudes toward affirmative action programs in employment: Summary in meta-analysis of 35 years of research. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 91*, 1013–1036.

In addition to employee reactions to affirmative action, there is some research indicating that affirmative action programs may lead to stigmatization of the perceived beneficiaries. For example, in companies using affirmative action, coworkers of new hires may make the assumption that the new hire was chosen due to gender or race as opposed to having the necessary qualifications. These effects may even occur in the new hires themselves, who may have doubts about the fact that they were chosen because they were the best candidate for the position. Research also shows that giving coworkers information about the qualifications and performance of the new hire eliminates these potentially negative effects of affirmative action programs. Heilman, M. E., Kaplow, S. R., Amato, M. A., & Stathatos, P. (1993). When similarity is a liability: Effects of sex-based preferential selection on reactions to like-sex and different-sex others. *Journal of*

*Applied Psychology*, 78, 917–927; Heilman, M. E., Rivero, C. J., & Brett, J. F. (1991). Skirting the competence issue: Effects of sex-based preferential selection on task choices of women and men. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 76, 99–105; Heilman, M. E., Simon, M. C., & Repper, D. P. (1987). Internationally favored, unintentionally harmed? Impact of sex-based preferential selection on self-perceptions and self-evaluations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 72, 62–68; Kravitz, D. A. (2008). The diversity-validity dilemma: Beyond selection: The role of affirmative action. *Personnel Psychology*, 61, 173–193.

## **OB Toolbox: Dealing with Being Different**

At any time in your career, you may find yourself in a situation in which you are different from those around you. Maybe you are the only male in an organization where most of your colleagues and managers are females. Maybe you are older than all your colleagues. How do you deal with the challenges of being different?

- *Invest in building effective relationships.* Early in a relationship, people are more attracted to those who are demographically similar to them. This means that your colleagues or manager may never get to find out how smart, fun, or hardworking you are if you have limited interactions with them. Create opportunities to talk to them. Be sure to point out areas of commonality.
- *Choose your mentor carefully.* Mentors may help you make sense of the organization's culture, give you career-related advice, and help you feel like you belong. That said, how powerful and knowledgeable your mentor is also matters. You may be more attracted to someone at your same level and who is similar to you, but you may have more to learn from someone who is more experienced, knowledgeable, and powerful than you are.
- *Investigate company resources.* Many companies offer networking opportunities and interest groups for women, ethnic minorities, and employees with disabilities among others. Check out what resources are available through your company.

- *Know your rights.* You should know that harassment based on protected characteristics such as gender, race, age, or disabilities, as well as discrimination based on these traits are illegal in the United States. If you face harassment or discrimination, you may want to notify your manager or your company's HR department.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Organizations managing diversity effectively benefit from diversity because they achieve higher creativity, better customer service, higher job satisfaction, higher stock prices, and lower litigation expenses. At the same time, managing a diverse workforce is challenging for several key reasons. Employees are more likely to associate with those who are similar to them early in a relationship, the distribution of demographic traits could create faultlines within a group, and stereotypes may act as barriers to advancement and fair treatment of employees. Demographic traits such as gender, race, age, religion, disabilities, and sexual orientation each face unique challenges.

Organizations can manage demographic diversity more effectively by building a culture of respect, making managers accountable for diversity, creating diversity-training programs, reviewing recruitment practices, and under some conditions, utilizing affirmative action programs.

## 2.3 Cultural Diversity

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain what culture is.
2. Define the four dimensions of culture that are part of Hofstede's framework.
3. Describe some ways in which national culture affects organizational behavior.

Culture refers to values, beliefs, and customs that exist in a society. In the United States, the workforce is becoming increasingly multicultural, with close to 16% of all employees being born outside the country. In addition, the world of work is becoming increasingly international. The world is going through a transformation in which China, India, and Brazil are emerging as major players in world economics. Companies are realizing that doing international business provides access to raw materials, resources, and a wider customer base. For many companies, international business is where most of the profits lie, such as for Intel Corporation, where 70% of all revenues come from outside the United States. International companies are also becoming major players within the United States. For example, China's Lenovo acquired IBM's personal computer business and became the world's third largest computer manufacturer. Frauenheim, E. (2005). Crossing cultures. *Workforce Management*, 84(13), 1–32. As a result of these trends, understanding the role of national culture for organizational behavior may provide you with a competitive advantage in your career. In fact, sometime in your career, you may find yourself working as an expatriate. An expatriate is someone who is temporarily assigned to a position in a foreign country. Such an experience may be invaluable for your career and challenge you to increase your understanding and appreciation of differences across cultures.

How do cultures differ from each other? If you have ever visited a country different from your own, you probably have stories to tell about what aspects of the culture were different and which were similar. Maybe you have noticed that in many parts of the

United States people routinely greet strangers with a smile when they step into an elevator or see them on the street, but the same behavior of saying hello and smiling at strangers would be considered odd in many parts of Europe. In India and other parts of Asia, traffic flows with rules of its own, with people disobeying red lights, stopping and loading passengers in highways, or honking continuously for no apparent reason. In fact, when it comes to culture, we are like fish in the sea: We may not realize how culture is shaping our behavior until we leave our own and go someplace else. Cultural differences may shape how people dress, how they act, how they form relationships, how they address each other, what they eat, and many other aspects of daily life. Of course, talking about national cultures does not mean that national cultures are uniform. In many countries, it is possible to talk about the existence of cultures based on region or geography. For example, in the United States, the southern, eastern, western, and midwestern regions of the country are associated with slightly different values.

Thinking about hundreds of different ways in which cultures may differ is not very practical when you are trying to understand how culture affects work behaviors. For this reason, the work of Geert Hofstede, a Dutch social scientist, is an important contribution to the literature. Hofstede studied IBM employees in 66 countries and showed that four dimensions of national culture explain an important source of variation among cultures. Research also shows that cultural variation with respect to these four dimensions influence employee job behaviors, attitudes, well-being, motivation, leadership, negotiations, and many other aspects of organizational behavior. Hofstede, G. (1980). Culture and organizations. *International Studies of Management & Organization*, 10(4), 15–41; Tsui, A. S., Nifadkar, S. S., & Ou, A. Y. (2007). Cross-national, cross-cultural organizational behavior research: Advances, gaps, and recommendations. *Journal of Management*, 33, 426–478.

*Figure 2.10*

<p><b>Individualism</b> Cultures in which people define themselves as individuals and form looser ties with their groups.</p>	<p><b>Collectivism</b> Cultures where people have stronger bonds to their groups and group membership forms a person's self identity.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• USA</li> <li>• Australia</li> <li>• UK</li> <li>• Canada</li> <li>• Hungary</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guatemala</li> <li>• Ecuador</li> <li>• Indonesia</li> <li>• Pakistan</li> <li>• China</li> </ul>
<p><b>Low Power Distance</b> A society that views an unequal distribution of power as relatively unacceptable.</p>	<p><b>High Power Distance</b> A society that views an unequal distribution of power as relatively acceptable.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Austria</li> <li>• Denmark</li> <li>• Israel</li> <li>• Ireland</li> <li>• New Zealand</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Malaysia</li> <li>• Slovakia</li> <li>• Philippines</li> <li>• Russia</li> <li>• Mexico</li> </ul>
<p><b>Low Uncertainty Avoidance</b> Cultures in which people are comfortable in unpredictable situations and have high tolerance for ambiguity.</p>	<p><b>High Uncertainty Avoidance</b> Cultures in which people prefer predictable situations and have low tolerance for ambiguity.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Denmark</li> <li>• Jamaica</li> <li>• Singapore</li> <li>• China</li> <li>• Sweden</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Belgium</li> <li>• El Salvador</li> <li>• Greece</li> <li>• Guatemala</li> <li>• Portugal</li> </ul>
<p><b>Masculinity</b> Cultures in which people value achievement and competitiveness, as well as acquisition of money and other material objects.</p>	<p><b>Femininity</b> Cultures in which people value maintaining good relationships, caring for the weak, and quality of life.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Slovakia</li> <li>• Japan</li> <li>• Hungary</li> <li>• Austria</li> <li>• Venezuela</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Norway</li> <li>• Netherlands</li> <li>• Sweden</li> <li>• Costa Rica</li> <li>• Chile</li> </ul>

*Hofstede's culture framework is a useful tool to understand the systematic differences across cultures.*

*Source: Adapted from information in Geert Hofstede cultural dimensions. Retrieved November 12, 2008, from [http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede\\_dimensions.php](http://www.geert-hofstede.com/hofstede_dimensions.php).*

## **Individualism-Collectivism**

Individualistic cultures are cultures in which people define themselves as an individual and form looser ties with their groups. These cultures value autonomy and independence of the person, self-reliance, and creativity. Countries such as the United States, United Kingdom, and Australia are examples of individualistic cultures. In contrast, collectivistic cultures are cultures where people have stronger bonds to their groups and group membership forms a person's self identity. Asian countries such as China and Japan, as well as countries in Latin America are higher in collectivism.

In collectivistic cultures, people define themselves as part of a group. In fact, this may be one way to detect people's individualism-collectivism level. When individualists are asked a question such as "Who are you? Tell me about yourself," they are more likely to talk about their likes and dislikes, personal goals, or accomplishments. When collectivists are asked the same question, they are more likely to define themselves in relation to others, such as "I am Chinese" or "I am the daughter of a doctor and a homemaker. I have two brothers." In other words, in collectivistic cultures, self identity is shaped to a stronger extent by group memberships. Triandis, H. C., McCusker, C., & Hui, H. C. (1990). Multimethod probes on individualism and collectivism. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 59, 1006–1020.

In collectivistic societies, family bonds are more influential in people's daily lives. While individualists often refer to their nuclear family when thinking about their families, collectivists are more likely to define family in a broader sense, including cousins, uncles, aunts, and second cousins. Family members are more involved in each others'

lives. For example, in societies such as Iran, Greece, and Turkey, extended family members may see each other several times a week. In many collectivistic societies, the language reflects the level of interaction among extended family members such that there may be different words used to refer to maternal versus paternal grandparents, aunts, or uncles. In addition to interacting with each other more often, family members have a strong sense of obligation toward each other. For example, children often expect to live with their parents until they get married. In collectivistic countries such as Thailand, Japan, and India, choosing a career or finding a spouse are all family affairs. In these cultures, family members feel accountable for each others' behavior such that one person's misbehavior may be a cause of shame for the rest of the family. Hui, H. C., & Triandis, H. C. (1986). Individualism-collectivism: A study of cross-cultural researchers. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology, 17*, 225–248. Understanding the importance of family in collectivistic cultures is critical to understanding their work behaviors. For example, one multinational oil company in Mexico was suffering from low productivity. When the situation was investigated, it became clear that the new manager of the subsidiary had gotten rid of a monthly fiesta for company employees and their families under the assumption that it was a waste of time and money. Employees had interpreted this to mean that the company no longer cared about their families. Raphael, T. (2001). Savvy companies build bonds with Hispanic employees. *Workforce, 80*(9), 19. In India, companies such as Intel organize “take your parents to work day” and involve parents in recruitment efforts, understanding the role of parents in the career and job choices of prospective employees. Frauenheim, E. (2005). Crossing cultures. *Workforce Management, 84*(13), 1–32.

Collectivists are more attached to their groups and have more permanent attachments to these groups. Conversely, individualists attempt to change groups more often and have weaker bonds to them. It is important to recognize that to collectivists the entire human universe is not considered to be their in-group. In other words, collectivists draw sharper distinctions between the groups they belong to and those they do not belong to.

They may be nice and friendly to their in-group members while acting much more competitively and aggressively toward out-group members. This tendency has important work implications. While individualists may evaluate the performance of their colleagues more accurately, collectivists are more likely to be generous when evaluating their in-group members. Freeborders, a software company based in San Francisco, California, found that even though it was against company policy, Chinese employees were routinely sharing salary information with their coworkers. This situation led them to change their pay system by standardizing pay at job levels and then giving raises after more frequent appraisals. Frauenheim, E. (2005). Crossing cultures. *Workforce Management*, 84(13), 1–32; Hui, H. C., & Triandis, H. C. (1986). Individualism-collectivism: A study of cross-cultural researchers. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 17, 225–248; Javidan, M., & Dastmalchian, A. (2003). Culture and leadership in Iran: The land of individual achievers, strong family ties and powerful elite. *Academy of Management Executive*, 17, 127–142; Gomez, C., Shapiro, D. L., & Kirkman, B. L. (2000). The impact of collectivism and in-group/out-group membership on the evaluation generosity of team members. *Academy of Management Journal*, 43, 1097–1106.

Collectivistic societies emphasize conformity to the group. The Japanese saying “the nail that sticks up gets hammered down” illustrates that being different from the group is undesirable. In these cultures, disobeying or disagreeing with one’s group is difficult and people may find it hard to say no to their colleagues or friends. Instead of saying no, which would be interpreted as rebellion or at least be considered rude, they may use indirect ways of disagreeing, such as saying “I have to think about this” or “this would be difficult.” Such indirect communication prevents the other party from losing face but may cause misunderstandings in international communications with cultures that have a more direct style. Collectivist cultures may have a greater preference for team-based rewards as opposed to individual-based rewards. For example, in one study, more than 75% of the subjects in Philippines viewed team-based pay as fair, while less than 50% of

the U.S.-based subjects viewed team-based rewards as fair. Kirkman, B. L., Gibson, B. C., & Shapiro, D. L. (2001). Exporting teams: Enhancing the implementation and effectiveness of work teams in global affiliates. *Organizational Dynamics*, 30, 12–29.

## Power Distance

Power distance refers to the degree to which the society views an unequal distribution of power as acceptable. Simply put, some cultures are more egalitarian than others. In low power distance cultures, egalitarianism is the norm. In high power distance cultures, people occupying more powerful positions such as managers, teachers, or those who are older are viewed as more powerful and deserving of a higher level of respect. High power distance cultures are hierarchical cultures where everyone has their place.

Powerful people are supposed to act powerful, while those in inferior positions are expected to show respect. For example, Thailand is a high power distance culture and, starting from childhood, people learn to recognize who is superior, equal, or inferior to them. When passing people who are more powerful, individuals are expected to bow, and the more powerful the person, the deeper the bow would be. Pornpitakpan, C. (2000). Trade in Thailand: A three-way cultural comparison. *Business Horizons*, 43, 61–70. Managers in high power distance cultures are treated with a higher degree of respect, which may surprise those in lower power distance cultures. A Citibank manager in Saudi Arabia was surprised when employees stood up every time he passed by. Denison, D. R., Haaland, S., & Goelzer, P. (2004). Corporate culture and organizational effectiveness: Is Asia different from the rest of the world? *Organizational Dynamics*, 33, 98–109. Similarly, in Turkey, students in elementary and high schools greet their teacher by standing up every time the teacher walks into the classroom. In these cultures, referring to a manager or a teacher with their first name would be extremely rude. High power distance within a culture may easily cause misunderstandings with those from low power distance societies. For example, the limp handshake someone from India may give or a job candidate from Chad who is looking at the floor throughout the interview are in fact showing their respect, but these behaviors

may be interpreted as indicating a lack of confidence or even disrespect in low power distance cultures.

One of the most important ways in which power distance is manifested in the workplace is that in high power distance cultures, employees are unlikely to question the power and authority of their manager, and conformity to the manager will be expected. Managers in these cultures may be more used to an authoritarian style with lower levels of participative leadership demonstrated. People will be more submissive to their superiors and may take orders without questioning the manager. Kirkman, B. L., Gibson, B. C., & Shapiro, D. L. (2001). Exporting teams: Enhancing the implementation and effectiveness of work teams in global affiliates. *Organizational Dynamics*, 30, 12–29. In these cultures, people may feel uncomfortable when they are asked to participate in decision making. For example, peers are much less likely to be involved in hiring decisions in high power distance cultures. Instead, these cultures seem to prefer paternalistic leaders—leaders who are authoritarian but make decisions while showing a high level of concern toward employees as if they were family members. Javidan, M., & Dastmalchian, A. (2003). Culture and leadership in Iran: The land of individual achievers, strong family ties and powerful elite. *Academy of Management Executive*, 17, 127–142; Ryan, A. M., Farland, L. M., Baron, H., & Page R. (1999). An international look at selection practices: Nation and culture as explanations for variability in practice. *Personnel Psychology*, 52, 359–391.

## **Uncertainty Avoidance**

Uncertainty avoidance refers to the degree to which people feel threatened by ambiguous, risky, or unstructured situations. Cultures high in uncertainty avoidance prefer predictable situations and have low tolerance for ambiguity. Employees in these cultures expect a clear set of instructions and clarity in expectations. Therefore, there will be a greater level of creating procedures to deal with problems and writing out expected behaviors in manuals.

Cultures high in uncertainty avoidance prefer to avoid risky situations and attempt to reduce uncertainty. For example, one study showed that when hiring new employees, companies in high uncertainty avoidance cultures are likely to use a larger number of tests, conduct a larger number of interviews, and use a fixed list of interview questions. Ryan, A. M., Farland, L. M., Baron, H., & Page, R. (1999). An international look at selection practices: Nation and culture as explanations for variability in practice. *Personnel Psychology*, *52*, 359–391. Employment contracts tend to be more popular in cultures higher in uncertainty avoidance compared to cultures low in uncertainty avoidance. Raghuram, S., London, M., & Larsen, H. H. (2001). Flexible employment practices in Europe: Country versus culture. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *12*, 738–753. The level of change-oriented leadership seems to be lower in cultures higher in uncertainty avoidance. Ergeneli, A., Gohar, R., & Temirbekova, Z. (2007). Transformational leadership: Its relationship to culture value dimensions. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, *31*, 703–724. Companies operating in high uncertainty avoidance cultures also tend to avoid risky endeavors such as entering foreign target markets unless the target market is very large. Rothaermel, F. T., Kotha, S., & Steensma, H. K. (2006). International market entry by U.S. Internet firms: An empirical analysis of country risk, national culture, and market size. *Journal of Management*, *32*, 56–82.

Germany is an example of a high uncertainty avoidance culture where people prefer structure in their lives and rely on rules and procedures to manage situations. Similarly, Greece is a culture relatively high in uncertainty avoidance, and Greek employees working in hierarchical and rule-oriented companies report lower levels of stress. Joiner, A. (2001). The influence of national culture and organizational culture alignment on job stress and performance: Evidence from Greece. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, *16*, 229–243. In contrast, cultures such as Iran and Russia are lower in uncertainty avoidance, and companies in these regions do not have rule-oriented cultures. When they create rules, they also selectively enforce rules and make a number of exceptions to

them. In fact, rules may be viewed as constraining. Uncertainty avoidance may influence the type of organizations employees are attracted to. Japan's uncertainty avoidance is associated with valuing job security, while in uncertainty-avoidant Latin American cultures, many job candidates prefer the stability of bigger and well-known companies with established career paths.

## **Masculinity–Femininity**

Masculine cultures are cultures that value achievement, competitiveness, and acquisition of money and other material objects. Japan and Hungary are examples of masculine cultures. Masculine cultures are also characterized by a separation of gender roles. In these cultures, men are more likely to be assertive and competitive compared to women. In contrast, feminine cultures are cultures that value maintaining good relationships, caring for the weak, and emphasizing quality of life. In these cultures, values are not separated by gender, and both women and men share the values of maintaining good relationships. Sweden and the Netherlands are examples of feminine cultures. The level of masculinity inherent in the culture has implications for the behavior of individuals as well as organizations. For example, in masculine cultures, the ratio of CEO pay to other management-level employees tends to be higher, indicating that these cultures are more likely to reward CEOs with higher levels of pay as opposed to other types of rewards. Tosi, H. L., & Greckhamer, T. (2004). Culture and CEO compensation. *Organization Science*, 15, 657–670. The femininity of a culture affects many work practices, such as the level of work/life balance. In cultures high in femininity such as Norway and Sweden, work arrangements such as telecommuting seem to be more popular compared to cultures higher in masculinity like Italy and the United Kingdom.

## **OB Toolbox: Prepare Yourself for a Global Career**

With the globalizing economy, boundaries with respect to careers are also blurring. How can you prepare yourself for a career that crosses national boundaries?

- *Learn a language.* If you already know that you want to live in China after you finish school, now may be the time to start learning the language. It is true that business is often conducted in English, but it is becoming increasingly ethnocentric to speak only one language while many in the rest of the world can speak two or more. For example, only 9% of those living in the United States can speak their native language plus another language fluently, as opposed to 53% of Europeans. National Virtual Translation Center. (2009). Languages in American school and universities. Retrieved January 29, 2009, from <http://www.nvtc.gov/lotw/months/november/USschoollanguages.htm>. Plus, even if business is conducted in English, your adaptation to a different society, making friends, and leading a satisfying life will be much easier if you can speak the language.
- *Immerse yourself in different cultures.* Visit different cultures. This does not mean visiting five countries in 5 days. Plan on spending more time in one locale, and get to know, observe, and understand the culture.
- *Develop an openness to different experiences.* Be open to different cuisines, different languages, and different norms of working and living. If you feel very strongly that your way of living and working is the right way, you will have a hard time adjusting to a different culture.
- *Develop a strong social support network.* Once you arrive in the culture you will live in, be proactive in making friends. Being connected to people in a different culture will have an influence on your ability to adjust to living there. If you are planning on taking family members with you, their level of readiness will also influence your ability to function in a different culture.

- *Develop a sense of humor.* Adjusting to a different culture is often easier if you can laugh at yourself and the mistakes you make. If you take every mistake too personally, your stay will be less enjoyable and more frustrating.
- *Plan your return.* If you have plans to come back and work in your home country, you will need to plan your return in advance. When people leave home for a long time, they often adapt to the foreign culture they live in and may miss many elements of it when they go back home. Your old friends may have moved on, local employers may not immediately appreciate your overseas experience, and you may even find that cultural aspects of your home country may have changed in your absence. Be ready for a reverse culture shock!

## **Suggestions for Managing Cultural Diversity**

With the increasing importance of international business as well as the culturally diverse domestic workforce, what can organizations do to manage cultural diversity?

### **Help Employees Build Cultural Intelligence**

Cultural intelligence is a person's capability to understand how a person's cultural background influences one's behavior. Developing cultural intelligence seems important, because the days when organizations could prepare their employees for international work simply by sending them to long seminars on a particular culture are gone. Presently, international business is not necessarily conducted between pairs of countries. A successful domestic manager is not necessarily assigned to work on a long-term assignment in China. Of course such assignments still happen, but it is more likely that the employees will continually work with others from diverse cultural backgrounds. This means employees will not necessarily have to become experts in one culture. Instead, they should have the ability to work with people from many diverse backgrounds all at the same time. For these types of assignments, employees will need to develop an awareness of overall cultural differences and learn how to recognize

cultural principles that are operating in different situations. In other words, employees will need to be selected based on cultural sensitivity and understanding and trained to enhance such qualities. Earley, P. C., & Mosakowski, E. (2004). Cultural intelligence. *Harvard Business Review*, 82(10), 139–146. For example, GlobeSmart by Aperian Global is an online tool that helps employees learn how to deal with people from around the world. The process starts by completing a survey about your cultural values, and then these values are compared to those of different cultures. The tool provides specific advice about interpersonal interactions with these cultures. Hamm, S. (2008, September 8). Aperian: Helping companies bridge cultures. *Business Week Online*. Retrieved January 29, 2009, from [http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/sep2008/tc2008095\\_508754.htm](http://www.businessweek.com/technology/content/sep2008/tc2008095_508754.htm).

### **Avoid Ethnocentrism**

Ethnocentrism is the belief that one's own culture is superior to other cultures one comes across. Ethnocentrism leads organizations to adopt universal principles when doing business around the globe and may backfire. In this chapter, we highlighted research findings showing how culture affects employee expectations of work life such as work–life balance, job security, or the level of empowerment. Ignoring cultural differences, norms, and local habits may be costly for businesses and may lead to unmotivated and dissatisfied employees. Successful global companies modify their management styles, marketing, and communication campaigns to fit with the culture in which they are operating. For example, Apple Inc.'s famous PC versus Mac advertising campaign was reshot in Japan and the United Kingdom using local actors. The American ads were found to be too aggressive for the Japanese culture, where direct product comparisons are rare and tend to make people uncomfortable. The new ads feature more friendly banter and are subtler than the U.S. ads. For the British market, the advertisers localized the humor. Fowler, G. A., Steinberg, B., & Patrick, A. O. (2007,

March 1). Mac and PC's overseas adventures; globalizing Apple's ads meant tweaking characters, clothing and body language. *Wall Street Journal*, p. B1.

### **Listen to Locals**

When doing cross-cultural business, locals are a key source of information. To get timely and accurate feedback, companies will need to open lines of communication and actively seek feedback. For example, Convergys, a Cincinnati-based call-center company, built a cafeteria for the employees in India. During the planning phase, the Indian vice president pointed out that because Indian food is served hot and employees would expect to receive hot meals for lunch, building a cafeteria that served only sandwiches would create dissatisfied employees. By opening the lines of communication in the planning phase of the project, Convergys was alerted to this important cultural difference in time to change the plans. Fisher, A. (2005, January 24). Offshoring could boost your career. *Fortune*, 151(2), 36.

### **Recognize That Culture Changes**

Cultures are not static—they evolve over the years. A piece of advice that was true 5 years ago may no longer hold true. For example, showing sensitivity to the Indian caste system may be outdated advice for those internationals doing business in India today.

### **Do Not Always Assume That Culture Is the Problem**

When doing business internationally, failure may occur due to culture as well as other problems. Attributing all misunderstandings or failures to culture may enlarge the cultural gap and shift the blame to others. In fact, managing people who have diverse personalities or functional backgrounds may create misunderstandings that are not necessarily due to cultural differences. When marketing people from the United States interact with engineers in India, misunderstandings may be caused by the differences in perceptions between marketing and engineering employees. While familiarizing

employees about culture, emphasizing the importance of interpersonal skills regardless of cultural background will be important.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

With the increasing prevalence of international business as well as diversification of the domestic workforce in many countries, understanding how culture affects organizational behavior is becoming important. Individualism-collectivism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and masculinity–femininity are four key dimensions in which cultures vary. The position of a culture on these dimensions affects the suitable type of management style, reward systems, employee selection, and ways of motivating employees.

## 2.4 The Role of Ethics and National Culture

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Consider the role of diversity for ethical behavior.
2. Consider the role of national culture on diversity.

### Diversity and Ethics

When managing a diverse group of employees, ensuring the ethicality of organizational behavior will require special effort. This is because employees with different backgrounds or demographic traits may vary in their standards of ethics. For example, research shows that there are some gender differences when it comes to evaluating the degree of ethicality of hypothetical scenarios, with women utilizing higher standards. Men and women seem to have similar standards when judging the ethicality of monetary issues but differ on issues such as the ethicality of breaking organizational rules. Interestingly, gender differences seem to disappear as people grow older. Age is another demographic trait that influences the standards of ethics people use, with older employees being bothered more by unethical behaviors compared to younger employees. Similarly, one study showed that older respondents found some questionable negotiation behaviors such as misrepresenting information and bluffing to be more unethical compared to younger respondents. Deshpande, S. P. (1997).

Manager's perception of proper ethical conduct: The effect of sex, age, and level of education. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 16, 79–85; Franke, G. R., Crown, D. F., & Spake, D. F. (1997). Gender differences in ethical perceptions of business practices: A social role theory perspective. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82, 920–934; Peterson, D., Rhoads, A., & Vaught, B. C. (2001). Ethical beliefs of business professionals: A study of gender, age, and external factors. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 31, 225–231; Volkema, R. J. (2004). Demographic, cultural, and economic predictors of perceived ethicality of negotiation behavior: A nine-country analysis. *Journal of Business Research*, 57, 69–78.

In addition to demographic diversity, cultural diversity introduces challenges to managing ethical behavior, given that cultures differ in the actions they view as ethical. Cultural differences are particularly important when doing cross-cultural business. For example, one study compared Russian and American subjects on their reactions to ethics scenarios. Americans viewed scenarios such as an auditing company sharing information regarding one client with another client as more unethical compared to how Russian subjects viewed the same scenarios. Beekun, R. I., Stedham, Y., Yamamura, J. H., & Barghouti, J. A. (2003). Comparing business ethics in Russia and the U.S. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *14*, 1333–1349. A study comparing U.S., Korean, and Indian managers found differences in attitudes toward business ethics, particularly with Koreans thinking that being ethical was against the goal of being profitable. Indian and Korean subjects viewed questionable practices such as software piracy, nepotism, or the sharing of insider information as relatively more ethical compared to subjects in the United States. At the same time, Korean and Indian subjects viewed injury to the environment as more unethical compared to the U.S. subjects. Christie, P. J., Kwon, I. W., Stoeberl, P. A., & Baumhart, R. (2003). A cross-cultural comparison of ethical attitudes of business managers. *Journal of Business Ethics*, *46*, 263–287. In other words, the ethical standards held in different societies may emphasize different behaviors as ethical or unethical.

When dealing with unethical behavior overseas, companies will need to consider the ethical context. Having internal reporting mechanisms may help, but research shows that in very high power distant societies, these mechanisms often go unused. MacNab, B., MacLean, J., Brislin, R., Aguilera, G. M., Worthley, R., Ravlin, E., et al. (2007). Culture and ethics management: Whistle-blowing and internal reporting within a NAFTA country context. *International Journal of Cross-Cultural Management*, *7*, 5–28. Even when a multinational company has ethical standards that are different from local standards, using the headquarters' standards in all cross-cultural interactions will not be possible or suitable. The right action often depends on the specifics of the

situation and a consideration of the local culture. For example, in the 1990s, Levi-Strauss & Company found that some of its contractors in Bangladesh were using child labor consisting of children under 14 years old in its factories. One option they had was to demand that their contractors fire those children immediately. Yet, when they looked at the situation more closely, they found that it was common for young children to be employed in factories, and in many cases these children were the sole breadwinners in the family. Firing these children would have caused significant hardship for the families and could have pushed the children into more dangerous working conditions. Therefore, Levi-Strauss reached an agreement to send the children back to school while continuing to receive their wages partly from the contractor companies and partly from Levi-Strauss. The school expenses were met by Levi-Strauss and the children were promised work when they were older. In short, the diverse ethical standards of the world's cultures make it unlikely that one approach can lead to fair outcomes in all circumstances.

## **Diversity Around the Globe**

Demographic diversity is a fact of life in the United States. The situation is somewhat different in other parts of the world. Attitudes toward gender, race, disabilities, or sexual orientation differ around the world, and each country approaches the topic of diversity differently.

As a case in point, Japan is a relatively homogeneous society that sees the need to diversify itself. With the increasing age of the population, the country expects to lose 650,000 workers per year. At the same time, the country famously underutilizes female employees. Overt sexism is rampant, and stereotypes about female employees as unable to lead are part of the culture. While there is antidiscrimination legislation and the desire of the Japanese government to deal with this issue, women are seriously underrepresented in management. For example, while 25% of all Hewlett-Packard Development Company managers in the United States are female, in Japan this number

is around 4%. Some companies such as Sanyo Electric Co. Ltd. have female CEOs, but these companies are generally considered exceptions. Because of the labor shortage, the country is attracting immigrants from South America, thereby increasing the level of diversity of the country and increasing awareness of diversity-related issues. Kelly, T. (2008). Rio de Janeiro. *Forbes Asia*, 4(13), 39–40; Woods, G. P. (2005, October 24). Japan's diversity problem: Women are 41% of work force but command few top posts; A "waste," says Carlos Ghosn. *Wall Street Journal*, p. B1.

Attitudes toward concepts such as affirmative action are also culturally determined. For example, France experiences different employment situations for employees with different backgrounds. According to one study conducted by a University of Paris professor in which fake résumés were sent to a large number of companies, even when all qualifications were the same, candidates with French-sounding names were three times more likely to get a callback compared to those with North African-sounding names. However, affirmative action is viewed as unfair in French society, leaving the situation in the hands of corporations. Some companies such as PSA Peugeot Citroën started utilizing human resource management systems in which candidate names are automatically stripped from résumés before HR professionals personally investigate them. Valla, M. (2007, January 3). France seeks path to workplace diversity: Employers, politicians wrestle with traditions that make integration a difficult process. *Wall Street Journal*, p. A2. In summary, due to differences in the legal environment as well as cultural context, "managing diversity effectively" may carry a different meaning across the globe.

## KEY TAKEAWAY

Ethical behavior is affected by the demographic and cultural composition of the workforce. Studies indicate that men and women, as well as younger and older employees, differ in the types of behaviors they view as ethical. Different cultures also hold different ethical standards, which become important when managing a diverse workforce or doing business within different cultures. Around the globe, diversity has a

different meaning and different overtones. In addition to different legal frameworks protecting employee classes, the types of stereotypes that exist in different cultures and whether and how the society tackles prejudice against different demographic categories vary from region to region.

## 2.5 Managing Diversity for Success: The Case of IBM

When you are a company that operates in over 170 countries with a workforce of over 398,000 employees, understanding and managing diversity effectively is not optional—it is a key business priority. A company that employs individuals and sells products worldwide needs to understand the diverse groups of people that make up the world.

Starting from its early history in the United States, IBM Corporation (NYSE: IBM) has been a pioneer in valuing and appreciating its diverse workforce. In 1935, almost 30 years before the Equal Pay Act guaranteed pay equality between the sexes, then IBM president Thomas Watson promised women equal pay for equal work. In 1943, the company had its first female vice president. Again, 30 years before the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) granted women unpaid leave for the birth of a child, IBM offered the same benefit to female employees, extending it to one year in the 1960s and to three years in 1988. In fact, the company ranks in the top 100 on *Working Mother* magazine's "100 Best Companies" list and has been on the list every year since its inception in 1986. It was awarded the honor of number 1 for multicultural working women by the same magazine in 2009.

IBM has always been a leader in diversity management. Yet, the way diversity was managed was primarily to ignore differences and provide equal employment opportunities. This changed when Louis Gerstner became CEO in 1993.

Gerstner was surprised at the low level of diversity in the senior ranks of the company. For all the effort being made to promote diversity, the company still had what he perceived a masculine culture.

In 1995, he created eight diversity task forces around demographic groups such as women and men, as well as Asians, African Americans, LGBT (lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender) individuals, Hispanics, Native Americans, and employees with disabilities. These task forces consisted of senior-level, well-respected executives and

higher-level managers, and members were charged with gaining an understanding of how to make each constituency feel more welcome and at home at IBM. Each task force conducted a series of meetings and surveyed thousands of employees to arrive at the key factors concerning each particular group. For example, the presence of a male-dominated culture, lack of networking opportunities, and work-life management challenges topped the list of concerns for women. Asian employees were most concerned about stereotyping, lack of networking, and limited employment development plans. African American employee concerns included retention, lack of networking, and limited training opportunities. Armed with a list of priorities, the company launched a number of key programs and initiatives to address these issues. As an example, employees looking for a mentor could use the company's Web site to locate one willing to provide guidance and advice. What is probably most unique about this approach is that the company acted on each concern whether it was based on reality or perception. They realized that some women were concerned that they would have to give up leading a balanced life if they wanted to be promoted to higher management, whereas 70% of the women in higher levels actually had children, indicating that perceptual barriers can also act as a barrier to employee aspirations. IBM management chose to deal with this particular issue by communicating better with employees as well as through enhancing their networking program.

The company excels in its recruiting efforts to increase the diversity of its pool of candidates. One of the biggest hurdles facing diversity at IBM is the limited minority representation in fields such as computer sciences and engineering. For example, only 4% of students graduating with a degree in computer sciences are Hispanic. To tackle this issue, IBM partners with colleges to increase recruitment of Hispanics to these programs. In a program named EXITE (Exploring Interest in Technology and Engineering), they bring middle school female students together for a weeklong program where they learn math and science in a fun atmosphere from IBM's female engineers. To date, over 3,000 girls have gone through this program.

What was the result of all these programs? IBM tracks results through global surveys around the world and identifies which programs have been successful and which issues no longer are viewed as problems. These programs were instrumental in more than tripling the number of female executives worldwide as well as doubling the number of minority executives. The number of LBGT executives increased sevenfold, and executives with disabilities tripled. With growing emerging markets and women and minorities representing a \$1.3 trillion market, IBM's culture of respecting and appreciating diversity is likely to be a source of competitive advantage.

Case written by [citation redacted per publisher request]. Based on information from Ferris, M. (2004, Fall). What everyone said couldn't be done: Create a global women's strategy for IBM. *The Diversity Factor*, 12(4), 37–42; IBM hosts second annual Hispanic education day. (2007, December–January). *Hispanic Engineer*, 21(2), 11; Lee, A. M. D. (2008, March). The power of many: Diversity's competitive advantage. *Incentive*, 182(3), 16–21; Thomas, D. A. (2004, September). Diversity as strategy. *Harvard Business Review*, 82(9), 98–108.

## 2.6 Conclusion

In conclusion, in this chapter we reviewed the implications of demographic and cultural diversity for organizational behavior. Management of diversity effectively promises a number of benefits for companies and may be a competitive advantage. Yet, challenges such as natural human tendencies to associate with those similar to us and using stereotypes in decision making often act as barriers to achieving this goal. By creating a work environment where people of all origins and traits feel welcome, organizations will make it possible for all employees to feel engaged with their work and remain productive members of the organization.

# *Boundless Management: "Current Challenges in Management: The Challenge of Diversity"*

Read this article, which discusses how globalization and diversity cause managers to focus on balancing a range of cultural norms and expectations.

## The Challenge of Diversity

Globalization demands a diverse workforce, and assimilating varying cultures, genders, ages, and dispositions is of high value.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Explain the inherent value diversity generates in the competitive landscape and the challenges globalization presents

### KEY POINTS

- In the 1960s, the U.S. began identifying trends in workplace diversity and addressed them with legislation. This evolved into a societal change that embraces diversity as both valuable and ethical.
- Diversity poses various challenges in communication, from differences in language to differences in culture. Understanding these cultural differences and what they may accidentally communicate is critical to effective communication.
- Majority cultures have a tendency to create a homogeneous environment, possibly limiting the potential diverse opinions can provide.
- Groupthink is a threat of which managers must be aware, particularly in meetings where dominant opinions steal most of the spotlight. Different perspectives are where the highest value can be captured in diverse environments.
- The ability to manage diversity, as well as refine actions to communicate accurately and intentionally, are valuable and necessary aspects of effective management.

### TERMS

- Hegemony

The dominance of one social group over another.

- groupthink

Decision making that is often characterized by a high degree of conformity.

## The Value of Diversity

Globalization has resulted in enormous cross-cultural relationships, along with high percentages of domestic diversity. As globalization creates higher potential value in approaching diverse markets and demographics, understanding how to manage a diverse community internally is a priority for management.

Through creating a more international community and increasing variety among workforces, companies stand to benefit enormously from meaningful diversity in opinions and perspectives. This opportunity, if not properly utilized, becomes a threat as the competition grows more effective at leveraging diversity to create synergy. Therefore, staying competitive requires the creation of an effectively diverse workplace.

## Ethnic diversity map

**This map illustrates the level of diversity worldwide. Areas like sub-Saharan Africa tend to be more heterogenous than, for instance, states in Europe.**

Stemming from various legislative initiatives in the 1960s, the concept of equality and a fair distribution of opportunity became a domestic focus in the United States. As the decades passed, this focus shifted from a legal requirement to a social expectation. Finally the idea of equality became a societal norm that recognizes both the importance and the value of diversity. This evolving outlook on a diverse workplace has ultimately resulted in the recognition and implementation of diversity management and intercultural understandings within organizations, creating stronger and more ethical business practices.

## Challenges of Diversity

Despite this successful trajectory, challenges to diversity naturally occur as a result of communication (languages and values), majority hegemony, and groupthink.

### Communication

Communication is at the heart of diversity management, but not necessarily for obvious reasons. Linguistic differences, while certainly a challenge, are tangible and straightforward. Learning new languages or translating materials is a reasonably effective approach to addressing these difficulties.

The more difficult challenge is the intangibles in communication that arise not from literal words but from cultural expectations. Different cultures not only speak different languages but adhere to different values, draw different assumptions, and define different actions as appropriate or inappropriate. Overlooking these cultural differences can result in miscommunication that may go unrecognized. For example, in China it is quite important to understand the concept of *guanxi* (face), particularly as it pertains to paying respect to guests or superiors. Overlooking these customs sends unintentional messages that can do irreversible damage.

### Majority Hegemony

Majorities in businesses creating a homogeneous culture is also a substantial threat, as company culture is a direct product of the participants (employees). This can result in a business that creates and promotes a particular culture over other minority cultures, usually unintentionally as a result of numbers. This hegemony can create tension between different groups, ultimately resulting in the smaller groups moving towards the culture of the larger ones to close the dissonance, a practice called assimilation. Assimilation should be a shared responsibility, not simply assumed by those in the minority group.

### Groupthink

The most substantial threat these communicative barriers and homogeneous tendencies create could loosely be defined as groupthink. Groupthink is when many people within the same organization begin to adopt similar perspectives, usually to simplify meetings and minimize discord. On the surface, this consensus sounds like a good thing. However, as the global economy requires businesses to understand varying perspectives, it also necessitates the cultivation of these diverse perspectives internally. Groupthink will often result in the assimilation of dissenting perspectives. The opportunity cost is precisely these different viewpoints. Without differences in perspective, companies have little room to expand into new demographics or innovate new solutions.

### The Role of Management

Different cultural norms offer an interesting study in diversity management. Etiquette for receiving a business card in China requires accepting it with both hands and taking a full moment to read it. Following this, recipients place the card face up on the table in front of them during the meeting, referring to it when necessary. In the U.S., a strong handshake and self-introduction is a polite start to a meeting. Conversely, in Japan, it is appropriate to wait to be introduced and then bow following the greeting.

Managers must be not only aware of diversity in the workplace but also open-minded and empathetic to perspectives other than their own. Effective managers in diverse situations have a highly developed degree of cultural competence that empowers them to use careful

observation skills to determine what gestures, phrases, customs and values would be most appropriate in a given circumstance. Adroit management must also work actively against groupthink, empowering everyone not only to speak but to be brave enough to go against the majority opinion. The goal for management is to ensure everyone is working to assimilate to everyone else in a balanced and effective manner that harvests differences rather than smoothing them over.

### Example

Different cultural norms offer an interesting study in diversity management. Etiquette for receiving a business card in China requires accepting it with both hands and taking a full moment to read it. Following this, recipients place the card face up on the table in front of them during the meeting, referring to it when necessary. In the U.S., a strong handshake and self-introduction is a polite start to a meeting. Conversely, in Japan, it is appropriate to wait to be introduced and then bow following the greeting.

## Kentucky State University: Charles R. Nichols' "Diversity"

Read the article and respond to the following in detail. When coming to a new country, it is necessary for the employee/individual to submerge themselves in the host country's culture and ways as quickly as possible and abandon their traditional ways? respond to the following in an essay of 200–350 words.

Diversity today no longer merely focuses on one's age, ethnicity or gender. It can also address one's physical or mental status. We have seen an increased effort to assist veterans as they return home. The current and future manager must identify opportunities for them. The inclusion of individuals from other nations also must become a part of a diversity strategy. We are more and more becoming "citizens of the world" as nations exchange their people for education, vocational and other opportunities to learn and grow.

The Western, industrialized nations have seen an increased number of individuals coming in from Asia, Africa, Australia, North and South America. This situation means having to develop training and related material to help international employees transition into their workplace. Conflict has and will continue to occur over whether or not organizations should commit resources to help their "foreign" workers adjust to their new country. The employees' culture, customs and language may be retained in both a public and private manner. That also may result in some conflict as those from the home country will resent the fact that the "foreign" workers will hold to these things rather than to assimilate into the American or other host country in full. We can make the case that learning the new country's expectation of them from the new home country employer.

# Small Group Communication

When you think of small groups, you probably think of the much dreaded “group assignment” that you’ve endured in high school and college. You are less likely to think of the numerous other groups to which you belong that bring more positive experiences, such as your family and friendship groups or shared-interest groups. Group communication scholars are so aware of this common negative sentiment toward group communication that they coined the term *group hate* to describe it. Susan M. Sorensen, “Group-Hate: A Negative Reaction to Group Work” (paper presented at the annual meeting of the International Communication Association, Minneapolis, MN, May, 1981). Small groups, however, aren’t just entities meant to torture students; they have served a central purpose in human history and evolution. Groups make it easier for us to complete a wide variety of tasks; help us establish meaningful social bonds; and help us create, maintain, and change our sense of self. Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 433. Negative group experiences are often exacerbated by a lack of knowledge about group communication processes. We are just expected to know how to work in groups without much instruction or practice. This lack of knowledge about group communication can lead to negative group interactions, which creates a negative cycle that perpetuates further negative experiences. Fortunately, as with other areas of communication, instruction in group communication can improve people’s skills and increase people’s satisfaction with their group experiences.

## 13.1 Understanding Small Groups

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Define small group communication.
2. Discuss the characteristics of small groups.
3. Explain the functions of small groups.

4. Compare and contrast different types of small groups.
5. Discuss advantages and disadvantages of small groups.

Most of the communication skills discussed in this book are directed toward dyadic communication, meaning that they are applied in two-person interactions. While many of these skills can be transferred to and used in small group contexts, the more complex nature of group interaction necessitates some adaptation and some additional skills. Small group communication refers to interactions among three or more people who are connected through a common purpose, mutual influence, and a shared identity. In this section, we will learn about the characteristics, functions, and types of small groups.

## **Characteristics of Small Groups**

Different groups have different characteristics, serve different purposes, and can lead to positive, neutral, or negative experiences. While our interpersonal relationships primarily focus on relationship building, small groups usually focus on some sort of task completion or goal accomplishment. A college learning community focused on math and science, a campaign team for a state senator, and a group of local organic farmers are examples of small groups that would all have a different size, structure, identity, and interaction pattern.

### **Size of Small Groups**

There is no set number of members for the ideal small group. A small group requires a minimum of three people (because two people would be a pair or dyad), but the upper range of group size is contingent on the purpose of the group. When groups grow beyond fifteen to twenty members, it becomes difficult to consider them a small group based on the previous definition. An analysis of the number of unique connections between members of small groups shows that they are deceptively complex. For example, within a six-person group, there are fifteen separate potential dyadic

connections, and a twelve-person group would have sixty-six potential dyadic connections. Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 452–53. As you can see, when we double the number of group members, we more than double the number of connections, which shows that network connection points in small groups grow exponentially as membership increases. So, while there is no set upper limit on the number of group members, it makes sense that the number of group members should be limited to those necessary to accomplish the goal or serve the purpose of the group. Small groups that add too many members increase the potential for group members to feel overwhelmed or disconnected.

### **Structure of Small Groups**

Internal and external influences affect a group's structure. In terms of internal influences, member characteristics play a role in initial group formation. For instance, a person who is well informed about the group's task and/or highly motivated as a group member may emerge as a leader and set into motion internal decision-making processes, such as recruiting new members or assigning group roles, that affect the structure of a group. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 57. Different members will also gravitate toward different roles within the group and will advocate for certain procedures and courses of action over others. External factors such as group size, task, and resources also affect group structure. Some groups will have more control over these external factors through decision making than others. For example, a commission that is put together by a legislative body to look into ethical violations in athletic organizations will likely have less control over its external factors than a self-created weekly book club.



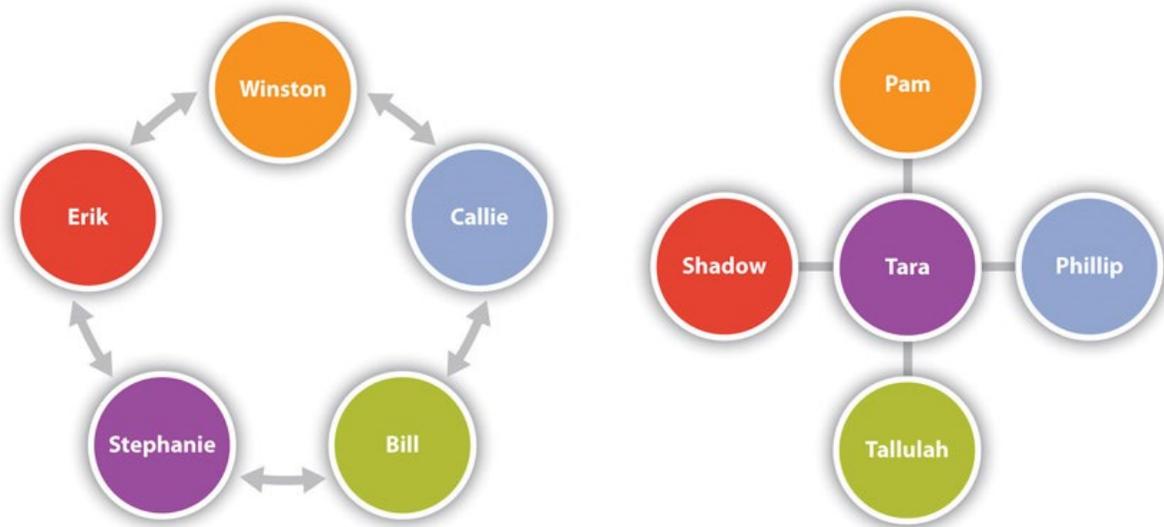
*A self-formed study group likely has a more flexible structure than a city council committee.*

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Group structure is also formed through formal and informal network connections. In terms of formal networks, groups may have clearly defined roles and responsibilities or a hierarchy that shows how members are connected. The group itself may also be a part of an organizational hierarchy that networks the group into a larger organizational structure. This type of formal network is especially important in groups that have to report to external stakeholders. These external stakeholders may influence the group's formal network, leaving the group little or no control over its structure. Conversely, groups have more control over their informal networks, which are connections among individuals within the group and among group members and people outside of the group that aren't official. For example, a group member's friend or relative may be able to secure a space to hold a fundraiser at a discounted rate, which helps the group achieve its task. Both types of networks are important because they may help facilitate information exchange within a group and extend a group's reach in order to access other resources.

Size and structure also affect communication within a group. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 66–74. In terms of size, the more people in a group, the more issues with scheduling and coordination of communication. Remember that time is an important resource in most group interactions and a resource that is usually strained. Structure can increase or decrease the flow of communication. Reachability refers to the way in which one member is or isn't connected to other group members. For example, the "Circle" group structure in [Figure 13.1 "Small Group Structures"](#) shows that each group member is connected to two other members. This can make coordination easy when only one or two people need to be brought in for a decision. In this case, Erik and Callie are very reachable by Winston, who could easily coordinate with them. However, if Winston needed to coordinate with Bill or Stephanie, he would have to wait on Erik or Callie to reach that person, which could create delays. The circle can be a good structure for groups who are passing along a task and in which each member is expected to progressively build on the others' work. A group of scholars coauthoring a research paper may work in such a manner, with each person adding to the paper and then passing it on to the next person in the circle. In this case, they can ask the previous person questions and write with the next person's area of expertise in mind. The "Wheel" group structure in [Figure 13.1 "Small Group Structures"](#) shows an alternative organization pattern. In this structure, Tara is very reachable by all members of the group. This can be a useful structure when Tara is the person with the most expertise in the task or the leader who needs to review and approve work at each step before it is passed along to other group members. But Phillip and Shadow, for example, wouldn't likely work together without Tara being involved.

Figure 13.1 *Small Group Structures*



Looking at the group structures, we can make some assumptions about the communication that takes place in them. The wheel is an example of a centralized structure, while the circle is decentralized. Research has shown that centralized groups are better than decentralized groups in terms of speed and efficiency. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 68. But decentralized groups are more effective at solving complex problems. In centralized groups like the wheel, the person with the most connections, person C, is also more likely to be the leader of the group or at least have more status among group members, largely because that person has a broad perspective of what's going on in the group. The most central person can also act as a gatekeeper. Since this person has access to the most information, which is usually a sign of leadership or status, he or she could consciously decide to limit the flow of information. But in complex tasks, that person could become overwhelmed by the burden of processing and sharing information with all the other group members. The circle structure is more likely to emerge in groups where collaboration is the goal and a specific task and course of action isn't required under time constraints. While the person who initiated the group or has the most expertise in regards to the task may emerge as a

leader in a decentralized group, the equal access to information lessens the hierarchy and potential for gatekeeping that is present in the more centralized groups.

## **Interdependence**

Small groups exhibit interdependence, meaning they share a common purpose and a common fate. If the actions of one or two group members lead to a group deviating from or not achieving their purpose, then all members of the group are affected. Conversely, if the actions of only a few of the group members lead to success, then all members of the group benefit. This is a major contributor to many college students' dislike of group assignments, because they feel a loss of control and independence that they have when they complete an assignment alone. This concern is valid in that their grades might suffer because of the negative actions of someone else or their hard work may go to benefit the group member who just skated by. Group meeting attendance is a clear example of the interdependent nature of group interaction. Many of us have arrived at a group meeting only to find half of the members present. In some cases, the group members who show up have to leave and reschedule because they can't accomplish their task without the other members present. Group members who attend meetings but withdraw or don't participate can also derail group progress. Although it can be frustrating to have your job, grade, or reputation partially dependent on the actions of others, the interdependent nature of groups can also lead to higher-quality performance and output, especially when group members are accountable for their actions.

## **Shared Identity**

The shared identity of a group manifests in several ways. Groups may have official charters or mission and vision statements that lay out the identity of a group. For example, the Girl Scout mission states that "Girl Scouting builds girls of courage, confidence, and character, who make the world a better place." Girl Scouts, "Facts," accessed July 15, 2012, [http://www.girlscouts.org/who we are/facts](http://www.girlscouts.org/who_we_are/facts). The mission for

this large organization influences the identities of the thousands of small groups called troops. Group identity is often formed around a shared goal and/or previous accomplishments, which adds dynamism to the group as it looks toward the future and back on the past to inform its present. Shared identity can also be exhibited through group names, slogans, songs, handshakes, clothing, or other symbols. At a family reunion, for example, matching t-shirts specially made for the occasion, dishes made from recipes passed down from generation to generation, and shared stories of family members that have passed away help establish a shared identity and social reality.

A key element of the formation of a shared identity within a group is the establishment of the in-group as opposed to the out-group. The degree to which members share in the in-group identity varies from person to person and group to group. Even within a family, some members may not attend a reunion or get as excited about the matching t-shirts as others. Shared identity also emerges as groups become cohesive, meaning they identify with and like the group's task and other group members. The presence of cohesion and a shared identity leads to a building of trust, which can also positively influence productivity and members' satisfaction.

## **Functions of Small Groups**

Why do we join groups? Even with the challenges of group membership that we have all faced, we still seek out and desire to be a part of numerous groups. In some cases, we join a group because we need a service or access to information. We may also be drawn to a group because we admire the group or its members. Whether we are conscious of it or not, our identities and self-concepts are built on the groups with which we identify. So, to answer the earlier question, we join groups because they function to help us meet instrumental, interpersonal, and identity needs.

## **Groups Meet Instrumental Needs**

Groups have long served the instrumental needs of humans, helping with the most basic elements of survival since ancient humans first evolved. Groups helped humans survive by providing security and protection through increased numbers and access to resources. Today, groups are rarely such a matter of life and death, but they still serve important instrumental functions. Labor unions, for example, pool efforts and resources to attain material security in the form of pay increases and health benefits for their members, which protects them by providing a stable and dependable livelihood. Individual group members must also work to secure the instrumental needs of the group, creating a reciprocal relationship. Members of labor unions pay dues that help support the group's efforts. Some groups also meet our informational needs. Although they may not provide material resources, they enrich our knowledge or provide information that we can use to then meet our own instrumental needs. Many groups provide referrals to resources or offer advice. For example, several consumer protection and advocacy groups have been formed to offer referrals for people who have been the victim of fraudulent business practices. Whether a group forms to provide services to members that they couldn't get otherwise, advocate for changes that will affect members' lives, or provide information, many groups meet some type of instrumental need.

### **Groups Meet Interpersonal Needs**

Group membership meets interpersonal needs by giving us access to inclusion, control, and support. In terms of inclusion, people have a fundamental drive to be a part of a group and to create and maintain social bonds. As we've learned, humans have always lived and worked in small groups. Family and friendship groups, shared-interest groups, and activity groups all provide us with a sense of belonging and being included in an in-group. People also join groups because they want to have some control over a decision-making process or to influence the outcome of a group. Being a part of a group allows people to share opinions and influence others. Conversely, some people join a group to

be controlled, because they don't want to be the sole decision maker or leader and instead want to be given a role to follow.

Just as we enter into interpersonal relationships because we like someone, we are drawn toward a group when we are attracted to it and/or its members. Groups also provide support for others in ways that supplement the support that we get from significant others in interpersonal relationships. Some groups, like therapy groups for survivors of sexual assault or support groups for people with cancer, exist primarily to provide emotional support. While these groups may also meet instrumental needs through connections and referrals to resources, they fulfill the interpersonal need for belonging that is a central human need.

### **Groups Meet Identity Needs**

Our affiliations are building blocks for our identities, because group membership allows us to use reference groups for social comparison—in short, identifying us with some groups and characteristics and separating us from others. Some people join groups to be affiliated with people who share similar or desirable characteristics in terms of beliefs, attitudes, values, or cultural identities. For example, people may join the National Organization for Women because they want to affiliate with others who support women's rights or a local chapter of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) because they want to affiliate with African Americans, people concerned with civil rights, or a combination of the two. Group memberships vary in terms of how much they affect our identity, as some are more prominent than others at various times in our lives. While religious groups as a whole are too large to be considered small groups, the work that people do as a part of a religious community—as a lay leader, deacon, member of a prayer group, or committee—may have deep ties to a person's identity.

*Group membership helps meet our interpersonal needs by providing an opportunity for affection and inclusion.*

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The prestige of a group can initially attract us because we want that group's identity to "rub off" on our own identity. Likewise, the achievements we make as a group member can enhance our self-esteem, add to our reputation, and allow us to create or project certain identity characteristics to engage in impression management. For example, a person may take numerous tests to become a part of Mensa, which is an organization for people with high IQs, for no material gain but for the recognition or sense of achievement that the affiliation may bring. Likewise, people may join sports teams, professional organizations, and honor societies for the sense of achievement and affiliation. Such groups allow us opportunities to better ourselves by encouraging further development of skills or knowledge. For example, a person who used to play the oboe in high school may join the community band to continue to improve on his or her ability.

## **Types of Small Groups**

There are many types of small groups, but the most common distinction made between types of small groups is that of task-oriented and relational-oriented groups. Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 434. Task-oriented groups are formed to solve a problem, promote a cause, or generate ideas or information. Matthew McKay, Martha Davis, and Patrick Fanning, *Messages: Communication Skills Book*, 2nd ed. (Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Publications, 1995), 254. In such groups, like a committee or study group, interactions and decisions are primarily evaluated based on the quality of the final product or output. The three main types of tasks are production, discussion, and problem-solving tasks. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision*

*Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 44. Groups faced with production tasks are asked to produce something tangible from their group interactions such as a report, design for a playground, musical performance, or fundraiser event. Groups faced with discussion tasks are asked to talk through something without trying to come up with a right or wrong answer. Examples of this type of group include a support group for people with HIV/AIDS, a book club, or a group for new fathers. Groups faced with problem-solving tasks have to devise a course of action to meet a specific need. These groups also usually include a production and discussion component, but the end goal isn't necessarily a tangible product or a shared social reality through discussion. Instead, the end goal is a well-thought-out idea. Task-oriented groups require honed problem-solving skills to accomplish goals, and the structure of these groups is more rigid than that of relational-oriented groups.

Relational-oriented groups are formed to promote interpersonal connections and are more focused on quality interactions that contribute to the well-being of group members. Decision making is directed at strengthening or repairing relationships rather than completing discrete tasks or debating specific ideas or courses of action. All groups include task and relational elements, so it's best to think of these orientations as two ends of a continuum rather than as mutually exclusive. For example, although a family unit works together daily to accomplish tasks like getting the kids ready for school and friendship groups may plan a surprise party for one of the members, their primary and most meaningful interactions are still relational. Since other chapters in this book focus specifically on interpersonal relationships, this chapter focuses more on task-oriented groups and the dynamics that operate within these groups.

To more specifically look at the types of small groups that exist, we can examine why groups form. Some groups are formed based on interpersonal relationships. Our family and friends are considered primary groups, or long-lasting groups that are formed based on relationships and include significant others. These are the small groups in which we interact most frequently. They form the basis of our society and our individual social

realities. Kinship networks provide important support early in life and meet physiological and safety needs, which are essential for survival. They also meet higher-order needs such as social and self-esteem needs. When people do not interact with their biological family, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, they can establish fictive kinship networks, which are composed of people who are not biologically related but fulfill family roles and help provide the same support.

We also interact in many secondary groups, which are characterized by less frequent face-to-face interactions, less emotional and relational communication, and more task-related communication than primary groups. David B. Barker, "The Behavioral Analysis of Interpersonal Intimacy in Group Development," *Small Group Research* 22, no. 1 (1991): 79. While we are more likely to participate in secondary groups based on self-interest, our primary-group interactions are often more reciprocal or other oriented. For example, we may join groups because of a shared interest or need.

Groups formed based on shared interest include social groups and leisure groups such as a group of independent film buffs, science fiction fans, or bird watchers. Some groups form to meet the needs of individuals or of a particular group of people. Examples of groups that meet the needs of individuals include study groups or support groups like a weight loss group. These groups are focused on individual needs, even though they meet as a group, and they are also often discussion oriented. Service groups, on the other hand, work to meet the needs of individuals but are task oriented. Service groups include Habitat for Humanity and Rotary Club chapters, among others. Still other groups form around a shared need, and their primary task is advocacy. For example, the Gay Men's Health Crisis is a group that was formed by a small group of eight people in the early 1980s to advocate for resources and support for the still relatively unknown disease that would later be known as AIDS. Similar groups form to advocate for everything from a stop sign at a neighborhood intersection to the end of human trafficking.

As we already learned, other groups are formed primarily to accomplish a task. Teams are task-oriented groups in which members are especially loyal and dedicated to the task and other group members. Carl E. Larson and Frank M. J. LaFasto, *TeamWork: What Must Go Right/What Must Go Wrong* (Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1989), 73. In professional and civic contexts, the word *team* has become popularized as a means of drawing on the positive connotations of the term—connotations such as “high-spirited,” “cooperative,” and “hardworking.” Scholars who have spent years studying highly effective teams have identified several common factors related to their success. Successful teams have Robert B. Adler and Jeanne Marquardt Elmhorst, *Communicating at Work: Principles and Practices for Businesses and the Professions*, 8th ed. (Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 2005), 248–50.

- clear and inspiring shared goals,
- a results-driven structure,
- competent team members,
- a collaborative climate,
- high standards for performance,
- external support and recognition, and
- ethical and accountable leadership.

Increasingly, small groups and teams are engaging in more virtual interaction. Virtual groups take advantage of new technologies and meet exclusively or primarily online to achieve their purpose or goal. Some virtual groups may complete their task without ever being physically face-to-face. Virtual groups bring with them distinct advantages and disadvantages that you can read more about in the “Getting Plugged In” feature next.

## **“Getting Plugged In”**

### Virtual Groups

Virtual groups are now common in academic, professional, and personal contexts, as classes meet entirely online, work teams interface using webinar or video-conferencing programs, and people connect around shared interests in a variety of online settings. Virtual groups are popular in professional contexts because they can bring together people who are geographically dispersed. Manju K. Ahuja and John E. Galvin, "Socialization in Virtual Groups," *Journal of Management* 29, no. 2 (2003): 163. Virtual groups also increase the possibility for the inclusion of diverse members. The ability to transcend distance means that people with diverse backgrounds and diverse perspectives are more easily accessed than in many offline groups.

One disadvantage of virtual groups stems from the difficulties that technological mediation presents for the relational and social dimensions of group interactions. Joseph B. Walther and Ulla Bunz, "The Rules of Virtual Groups: Trust, Liking, and Performance in Computer-Mediated Communication," *Journal of Communication* 55, no. 4 (2005): 830. As we will learn later in this chapter, an important part of coming together as a group is the socialization of group members into the desired norms of the group. Since norms are implicit, much of this information is learned through observation or conveyed informally from one group member to another. In fact, in traditional groups, group members passively acquire 50 percent or more of their knowledge about group norms and procedures, meaning they observe rather than directly ask. Debra R. Comer, "Organizational Newcomers' Acquisition of Information from Peers," *Management Communication Quarterly* 5, no. 1 (1991): 64–89. Virtual groups experience more difficulty with this part of socialization than copresent traditional groups do, since any form of electronic mediation takes away some of the richness present in face-to-face interaction.

To help overcome these challenges, members of virtual groups should be prepared to put more time and effort into building the relational dimensions of their group. Members of virtual groups need to make the social cues that guide new members' socialization more explicit than they would in an offline group. Manju K. Ahuja and John

E. Galvin, "Socialization in Virtual Groups," *Journal of Management* 29, no. 2 (2003): 164–65. Group members should also contribute often, even if just supporting someone else's contribution, because increased participation has been shown to increase liking among members of virtual groups. Joseph B. Walther and Ulla Bunz, "The Rules of Virtual Groups: Trust, Liking, and Performance in Computer-Mediated Communication," *Journal of Communication* 55, no. 4 (2005): 831–32. Virtual group members should also make an effort to put relational content that might otherwise be conveyed through nonverbal or contextual means into the verbal part of a message, as members who include little social content in their messages or only communicate about the group's task are more negatively evaluated. Virtual groups who do not overcome these challenges will likely struggle to meet deadlines, interact less frequently, and experience more absenteeism. What follows are some guidelines to help optimize virtual groups: Joseph B. Walther and Ulla Bunz, "The Rules of Virtual Groups: Trust, Liking, and Performance in Computer-Mediated Communication," *Journal of Communication* 55, no. 4 (2005): 834–35.

- Get started interacting as a group as early as possible, since it takes longer to build social cohesion.
  - Interact frequently to stay on task and avoid having work build up.
  - Start working toward completing the task while initial communication about setup, organization, and procedures are taking place.
  - Respond overtly to other people's messages and contributions.
  - Be explicit about your reactions and thoughts since typical nonverbal expressions may not be received as easily in virtual groups as they would be in colocated groups.
  - Set deadlines and stick to them.
1. Make a list of some virtual groups to which you currently belong or have belonged to in the past. What are some differences between your experiences in virtual groups versus traditional colocated groups?

2. What are some group tasks or purposes that you think lend themselves to being accomplished in a virtual setting? What are some group tasks or purposes that you think would be best handled in a traditional colocated setting? Explain your answers for each.

## Advantages and Disadvantages of Small Groups

As with anything, small groups have their advantages and disadvantages. Advantages of small groups include shared decision making, shared resources, synergy, and exposure to diversity. It is within small groups that most of the decisions that guide our country, introduce local laws, and influence our family interactions are made. In a democratic society, participation in decision making is a key part of citizenship. Groups also help in making decisions involving judgment calls that have ethical implications or the potential to negatively affect people. Individuals making such high-stakes decisions in a vacuum could have negative consequences given the lack of feedback, input, questioning, and proposals for alternatives that would come from group interaction. Group members also help expand our social networks, which provide access to more resources. A local community-theater group may be able to put on a production with a limited budget by drawing on these connections to get set-building supplies, props, costumes, actors, and publicity in ways that an individual could not. The increased knowledge, diverse perspectives, and access to resources that groups possess relates to another advantage of small groups—synergy.

Synergy refers to the potential for gains in performance or heightened quality of interactions when complementary members or member characteristics are added to existing ones. James R. Larson Jr., *In Search of Synergy in Small Group Performance* (New York: Psychology Press, 2010). Because of synergy, the final group product can be better than what any individual could have produced alone. When I worked in housing and residence life, I helped coordinate a “World Cup Soccer Tournament” for the international students that lived in my residence hall. As a group,

we created teams representing different countries around the world, made brackets for people to track progress and predict winners, got sponsors, gathered prizes, and ended up with a very successful event that would not have been possible without the synergy created by our collective group membership. The members of this group were also exposed to international diversity that enriched our experiences, which is also an advantage of group communication.

Participating in groups can also increase our exposure to diversity and broaden our perspectives. Although groups vary in the diversity of their members, we can strategically choose groups that expand our diversity, or we can unintentionally end up in a diverse group. When we participate in small groups, we expand our social networks, which increase the possibility to interact with people who have different cultural identities than ourselves. Since group members work together toward a common goal, shared identification with the task or group can give people with diverse backgrounds a sense of commonality that they might not have otherwise. Even when group members share cultural identities, the diversity of experience and opinion within a group can lead to broadened perspectives as alternative ideas are presented and opinions are challenged and defended. One of my favorite parts of facilitating class discussion is when students with different identities and/or perspectives teach one another things in ways that I could not on my own. This example brings together the potential of synergy and diversity. People who are more introverted or just avoid group communication and voluntarily distance themselves from groups—or are rejected from groups—risk losing opportunities to learn more about others and themselves.



*A social loafer is a dreaded group member who doesn't do his or her share of the work, expecting that others on the group won't notice or will pick up the slack.*

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There are also disadvantages to small group interaction. In some cases, one person can be just as or more effective than a group of people. Think about a situation in which a highly specialized skill or knowledge is needed to get something done. In this situation, one very knowledgeable person is probably a better fit for the task than a group of less knowledgeable people. Group interaction also has a tendency to slow down the decision-making process. Individuals connected through a hierarchy or chain of command often work better in situations where decisions must be made under time constraints. When group interaction does occur under time constraints, having one “point person” or leader who coordinates action and gives final approval or disapproval on ideas or suggestions for actions is best.

Group communication also presents interpersonal challenges. A common problem is coordinating and planning group meetings due to busy and conflicting schedules. Some people also have difficulty with the other-centeredness and self-sacrifice that some groups require. The interdependence of group members that we discussed earlier can also create some disadvantages. Group members may take advantage of the anonymity of a group and engage in social loafing, meaning they contribute less to the group than other members or than they would if working alone. Steven J. Karau and Kipling D. Williams, "Social Loafing: A Meta-Analytic Review and Theoretical Integration," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 65, no. 4 (1993): 681. Social loafers expect that no one will notice their behaviors or that others will pick up their slack. It is this potential for social loafing that makes many students and professionals dread group work, especially those who have a tendency to cover for other group members to prevent the social loafer from diminishing the group's productivity or output.

## **"Getting Competent"**

### Improving Your Group Experiences

Like many of you, I also had some negative group experiences in college that made me think similarly to a student who posted the following on a teaching blog: "Group work is code for 'work as a group for a grade less than what you can get if you work alone.'" Maryellen Weimer, "Why Students Hate Groups," *The Teaching Professor*, July 1, 2008, accessed July 15, 2012, <http://www.teachingprofessor.com/articles/teaching-and-learning/why-students-hate-groups>. But then I took a course called "Small Group and Team Communication" with an amazing teacher who later became one of my most influential mentors. She emphasized the fact that we all needed to increase our knowledge about group communication and group dynamics in order to better our group communication experiences—and she was right. So the first piece of advice to help you start improving your group experiences is to closely study the group

communication chapters in this textbook and to apply what you learn to your group interactions. Neither students nor faculty are born knowing how to function as a group, yet students and faculty often think we're supposed to learn as we go, which increases the likelihood of a negative experience.

A second piece of advice is to meet often with your group. Scott A. Myers and Alan K. Goodboy, "A Study of Group Cohesion in a Course on Small Group Communication," *Psychological Reports* 97, no. 2 (2005): 385. Of course, to do this you have to overcome some scheduling and coordination difficulties, but putting other things aside to work as a group helps set up a norm that group work is important and worthwhile. Regular meetings also allow members to interact with each other, which can increase social bonds, build a sense of interdependence that can help diminish social loafing, and establish other important rules and norms that will guide future group interaction. Instead of committing to frequent meetings, many student groups use their first meeting to equally divide up the group's tasks so they can then go off and work alone (not as a group). While some group work can definitely be done independently, dividing up the work and assigning someone to put it all together doesn't allow group members to take advantage of one of the most powerful advantages of group work—synergy.

Last, establish group expectations and follow through with them. I recommend that my students come up with a group name and create a contract of group guidelines during their first meeting (both of which I learned from my group communication teacher whom I referenced earlier). The group name helps begin to establish a shared identity, which then contributes to interdependence and improves performance. The contract of group guidelines helps make explicit the group norms that might have otherwise been left implicit. Each group member contributes to the contract and then they all sign it. Groups often make guidelines about how meetings will be run, what to do about lateness and attendance, the type of climate they'd like for discussion, and other relevant expectations. If group members end up falling short of these expectations, the other

group members can remind the straying member of the contract and the fact that he or she signed it. If the group encounters further issues, they can use the contract as a basis for evaluating the other group member or for communicating with the instructor.

1. Do you agree with the student's quote about group work that was included at the beginning? Why or why not?
2. The second recommendation is to meet more with your group. Acknowledging that schedules are difficult to coordinate and that that is not really going to change, what are some strategies that you could use to overcome that challenge in order to get time together as a group?
3. What are some guidelines that you think you'd like to include in your contract with a future group?

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Getting integrated: Small group communication refers to interactions among three or more people who are connected through a common purpose, mutual influence, and a shared identity. Small groups are important communication units in academic, professional, civic, and personal contexts.
  - Several characteristics influence small groups, including size, structure, interdependence, and shared identity.
  - In terms of size, small groups must consist of at least three people, but there is no set upper limit on the number of group members. The ideal number of group members is the smallest number needed to competently complete the group's task or achieve the group's purpose.
  - Internal influences such as member characteristics and external factors such as the group's size, task, and access to resources affect a group's structure. A group's structure also affects how group members communicate, as some structures are more centralized and hierarchical and other structures are more decentralized and equal.

- Groups are interdependent in that they have a shared purpose and a shared fate, meaning that each group member's actions affect every other group member.
- Groups develop a shared identity based on their task or purpose, previous accomplishments, future goals, and an identity that sets their members apart from other groups.
- Small groups serve several functions as they meet instrumental, interpersonal, and identity needs.
  - Groups meet instrumental needs, as they allow us to pool resources and provide access to information to better help us survive and succeed.
  - Groups meet interpersonal needs, as they provide a sense of belonging (inclusion), an opportunity to participate in decision making and influence others (control), and emotional support.
  - Groups meet identity needs, as they offer us a chance to affiliate ourselves with others whom we perceive to be like us or whom we admire and would like to be associated with.
- There are various types of groups, including task-oriented, relational-oriented, primary, and secondary groups, as well as teams.
  - Task-oriented groups are formed to solve a problem, promote a cause, or generate ideas or information, while relational-oriented groups are formed to promote interpersonal connections. While there are elements of both in every group, the overall purpose of a group can usually be categorized as primarily task or relational oriented.
  - Primary groups are long-lasting groups that are formed based on interpersonal relationships and include family and friendship groups, and secondary groups are characterized by less frequent interaction and less emotional and relational communication than in primary groups. Our communication in primary groups is more frequently other oriented than our communication in secondary groups, which is often self-oriented.

- Teams are similar to task-oriented groups, but they are characterized by a high degree of loyalty and dedication to the group's task and to other group members.
- Advantages of group communication include shared decision making, shared resources, synergy, and exposure to diversity. Disadvantages of group communication include unnecessary group formation (when the task would be better performed by one person), difficulty coordinating schedules, and difficulty with accountability and social loafing.

## 13.2 Small Group Development

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain the process of group development.
2. Discuss the characteristics of each stage of group development.

Small groups have to start somewhere. Even established groups go through changes as members come and go, as tasks are started and completed, and as relationships change. In this section, we will learn about the stages of group development, which are forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning. Bruce W. Tuckman and Mary Ann C. Jensen, “Stages of Small-Group Development Revisited,” *Group and Organizational Studies* 2, no. 4 (1977): 419–27. As with most models of communication phenomena, although we order the stages and discuss them separately, they are not always experienced in a linear fashion. Additionally, some groups don’t experience all five stages, may experience stages multiple times, or may experience more than one stage at a time.

### Forming

During the forming stage, group members begin to reduce uncertainty associated with new relationships and/or new tasks through initial interactions that lay the foundation for later group dynamics. Groups return to the forming stage as group members come and go over the life span of a group. Although there may not be as much uncertainty when one or two new people join a group as there is when a group first forms, groups spend some time in the forming stage every time group membership changes.

Given that interpersonal bonds are likely not yet formed and people are unfamiliar with the purpose of the group or task at hand, there are high levels of uncertainty. Early stages of role negotiation begin and members begin to determine goals for the group and establish rules and norms. Group cohesion also begins to form during this

stage. Group cohesion refers to the commitment of members to the purpose of the group and the degree of attraction among individuals within the group. Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 445. The cohesion that begins in this stage sets the group on a trajectory influenced by group members' feelings about one another and their purpose or task. Groups with voluntary membership may exhibit high levels of optimism about what the group can accomplish. Although the optimism can be motivating, unrealistic expectations can lead to disappointment, making it important for group members to balance optimism with realism. Groups with assigned or mandatory membership may include members that carry some degree of resentment toward the group itself or the goals of the group. These members can start the group off on a negative trajectory that will lessen or make difficult group cohesiveness. Groups can still be successful if these members are balanced out by others who are more committed to and positive in regards to the purpose of the group.

Many factors influence how the forming stage of group development plays out. The personalities of the individuals in the group, the skills that members bring, the resources available to the group, the group's size, and the group's charge all contribute to the creation of the early tone of and climate within a group. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 14. For example, more dominant personalities may take early leadership roles in the group that can affect subsequent decisions. Group members' diverse skill sets and access to resources can also influence the early stages of role differentiation. In terms of size, the bonding that begins in the forming stage becomes difficult when the number of people within the group prevents every person from having a one-on-one connection with every other member of the group. Also, in larger groups, more dominant members tend to assert themselves as leaders and build smaller coalitions within the group, which can start the group on a trajectory toward more conflict during the upcoming storming stage. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey

Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 15.

When a group receives an external charge, meaning that the goal or purpose of the group is decided by people outside the group, there may be less uncertainty related to the task dimensions of the group. Additionally, decisions about what roles people will play including group leaders and other decisions about the workings of the group may come from the outside, which reduces some of the uncertainty inherent in the forming stage. Relational uncertainty can also be diminished when group members have preexisting relationships or familiarity with each other. Although the decreased uncertainty may be beneficial at this stage, too much imposed structure from the outside can create resentment or a feeling of powerlessness among group members. So a manageable amount of uncertainty is actually a good thing for group cohesion and productivity.

## **Storming**

During the storming stage of group development, conflict emerges as people begin to perform their various roles, have their ideas heard, and negotiate where they fit in the group's structure. The uncertainty present in the forming stage begins to give way as people begin to occupy specific roles and the purpose, rules, and norms of a group become clearer. Conflict develops when some group members aren't satisfied with the role that they or others are playing or the decisions regarding the purpose or procedures of the group. For example, if a leader begins to emerge or is assigned during the forming stage, some members may feel that the leader is imposing his or her will on other members of the group. As we will learn in our section on group leadership, leaders should expect some degree of resentment from others who wanted to be the leader, have interpersonal conflicts with the leader, or just have general issues with being led.

Although the word *storming* and the concept of conflict have negative connotations, conflict can be positive and productive. Just like storms can replenish water supplies and make crops grow, storming can lead to group growth. While conflict is inevitable and should be experienced by every group, a group that gets stuck at the storming stage will likely not have much success in completing its task or achieving its purpose.

Influences from outside the group can also affect the conflict in the storming stage. Interpersonal conflicts that predate the formation of the group may distract the group from the more productive idea- or task-oriented conflict that can be healthy for the group and increase the quality of ideas, decision making, and output.

*Although we often have negative connotations of storming and conflict, the group conflict that happens in this stage is necessary and productive.*

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## **Norming**

During the norming stage of group development, the practices and expectations of the group are solidified, which leads to more stability, productivity, and cohesion within the group. Group norms are behaviors that become routine but are not explicitly taught or stated. In short, group norms help set the tone for what group members ought to do and how they ought to behave. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 129. Many implicit norms are derived from social norms that people follow in their everyday life. Norms within the group about politeness, lateness, and communication patterns are typically similar to those in other contexts. Sometimes a norm needs to be challenged because it is not working for the group, which could lead a group back to the storming stage. Other times, group members challenge norms for no

good reason, which can lead to punishment for the group member or create conflict within the group.

At this stage, there is a growing consensus among group members as to the roles that each person will play, the way group interactions will typically play out, and the direction of the group. Leaders that began to emerge have typically gained the support of other group members, and group identity begins to solidify. The group may now be recognizable by those on the outside, as slogans, branding, or patterns of interaction become associated with the group. This stage of group development is key for the smooth operation of the group. Norms bring a sense of predictability and stability that can allow a group to move on to the performing stage of group development. Norms can also bring with them conformity pressures that can be positive or negative. In general, people go along with a certain amount of pressure to conform out of a drive to avoid being abnormal that is a natural part of our social interaction. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 128. Too much pressure, however, can lead people to feel isolated and can create a negative group climate. We will learn more about pressure as a group dynamic later in this chapter.

Explicit rules may also guide group interaction. Rules are explicitly stated guidelines for members and may refer to things like expected performance levels or output, attitudes, or dress codes. Rules may be communicated through verbal instructions, employee handbooks, membership policies, or codes of conduct. Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 440. Groups can even use procedures like Robert's Rules of Order to manage the flow of conversations and decision-making procedures. Group members can contest or subvert group rules just as they can norms. Violations of group rules, however, typically result in more explicit punishments than do violations of norms.

## **Performing**

During the performing stage of group development, group members work relatively smoothly toward the completion of a task or achievement of a purpose. Although interactions in the performing stage are task focused, the relational aspects of group interaction provide an underlying support for the group members. Socialization outside of official group time can serve as a needed relief from the group's task. During task-related interactions, group members ideally begin to develop a synergy that results from the pooling of skills, ideas, experiences, and resources. Synergy is positive in that it can lead group members to exceed their expectations and perform better than they could individually. Glitches in the group's performance can lead the group back to previous stages of group development. Changes in membership, member roles, or norms can necessitate a revisiting of aspects of the forming, storming, or norming stages. One way to continue to build group cohesion during the performing stage is to set short-term attainable group goals. Accomplishing something, even if it's small, can boost group morale, which in turn boosts cohesion and productivity.

## **Adjourning**

The adjourning stage of group development occurs when a group dissolves because it has completed its purpose or goal, membership is declining and support for the group no longer exists, or it is dissolved because of some other internal or external cause. Some groups may live on indefinitely and not experience the adjourning stage. Other groups may experience so much conflict in the storming stage that they skip norming and performing and dissolve before they can complete their task. For groups with high social cohesion, adjourning may be a difficult emotional experience. However, group members may continue interpersonal relationships that formed even after the group dissolves. In reality, many bonds, even those that were very close, end up fading after the group disbands. This doesn't mean the relationship wasn't genuine; interpersonal relationships often form because of proximity and shared task interaction. Once that force is gone, it becomes difficult to maintain friendships, and many fade away. For groups that had negative experiences, the adjourning stage may be welcomed.

To make the most out of the adjourning stage, it is important that there be some guided and purposeful reflection. Many groups celebrate their accomplishments with a party or ceremony. Even groups that had negative experiences or failed to achieve their purpose can still learn something through reflection in the adjourning stage that may be beneficial for future group interactions. Often, group members leave a group experience with new or more developed skills that can be usefully applied in future group or individual contexts. Even groups that are relational rather than task focused can increase members' interpersonal, listening, or empathetic skills or increase cultural knowledge and introduce new perspectives.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Small groups have to start somewhere, but their course of development varies after forming based on many factors. Some groups go through each stage of development in a progressive and linear fashion, while other groups may get stuck in a stage, skip a stage, or experience a stage multiple times.
- The five stages of group development include forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning.
    1. During the forming stage, group members engage in socially polite exchanges to help reduce uncertainty and gain familiarity with new members. Even though their early interactions may seem unproductive, they lay the groundwork for cohesion and other group dynamics that will play out more prominently in later stages.
    2. During the storming stage, conflict emerges as group members begin to perform their various roles, have their ideas heard, and negotiate where they fit in the group's structure. Conflict is inevitable and important as a part of group development and can be productive if it is managed properly.
    3. During the norming stage, the practices and expectations (norms and rules) of the group are solidified, which leads to more stability, productivity, and cohesion within the group.

4. During the performing stage, group members work relatively smoothly toward the completion of a task or the achievement of their purpose, ideally capitalizing on the synergy that comes from the diverse experiences group members bring to the decision-making process.
5. During the adjourning stage, a group dissolves because its purpose has been met, because membership has declined or the group has lost support, or due to some other internal or external cause. It is important that groups reflect on the life of the group to learn any relevant lessons and celebrate accomplishments.

## 13.3 Small Group Dynamics

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Explain the relationship between group cohesion and group climate.
2. Describe the process of group member socialization.
3. Explain the relationship between conformity and groupthink.
4. Define various types of group conflict and identify strategies for managing each type.

Any time a group of people come together, new dynamics are put into place that differ from the dynamics present in our typical dyadic interactions. The impressions we form about other people's likeability and the way we think about a group's purpose are affected by the climate within a group that is created by all members. Groups also develop norms, and new group members are socialized into a group's climate and norms just as we are socialized into larger social and cultural norms in our everyday life. The pressure to conform to norms becomes more powerful in group situations, and some groups take advantage of these forces with positive and negative results. Last, the potential for productive and destructive conflict increases as multiple individuals come together to accomplish a task or achieve a purpose. This section explores the dynamics mentioned previously in order to better prepare you for future group interactions.

### Group Cohesion and Climate

When something is cohesive, it sticks together, and the cohesion within a group helps establish an overall group climate. Group climate refers to the relatively enduring tone and quality of group interaction that is experienced similarly by group members. To better understand cohesion and climate, we can examine two types of cohesion: task and social.

Task cohesion refers to the commitment of group members to the purpose and activities of the group. Social cohesion refers to the attraction and liking among group members.

Ideally, groups would have an appropriate balance between these two types of cohesion relative to the group's purpose, with task-oriented groups having higher task cohesion and relational-oriented groups having higher social cohesion. Even the most task-focused groups need some degree of social cohesion, and vice versa, but the balance will be determined by the purpose of the group and the individual members. For example, a team of workers from the local car dealership may join a local summer softball league because they're good friends and love the game. They may end up beating the team of faculty members from the community college who joined the league just to get to know each other better and have an excuse to get together and drink beer in the afternoon. In this example, the players from the car dealership exhibit high social and task cohesion, while the faculty exhibit high social but low task cohesion.

Cohesion benefits a group in many ways and can be assessed through specific group behaviors and characteristics. Groups with an appropriate level of cohesivenessOwen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 445.

- set goals easily;
- exhibit a high commitment to achieving the purpose of the group;
- are more productive;
- experience fewer attendance issues;
- have group members who are willing to stick with the group during times of difficulty;
- have satisfied group members who identify with, promote, and defend the group;
- have members who are willing to listen to each other and offer support and constructive criticism; and
- experience less anger and tension.

Appropriate levels of group cohesion usually create a positive group climate, since group climate is affected by members' satisfaction with the group. Climate has also been

described as group morale. Following are some qualities that contribute to a positive group climate and morale: Peter J. Marston and Michael L. Hecht, "Group Satisfaction," in *Small Group Communication*, 5th ed., eds. Robert Cathcart and Larry Samovar (Dubuque, IA: Brown, 1988), 236–46.

- **Participation.** Group members feel better when they feel included in discussion and a part of the functioning of the group.
- **Messages.** Confirming messages help build relational dimensions within a group, and clear, organized, and relevant messages help build task dimensions within a group.
- **Feedback.** Positive, constructive, and relevant feedback contribute to group climate.
- **Equity.** Aside from individual participation, group members also like to feel as if participation is managed equally within the group and that appropriate turn taking is used.
- **Clear and accepted roles.** Group members like to know how status and hierarchy operate within a group. Knowing the roles isn't enough to lead to satisfaction, though—members must also be comfortable with and accept those roles.
- **Motivation.** Member motivation is activated by perceived connection to and relevance of the group's goals or purpose.

*Cohesion and shared identity help create symbolic convergence as group members develop a group identity and shared social reality.*

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Group cohesion and climate is also demonstrated through symbolic convergence. Ernest G. Bormann, "Symbolic Convergence Theory: A Communication Formulation," *Journal*

of *Communication*, 35, no. 4 (1985): 128–38. Symbolic convergence refers to the sense of community or group consciousness that develops in a group through non-task-related communication such as stories and jokes. The originator of symbolic convergence theory, Ernest Bormann, claims that the sharing of group fantasies creates symbolic convergence. *Fantasy*, in this sense, doesn't refer to fairy tales, sexual desire, or untrue things. In group communication, group fantasies are verbalized references to events outside the "here and now" of the group, including references to the group's past, predictions for the future, or other communication about people or events outside the group. Em Griffin, *A First Look at Communication Theory*, 7th ed. (Boston, MA: McGraw-Hill, 2009), 28. For example, as a graduate student, I spent a lot of time talking with others in our small group about research, writing, and other things related to our classes and academia in general. Most of this communication wouldn't lead to symbolic convergence or help establish the strong social bonds that we developed as a group. Instead, it was our grad student "war stories" about excessive reading loads and unreasonable paper requirements we had experienced in earlier years of grad school, horror stories about absent or vindictive thesis advisors, and "you won't believe this" stories from the classes that we were teaching that brought us together.

In any group, you can tell when symbolic convergence is occurring by observing how people share such fantasies and how group members react to them. If group members react positively and agree with or appreciate the teller's effort or other group members are triggered to tell their own related stories, then convergence is happening and cohesion and climate are being established. Over time, these fantasies build a shared vision of the group and what it means to be a member that creates a shared group consciousness. By reviewing and applying the concepts in this section, you can hopefully identify potential difficulties with group cohesion and work to enhance cohesion when needed in order to create more positive group climates and enhance your future group interactions.

## **"Getting Real"**

## Working in Teams

Although most college students hate working in groups, in the “real world” working in teams has become a regular part of professional expectations. Following Japan’s lead, corporations in the United States began adopting a more team-based approach for project management decades ago. Anshu K. Jain, Jon M. Thompson, Joseph Chaudry, Shaun McKenzie, and Richard W. Schwartz, “High-Performance Teams for Current and Future Physician Leaders: An Introduction,” *Journal of Surgical Education* 65 (2008): 145. This model has become increasingly popular in various organizational settings since then as means to increase productivity and reduce bureaucracy. Teams in the workplace have horizontally expanded the traditional vertical hierarchy of organizations, as the aim of creating these teams was to produce smaller units within an organization that are small enough to be efficient and self-manageable but large enough to create the synergy that we discussed in the earlier part of the chapter.

Aside from efficiency, teams are also valued for the potential for innovation. The strategic pooling of people with diverse knowledge, experience, and skills can lead to synergistic collaborative thinking that produces new knowledge. Elisa du Chatenier, Jos A. A. M. Verstegen, Harm J. A. Biemans, Martin Mulder, and Onno S. W. F. Omta, “Identification of Competencies in Open Innovation Teams,” *Research and Development Management* 40, no. 3 (2010): 271. This potential for innovation makes teams ideal in high-stakes situations where money, contracts, or lives are at stake. Large corporations are now putting together what has been termed *interorganizational high-performance research and development teams* consisting of highly trained technical and scientific experts from diverse backgrounds to work collectively and simultaneously on complex projects under very challenging conditions. Lisa J. Daniel and Charles R. Davis, “What Makes High-Performance Teams Excel?” *Research Technology Management* 52, no. 4 (2009): 40–41. In markets where companies race to find the next generation of technological improvement, such research and development teams are critical for an organization’s success. Research on such teams in real-world contexts

has found that in order to be successful, high-performance teams should have a clear base such as a project mission, a leader who strategically assigns various tasks to members based on their specialized expertise, and shared leadership in which individual experts are trusted to make decisions relevant to their purview within the group. Although these high-performance teams are very task oriented, research has also found that the social element cannot be ignored, even under extreme internal and external pressures. In fact, cohesion and interdependence help create a shared reality that in turn improves productivity, because team members feel a sense of shared ownership over their charge. Stephanie T. Solansky, "Team Identification: A Determining Factor of Performance," *Journal of Managerial Psychology* 26, no. 3 (2011): 250.

Some challenges associated with working in teams include the potential for uncertainty or conflict due to the absence of traditional hierarchy, pressures that become overwhelming, lack of shared history since such teams are usually future oriented, and high expectations without resources necessary to complete the task. Elisa du Chatenier, Jos A. A. M. Verstegen, Harm J. A. Biemans, Martin Mulder, and Onno S. W. F. Omta, "Identification of Competencies in Open Innovation Teams," *Research and Development Management* 40, no. 3 (2010): 275–77. To overcome these challenges, team members can think positively but realistically about the team's end goal, exhibit trust in the expertise of other team members, be reliable and approachable to help build a good team spirit, take initiative with actions and ideas, ask critical questions, and provide critical but constructive feedback.

1. Given your career goals, what sorts of teamwork do you think you might engage in?
2. Would you welcome the opportunity to work on a high-performance team? Why or why not?
3. Members of teams are often under intense pressures to produce or perform at high levels. What is the line at which the pressure becomes too much? Ethically,

how far should companies push teams and how far should team members go to complete a task?

## Socializing Group Members

Group socialization refers to the process of teaching and learning the norms, rules, and expectations associated with group interaction and group member behaviors. Group norms, rules, and cohesion can only be created and maintained through socialization. Manju K. Ahuja and John E. Galvin, “Socialization in Virtual Groups,” *Journal of Management* 29, no. 2 (2003): 163. It is also through socialization that a shared identity and social reality develops among group members, but this development is dependent on several factors. For example, groups with higher levels of cohesion are more likely to have members that “buy into” rules and norms, which aids in socialization. The need for socialization also changes throughout a group’s life span. If membership in a group is stable, long-term members should not need much socialization. However, when new members join a group, existing members must take time to engage in socialization. When a totally new group is formed, socialization will be an ongoing process as group members negotiate rules and procedures, develop norms, and create a shared history over time.

The information exchanged during socialization can be broken down into two general categories: technical and social knowledge. Manju K. Ahuja and John E. Galvin, “Socialization in Virtual Groups,” *Journal of Management* 29, no. 2 (2003): 164. Technical knowledge focuses on skills and information needed to complete a task, and social knowledge focuses on behavioral norms that guide interaction. Each type of information is usually conveyed through a combination of formal and informal means. Technical knowledge can be fairly easily passed along through orientations, trainings, manuals, and documents, because this content is often fairly straightforward. Social knowledge is more ambiguous and is usually conveyed through informal means or passively learned by new members through observation. To return to our earlier

terminology, technical knowledge relates more to group rules and social knowledge relates more to group norms.

Companies and social organizations socialize new members in different ways. A new training cohort at an established company may be given technical rule-based information in the form of a manual and a history of the organization and an overview of the organizational culture to help convey social knowledge about group norms.

Members of some small groups like fraternities or professional organizations have to take pledges or oaths that may convey a mixture of technical and social knowledge. Social knowledge may be conveyed in interactions that are separate from official group time. For example, literally socializing as a group is a good way to socialize group members. Many large and successful businesses encourage small groups within the company to socialize outside of work time in order to build cohesion and group solidarity.

Socialization continues after initial membership through the enforcement of rules and norms. When someone deviates from the rules and norms and is corrected, it serves as a reminder for all other members and performs a follow-up socializing function. Since rules are explicitly stated and documented, deviation from the rules can have consequences ranging from verbal warnings, to temporary or permanent separation from the group, to fines or other sanctions. And although norms are implicit, deviating from them can still have consequences. Even though someone may not actually verbally correct the deviation, the self-consciousness, embarrassment, or awkwardness that can result from such deviations is often enough to initiate corrective actions. Group norms can be so implicit that they are taken for granted and operate under group members' awareness.

Group rules and norms provide members with a sense of predictability that helps reduce uncertainty and increase a sense of security for one's place within the group. They also guide group members' involvement with the group, help create a shared social reality,

and allow the group to function in particular ways without having actual people constantly educating, monitoring, and then correcting member behaviors. Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 441. Of course, the degree to which this is successful depends on the buy-in from group members.

## **Group Pressures**

There must be some kind of motivating force present within groups in order for the rules and norms to help govern and guide a group. Without such pressure, group members would have no incentive to conform to group norms or buy into the group's identity and values. In this section, we will discuss how rules and norms gain their power through internal and external pressures and how these pressures can have positive and negative effects.



*Even though group members are different, failure to conform to the group's identity could create problems.*

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## **Conformity**

In general, some people are more likely to accept norms and rules than others, which can influence the interaction and potential for conflict within a group. While some people may feel a need for social acceptance that leads them to accept a norm or rule with minimal conformity pressure, others may actively resist because they have a valid disagreement or because they have an aggressive or argumentative personality. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 133. Such personality traits are examples of internal pressures that operate within the individual group member and act as a self-governing mechanism. When group members discipline themselves and monitor their own behavior, groups need not invest in as many external mechanisms to promote conformity. Deviating from the group's rules and norms that a member internalized during socialization can lead to self-imposed feelings of guilt or shame that can then initiate corrective behaviors and discourage the member from going against the group.

External pressures in the form of group policies, rewards or punishments, or other forces outside of individual group members also exert conformity pressure. In terms of group policies, groups that have an official admission process may have a probation period during which new members' membership is contingent on them conforming to group expectations. Deviation from expectations during this "trial period" could lead to expulsion from the group. Supervisors, mentors, and other types of group leaders are also agents that can impose external pressures toward conformity. These group

members often have the ability to provide positive or negative reinforcement in the form of praise or punishment, which are clear attempts to influence behavior.

Conformity pressure can also stem from external forces when the whole group stands to receive a reward or punishment based on its performance, which ties back to the small group characteristic of interdependence. Although these pressures may seem negative, they also have positive results. Groups that exert an appropriate and ethical amount of conformity pressure typically have higher levels of group cohesion, which as we learned leads to increased satisfaction with group membership, better relationships, and better task performance. Groups with a strong but healthy level of conformity also project a strong group image to those outside the group, which can raise the group's profile or reputation. Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 444. Pressures toward conformity, of course, can go too far, as is evidenced in tragic stories of people driven to suicide because they felt they couldn't live up to the conformity pressure of their group and people injured or killed enduring hazing rituals that take expectations for group conformity to unethical and criminal extremes.

## **"Getting Critical"**

Hazing: Taking Conformity Pressures to the Extreme

*Hazing* can be defined as actions expected to be performed by aspiring or new members of a group that are irrelevant to the group's activities or mission and are humiliating, degrading, abusive, or dangerous. Brian K. Richardson, Zuoming Wang, and Camille A. Hall, "Blowing the Whistle against Greek Hazing: The Theory of Reasoned Action as a Framework for Reporting Intentions," *Communication Studies* 63, no. 2 (2012): 173. People who have participated in hazing or have been hazed often note that hazing activities are meant to build group identification and unity. Scholars note that hazing is rationalized because of high conformity pressures and that people who were hazed

internalize the group's practices and are more likely to perpetuate hazing, creating a cycle of abuse. Shelly Campo, Gretchen Poulos, and John W. Sipple, "Prevalence and Profiling: Hazing among College Students and Points of Intervention," *American Journal of Health Behavior* 29, no. 2 (2005): 138. Hazing is not new; it has been around in academic and athletic settings since ancient Greece, but it has gotten much attention lately on college campuses as the number of student deaths attributed to hazing behaviors has increased steadily over the past years. In general, it is believed that hazing incidents are underreported, because these activities are done in secret within tightly knit organizations such as fraternities, sororities, and athletic teams that have strong norms of conformity. Brian K. Richardson, Zuoming Wang, and Camille A. Hall, "Blowing the Whistle against Greek Hazing: The Theory of Reasoned Action as a Framework for Reporting Intentions," *Communication Studies* 63, no. 2 (2012): 185–220.

The urge to belong is powerful, but where is the line when it comes to the actions people take or what people are willing to endure in order to be accepted? Hazing is meant to have aspiring group members prove their worth or commitment to the group. Examples of hazing include, but aren't limited to, being "kidnapped, transported, and abandoned"; drinking excessively in games or contests; sleep deprivation; engaging in or simulating sexual acts; being physically abused; being required to remain silent; wearing unusual clothes or costumes; or acting in a subservient manner to more senior group members. Shelly Campo, Gretchen Poulos, and John W. Sipple, "Prevalence and Profiling: Hazing among College Students and Points of Intervention," *American Journal of Health Behavior* 29, no. 2 (2005): 137; Aldo Cimino, "The Evolution of Hazing: Motivational Mechanisms and the Abuse of Newcomers," *Journal of Cognition and Culture* 11, no. 3–4 (2011): 235. Research has found that people in leadership roles, who are more likely to have strong group identification, are also more likely to engage in hazing activities. Shelly Campo, Gretchen Poulos, and John W. Sipple, "Prevalence and Profiling: Hazing among College Students and Points of Intervention," *American*

*Journal of Health Behavior* 29, no. 2 (2005): 144. The same research also found that group members who have supportive friends outside of the organization are more likely to remove themselves from a hazing situation, which points to the fact that people who endure hazing may be doing so out of a strong drive to find the acceptance and belonging they do not have elsewhere.

1. What is your definition of hazing? When does something cross the line from a rite of passage or tradition to hazing?
2. What are some internal and external pressures that might lead to hazing activities?
3. Do some research on hazing incidents on college campuses. What concepts from this chapter do you think could be used in antihazing education campaigns to prevent incidents like the ones you researched?

## **Groupthink**

Groupthink is a negative group phenomenon characterized by a lack of critical evaluation of proposed ideas or courses of action that results from high levels of cohesion and/or high conformity pressures. Irving L. Janis, *Victims of Groupthink: A Psychological Study of Foreign-Policy Decisions and Fiascos* (New York: Houghton Mifflin, 1972). We can better understand groupthink by examining its causes and effects. When group members fall victim to groupthink, the effect is uncritical acceptance of decisions or suggestions for plans of action to accomplish a task or goal. Group meetings that appear to go smoothly with only positive interaction among happy, friendly people may seem ideal, but these actions may be symptomatic of groupthink. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 134. When people rush to agreement or fear argument, groupthink has a tendency to emerge. Decisions made as a result of groupthink may range from a poorly-thought-out presentation method that bores the audience to a mechanical failure resulting in death.

Two primary causes of groupthink are high levels of cohesion and excessive conformity pressures. When groups exhibit high levels of social cohesion, members may be reluctant to criticize or question another group member's ideas or suggestions for fear that it would damage the relationship. When group members have a high level of task cohesion, they may feel invincible and not critically evaluate ideas. High levels of cohesion may actually lessen conformity pressures since group members who identify strongly with the group's members and mission may not feel a need to question the decisions or suggestions made by others. For those who aren't blinded by the high levels of cohesion, internal conformity pressures may still lead them to withhold criticism of an idea because the norm is to defer to decisions made by organization leaders or a majority of group members. External conformity pressures because of impending reward or punishment, time pressures, or an aggressive leader are also factors that can lead to groupthink.

**To Avoid Groupthink, Groups Should**Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice*, 5th ed. (London: Routledge, 2011), 447.

- Divvy up responsibilities between group members so decision-making power isn't in the hands of a few
- Track contributions of group members in such a way that each person's input and output is recorded so that it can be discussed
- Encourage and reward the expression of minority or dissenting opinions
- Allow members to submit ideas prior to a discussion so that opinions aren't swayed by members who propose ideas early in a discussion
- Question each major decision regarding its weaknesses and potential negative consequences relative to competing decisions (encourage members to play "devil's advocate")
- Have decisions reviewed by an outside party that wasn't involved in the decision-making process

- Have a “reflection period” after a decision is made and before it is implemented during which group members can express reservations or second thoughts about the decision

## **Group Conflict**

Conflict can appear in indirect or direct forms within group interaction, just as it can in interpersonal interactions. Group members may openly question each other’s ideas or express anger toward or dislike for another person. Group members may also indirectly engage in conflict communication through innuendo, joking, or passive-aggressive behavior. Although we often view conflict negatively, conflict can be beneficial for many reasons. When groups get into a rut, lose creativity, or become complacent, conflict can help get a group out of a bad or mediocre routine. Conversely, conflict can lead to lower group productivity due to strain on the task and social dimensions of a group. There are three main types of conflict within groups: procedural, substantive, and interpersonal. Randy Fujishin, *Creating Effective Groups: The Art of Small Group Communication* (San Francisco, CA: Acada Books, 2001): 160–61. Each of these types of conflict can vary in intensity, which can affect how much the conflict impacts the group and its members.

### **Procedural Conflict**

Procedural conflict emerges from disagreements or trouble with the mechanics of group operations. In this type of conflict, group members differ in their beliefs about *how* something should be done. Procedural conflict can be handled by a group leader, especially if the leader put group procedures into place or has the individual power to change them. If there is no designated leader or the leader doesn’t have sole power to change procedures (or just wants input from group members), proposals can be taken from the group on ways to address a procedural conflict to initiate a procedural

change. A vote to reach a consensus or majority can also help resolve procedural conflict.



*Procedural conflict can often be resolved with a group vote.*

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## **Substantive Conflict**

Substantive conflict focuses on group members' differing beliefs, attitudes, values, or ideas related to the purpose or task of the group. Rather than focusing on questions of *how*, substantive conflicts focus on questions of *what*. Substantive conflicts may emerge as a group tries to determine its purpose or mission. As members figure out how to complete a task or debate which project to start on next, there will undoubtedly be differences of opinion on what something means, what is acceptable in terms of supporting evidence for a proposal, or what is acceptable for a goal or performance

standard. Leaders and other group members shouldn't rush to close this type of conflict down. As we learned in our earlier discussion of groupthink, open discussion and debate regarding ideas and suggestions for group action can lead to higher-quality output and may prevent groupthink. Leaders who make final decisions about substantive conflict for the sake of moving on run the risk of creating a win/lose competitive climate in which people feel like their ideas may be shot down, which could lead to less participation. To resolve this type of conflict, group members may want to do research to see what other groups have done in similar situations, as additional information often provides needed context for conflict regarding information and ideas. Once the information is gathered, weigh all proposals and try to discover common ground among perspectives. Civil and open discussions that debate the merits of an idea are more desirable than a climate in which people feel personally judged for their ideas.

### **Interpersonal Conflict**

Interpersonal conflict emerges from conflict between individual members of the group. Whereas procedural conflict deals with *how* and substantive conflict deals with *what*, interpersonal conflict deals with *who*. Such conflict can be completely irrelevant to the functioning or purpose of the group, perhaps focusing instead on personality differences. Interpersonal conflict can be the result of avoided or improperly handled procedural or substantive conflict that festers and becomes personal rather than task focused. This type of conflict can also result from differences in beliefs, attitudes, and values (when such differences are taken personally rather than substantively); different personalities; or different communication styles. While procedural and substantive conflict may be more easily expressed because they do not directly address a person, interpersonal conflict may slowly build as people avoid openly criticizing or confronting others. Passive-aggressive behavior is a sign that interpersonal conflict may be building under the surface, and other group members may want to intervene to avoid escalation and retaliation. Leaders can also meet with people involved in interpersonal conflict privately to help them engage in perception checking and act as mediators, if needed.

While people who initiate procedural or substantive conflict may be perceived by other group members as concerned about the group's welfare and seen as competent in their ability to notice areas on which the group could improve, people who initiate interpersonal conflict are often held in ill-regard by other group members. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 217–18.

### **Primary and Secondary Tensions**

Relevant to these types of conflict are primary and secondary tensions that emerge in every group. Ernest G. Bormann and Nancy C. Borman, *Effective Small Group Communication*, 4th ed. (Santa Rosa, CA: Burgess Publishing, 1988), 72. When the group first comes together, members experience primary tension, which is tension based on uncertainty that is a natural part of initial interactions. It is only after group members begin to “break the ice” and get to know each other that the tension can be addressed and group members can proceed with the forming stage of group development. Small talk and politeness help group members manage primary tensions, and there is a relatively high threshold for these conflicts because we have all had experiences with such uncertainty when meeting people for the first time and many of us are optimistic that a little time and effort will allow us to get through the tensions. Since some people are more comfortable initiating conversation than others, it's important for more extroverted group members to include less talkative members. Intentionally or unintentionally excluding people during the negotiation of primary tensions can lead to unexpected secondary tensions later on. During this stage people are also less direct in their communication, using more hedges and vague language than they will later in the group process. The indirect communication and small talk that characterize this part of group development aren't a waste of time, as they help manage primary tensions and lay the foundation for future interactions that may involve more substantive conflict.

Secondary tension emerges after groups have passed the forming stage of group development and begin to have conflict over member roles, differing ideas, and personality conflicts. These tensions are typically evidenced by less reserved and less polite behavior than primary tensions. People also have a lower tolerance threshold for secondary tensions, because rather than being an expected part of initial interaction, these conflicts can be more negative and interfere with the group's task performance. Secondary tensions are inevitable and shouldn't be feared or eliminated. It's not the presence or absence of secondary tension that makes a group successful or not; it's how it handles the tensions when they emerge. A certain level of secondary tension is tolerable, not distracting, and can actually enhance group performance and avoid groupthink. When secondary tensions rise above the tolerance threshold and become distracting, they should be released through direct means such as diplomatic confrontation or indirect means such as appropriate humor or taking a break. While primary tensions eventually disappear (at least until a new member arrives), secondary tensions will come and go and may persist for longer periods of time. For that reason, we will now turn to a discussion of how to manage conflict in group interaction.

### **Managing Conflict in Small Groups**

Some common ways to manage conflict include clear decision-making procedures, third-party mediation, and leader facilitation. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 236–44. Decision making is discussed in more detail in Chapter 14 "Leadership, Roles, and Problem Solving in Groups", but commonly used methods such as majority vote can help or hurt conflict management efforts. While an up-and-down vote can allow a group to finalize a decision and move on, members whose vote fell on the minority side may feel resentment toward other group members. This can create a win/lose climate that leads to further conflict. Having a leader who makes ultimate decisions can also help move a group toward completion of a task, but conflict may only be pushed to the side and left not fully addressed. Third-party mediation can

help move a group past a conflict and may create less feelings of animosity, since the person mediating and perhaps making a decision isn't a member of the group. In some cases, the leader can act as an internal third-party mediator to help other group members work productively through their conflict.

**Tips for Managing Group Conflict** Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 240–43.

1. Clarify the issue at hand by getting to the historical roots of the problem. Keep in mind that perception leads us to punctuate interactions differently, so it may be useful to know each person's perspective of when, how, and why the conflict began.
2. Create a positive discussion climate by encouraging and rewarding active listening.
3. Discuss needs rather than solutions. Determine each person's needs to be met and goals for the outcome of the conflict before offering or acting on potential solutions.
4. Set boundaries for discussion and engage in gatekeeping to prevent unproductive interactions like tangents and personal attacks.
5. Use "we" language to maintain existing group cohesion and identity, and use "I" language to help reduce defensiveness.

### **Advantages and Disadvantages of Conflict**

Remember that a complete lack of conflict in a group is a bad sign, as it indicates either a lack of activity or a lack of commitment on the part of the members. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 223. Conflict, when properly handled, can lead a group to have a better understanding of the issues they face. For example,

substantive conflict brings voice to alternative perspectives that may not have been heard otherwise. Additionally, when people view conflict as healthy, necessary, and productive, they can enter into a conflict episode with an open mind and an aim to learn something. This is especially true when those who initiate substantive conflict are able to share and defend their views in a competent and civil manner. Group cohesion can also increase as a result of well-managed conflict. Occasional experiences of tension and unrest followed by resolutions makes groups feel like they have accomplished something, which can lead them to not dread conflict and give them the confidence to more productively deal with it the next time.

Conflict that goes on for too long or is poorly handled can lead to decreased cohesiveness. Group members who try to avoid a conflict can still feel anger or frustration when the conflict drags on. Members who consistently take task-oriented conflict personally and escalate procedural or substantive conflict to interpersonal conflict are especially unpopular with other group members. Mishandled or chronic conflict can eventually lead to the destruction of a group or to a loss in members as people weigh the costs and rewards of membership. Donald G. Ellis and B. Aubrey Fisher, *Small Group Decision Making: Communication and the Group Process*, 4th ed. (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1994), 220. Hopefully a skilled leader or other group members can take on conflict resolution roles, which we will discuss more in [Chapter 14 "Leadership, Roles, and Problem Solving in Groups"](#) in order to prevent these disadvantages of conflict.

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- *Task cohesion* refers to the degree of commitment of group members to the purpose and activities of the group, and *social cohesion* refers to the degree of attraction and liking among group members. *Group climate* refers to the relatively enduring tone and quality of group interaction that is experienced similarly by group members. The degree of each type of cohesion affects the group's climate. Groups can be very close socially

but not perform well if they do not have an appropriate level of task cohesion. Groups that are too focused on the task can experience interpersonal conflict or a lack of motivation if the social cohesion, which helps enhance the feeling of interdependence, is lacking.

- *Group socialization* refers to the process of teaching and learning the norms, rules, and expectations associated with group interaction and group member behaviors. Group members are socialized by receiving technical and social information. Cohesion plays a role in socialization, as groups that have high levels of task and social cohesion are more likely to buy into the norms of the group. Socialization continues after a member has joined, as members are officially or unofficially rewarded or punished for adhering to or deviating from the group's norms.
- Conformity pressures are an important force behind group socialization. Internal pressures such as an internal drive to be seen as part of the group or to avoid feeling ashamed or guilty for deviating from the group influence behavior and communication. Likewise, external pressures such as group policies and the potential for reward or punishment also play into group dynamics. The pressures toward conformity can manifest in *groupthink*, which is characterized by a lack of critical evaluation of proposed ideas, a high level of agreement, and a fear of argument.

- Groups experience different kinds of conflict, including procedural, substantive, and interpersonal conflict.
  - Procedural conflict emerges from disagreements or trouble with the mechanics of group operations and deal with questions about “how” a group should do something. A leader may be able to resolve this conflict by changing or explaining a procedure or taking, from group members, proposals for or votes on procedural revisions.
  - Substantive conflict focuses on group members' differing beliefs, attitudes, values, or ideas related to the purpose or task of the group. Leaders and other group members should avoid closing off this type of conflict before people have had a chance to be heard, as a lack of substantive conflict can lead to groupthink.

Instead, listen to all viewpoints, try to find common ground, and then weigh and evaluate the information as a group.

- Interpersonal conflict emerges from personal conflict between individual members of a group. Manage interpersonal conflict by getting to the root cause of the conflict. In some cases, interpersonal conflict may be disguised as procedural or substantive conflict, or it may develop as a result of poorly managed procedural or substantive conflict. Leaders, group members not directly involved in the conflict, or even outside third parties may also be able to effectively mediate interpersonal conflict.

# *Boundless Sociology: "Group Dynamics: Effects of Group Size on Stability and Intimacy"*

By the end of this reading, you should be able to relate group size to group cohesiveness. In general, the smaller the group, the easier it will be for its members to come to a consensus on goals, and thus possess a stronger bond.

## Effects of Group Size on Stability and Intimacy

Since it is easier for fewer people to agree on goals and to coordinate their work, smaller groups are more cohesive than larger groups.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Relate group size to group cohesiveness

### KEY POINTS

- A group is said to be in a state of cohesion when its members possess bonds linking them to one another and to the group as a whole.
- An intimate community is one in which some members recognize and are recognized by all of the others, and most of the members recognize and are recognized by many of the others. Relationships in intimate communities tend to be more stable and the groups more cohesive.
- Dunbar's number is the suggested cognitive limit to the number of people with whom one can maintain stable social relationships. It is usually estimated to be around 150, and this serves as an upper bound on the size of intimate communities.

### TERMS

- dunbar's number

Dunbar's number is a suggested cognitive limit to the number of people with whom one can maintain stable social relationships.

- cohesiveness

The state of being cohesive.

### EXAMPLE

- Facebook presents an interesting example of how modern technology may or may not impact Dunbar's number. As people have more and more online friends, how does this effect group stability and intimacy?

A group is said to be in a state of cohesion when its members possess bonds linking them to one another and to the group as a whole. According to Festinger, Schachter, and Back (1950), group cohesion develops from a field of binding social forces that act on members to stay in the group. Groups that possess strong unifying forces typically stick together over time, whereas groups that lack such bonds between members usually disintegrate.

### The Role of Group Size

Since it is easier for fewer people to agree on goals and to coordinate their work, smaller groups are often more cohesive than larger groups. Group cohesiveness may suffer, though, if the group lacks enough members to perform its tasks well.

An intimate community is one in which some members recognize and are recognized by all of the others, and most of the members recognize and are recognized by many of the others. This is in contrast to (usually larger) communities where members are known and interact mostly within their own subgroup, such as a neighborhood, department, or occupation. The contrast between the two types is illustrated by comparing hamlet with town, military company with battalion, parish church with diocese, or a country school with a huge urban one.

### The Limits of Group Size

Intimate communities seldom have more than about 150 members, a number derived from the "Dunbar's Number" concept. This is the suggested cognitive limit to the number of people with whom one can maintain stable social relationships. These are relationships in which an individual knows who each person is, and how each person relates to every other person. While no precise value has been unanimously agreed upon, it has been proposed to lie between 100 and 230, with a commonly used value of 150. The concept is based on studies of social animals, which have shown a correlation between the typical frontal brain capacity the members of a species has and the maximum size of the groups in which they live. Like animals, the number of relationships the human brain can handle is large but not unlimited.

# *Boundless Management: "Building Successful Teams"*

Read the series of articles covering steps for building successful diverse teams. These steps include setting goals, instilling accountability, choosing team members, establishing processes, and the stages of team development. Be sure to reference the useful glossary terms at the bottom of each article.

## Setting Team Goals and Providing Team Feedback

Periodic performance assessments help a team identify areas for improvement so it can better achieve its goals.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Apply effective performance management procedures to the process of goal setting and feedback

### KEY POINTS

- How a team functions is as important an indicator of its performance as the quality of what it produces.
- Periodic assessments help a team identify its strengths and weakness and create plans to improve how members work together.
- Methods of collecting assessment data include discussions, surveys, and personality diagnostic tests.

### TERMS

- performance

The act of performing; carrying into execution or action; achievement; accomplishment.

- feedback

Critical assessment of information produced.

- implement

To bring about; to put into practice.

## Setting Goals and Providing Feedback

The way team members function as a group is as important to the team's success as the quality of what it produces. Because how they work together is so important to achieving the team's goals, members need to be attentive to how they interact and collaborate with each other. Periodic self-assessments that consider the team's progress, how it has gotten there, and where it is headed allow the team to gauge its effectiveness and take steps to improve its performance.

To assess its performance, a team seeks feedback from group members to identify its strengths and its weaknesses. Feedback from the team assessment can be used to identify gaps between what it needs to do to perform effectively and where it is currently. Once they have identified the areas for improvement, members of the team and others (such as managers) can develop a plan to close the gaps.

A team can gather the necessary data by holding a meeting in which members discuss what has gone well and what they would like to change about how they work together. It can be beneficial to have a non-team member such as a supervisor or a member of the human resources department solicit opinions through a brief written survey. The team can then use the results as a starting point for its discussion.

Poor communication and conflict can disrupt a team's performance, and sometimes these disruptions are caused by personality clashes between members. Another type of team assessment involves using diagnostic tests to identify the dominant personality traits of each member. Characteristics such as being an extrovert or an introvert can shape how people prefer to work and communicate. Having an understanding of personality differences among team members can prove useful for changing how they interact with each other.

## Accountability in Teams

Accountability is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, decisions, and policies.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Illustrate the concept of accountability in a team-based work environment

### KEY POINTS

- Accountability is the assignment of responsibility for outcomes to an individual or group to create an incentive for performance.
- Teams are accountable for achieving collective goals.

- Individual team members are accountable to each other for their effort and contributions to the team.
- Effective accountability for teams relies on making choices that support the team's ability to succeed.

## TERM

- accountability

The acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, and decisions.

## Accountability

Accountability is the acknowledgment and assumption of responsibility for actions, products, and decisions. In a management context, accountability explicitly identifies who is responsible for ensuring that outcomes meet goals and creates incentives for success.

For teams in particular, accountability means that all members share responsibility for their collective output and for their success in achieving their goals. Because teamwork is organized at the collective level rather than on a per-person basis, its results are the sum of each member's efforts. Organizations often use team-based rewards to hold teams accountable for their work.

Accountability for team members also implies that individuals have a responsibility to each other to complete tasks and contribute to the group effort. One benefit of teamwork is the mutual support and assistance that team members can provide each other. A sense of accountability to the team creates an incentive for individuals to provide help when needed. Since team tasks are interdependent, the quality of one person's work affects that of the others. Teams use norms and other forms of social pressure to hold one another accountable.

## Conditions for Effective Accountability

For accountability to work, teams need to have the resources, skills, and authority to do what they are being held responsible for. If leaders expect teams to accept the blame for failing to achieve an assigned goal, they should ensure that success is within the team's reach. For this reason, the choices made about goal-setting, team composition, and process design have a direct effect on the degree of responsibility a team can assume for its performance.

## **Government accountability**

**Governing authorities have the obligation to report, explain, and answer for resulting consequences of their actions.**

### Choosing Team Size and Team Members

Team size and composition affect team processes and outcomes.

#### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Justify the importance of drafting a team that reflects a manageable size and conducive skill sets

#### KEY POINTS

- The optimal size and composition of teams will vary depending on the team's purpose and goals.
- Team size should take into account the scope and complexity of required tasks and activities.
- As a whole, team members should bring all the necessary skills and knowledge to meet the team's goals.

#### TERM

- Composition

The proportion of different parts to make a whole.

Team size and composition affect team processes and outcomes. The optimal size and composition of teams depends on the scope of the team's goals. With too few people, a team will not have the resources and skills it needs to complete its tasks. Too many members can make communication and coordination difficult and lead to poor team performance.

Research shows that teams perform best with between five and nine members. Dr. Meredith Belbin did extensive research on teams prior to 1990 in the UK that suggested that the optimum team size is eight roles plus a specialist as needed. Fewer than five members resulted in decreased perspectives and diminished creativity. Membership in excess of twelve resulted in increased conflict and greater potential of subgroups forming that can disrupt team cohesion.

The mix of knowledge and expertise on a team is also important. Individuals should be selected for teams so that as a whole the group has all the expertise needed to achieve its goals. For this reason, cross-functional teams may be larger than groups formed to work on less complex activities. Similarly, a task force charged with making recommendations in a short time frame would benefit from having fewer members.

Teams benefit from similarities in background among members, which can reduce conflict and miscommunication. Having fewer differences can also reduce the amount of time a team takes to become an effective working group since there is less need to adjust individual work styles. On the other hand, more diversity in skills and experience brings broader perspectives and different approaches to the team's work. Having members with different skill sets also reduces redundancies and allows for the more efficient assignment of people to various teams.

## Team Building

Team building is an approach to helping a team become an effective performing unit.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Identify how to achieve team success and the underlying value of team building from a broader organizational perspective

### KEY POINTS

- Team building refers to a wide range of activities intended to help a team become an effective performing unit by increasing members' awareness of how they interact with each other.
- Team building is important as a team is being formed and can also be valuable after a team has begun its work.
- Activities that facilitate team building include introductory meetings, collaborative games, simulations, and retreats.

### TERMS

- retreat

An event during which people shift focus from their daily routines and responsibilities to personal or group development.

- team

A group of people linked in a common purpose.

Team building refers to a wide range of activities intended to help a team become an effective performing unit. To achieve this, team building aims to increase team members' awareness and understanding of their working relationships by focusing on their interactions with each other. The purpose is to create a cohesive group from a set of individuals and avoid common pitfalls that can undermine a team, such as conflict, miscommunication, and lack of trust.

Team-building activities require the participation of all team members. These often take place when a team is first created and can include activities such as the team working on a brief exercise to begin the process of collaboration or individuals simply introducing themselves. Sometimes organizations use more intensive and time-consuming activities such as off-site, day-long retreats with an agenda that can include interpersonal bonding exercises, simulations, personality and communication style assessments, and group-dynamics games. The human resources department may coordinate team building, though sometimes companies hire consultants or trainers skilled in facilitating those types of activities.

A team can also benefit from team building after its work has begun. Sometimes teams recognize that members are missing abilities that make collaboration easier, such as problem solving or conflict-resolution skills. Training sessions that address these deficiencies build the team's ability to work together. After people have been working together for a while, social norms can develop that interfere with a team's performance. Individuals might be afraid to challenge decisions if it has become unacceptable to question a team's leader, or work habits such as tardiness to meetings may have become commonplace. A discussion among team members creates an opportunity to address factors that are standing in the way of their working together effectively.

## Stages of Team Development

The Forming–Storming–Norming–Performing model of group development was first proposed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVE

- Evaluate each of the stages in team development for opportunities, threats and strategy

## KEY POINTS

- Teams move through a series of four phases—from when they are formed to when their work is complete.
- During the forming stage, a the team discusses it purpose, defines and assigns tasks, establishes timelines, and begins forming personal relationships.
- The often-contentious storming stage is the period when team members clarify their goals and the strategy for achieving them.
- The norming stage is when the team establishes its values for how individuals will interact and collaborate.
- Performing is the stage of team development when team members have productive relationships and are able to communicate and coordinate effectively and efficiently.
- While teams move through the four stages in sequence, the phases may overlap or be repeated.

## TERMS

- forming

The stage of group development when the team discusses its purpose, defines and assigns tasks, establishes timelines, and begins forming personal relationships.

- storming

The stage of group development when the team clarifies its goals and its strategy for achieving them.

- norming

The stage of group development when the team establishes its values for how individuals will interact and collaborate.

- performing

The stage of group development when team members have productive relationships and are able to communicate and coordinate effectively and efficiently.

Teams move through a series of stages, beginning when they are formed and ending when they are disbanded. Bruce Tuckman identified four distinct phases of team development: *forming*, *storming*, *norming*, and *performing*. Each has a primary purpose and a common set of interpersonal dynamics among team members. Tuckman proposed that all are inevitable and even necessary parts of a successful team's evolution.

### The Forming Stage

The first step in a team's life is bringing together a group of individuals. Individuals focus on defining and assigning tasks, establishing a schedule, organizing the team's work, and other start-up matters. In addition to focusing on the scope of the team's purpose and how to approach it, individuals in the formation stage are also gathering information and impressions about each other. Since people generally want to be accepted by others, during this period they usually avoid conflict and disagreement. Team members may begin to work on their tasks independently, not yet focused on their relationships with fellow team members.

### **Jets in formation**

**All teams go through a life-cycle of stages, identified by Bruce Tuckman as: forming, storming, norming, and performing.**

### The Storming Stage

Once their efforts are under way, team members need clarity about their activities and goals, as well as explicit guidance about how they will work independently and collectively. This leads to a period known as storming—because it can involve brainstorming ideas and also because it usually causes disruption. During the storming stage members begin to share ideas about what to do and how to do it that compete for consideration. Team members start to open up to each other and confront one another's ideas and perspectives.

Because storming can be contentious, members who are averse to conflict will find it unpleasant or even painful. This can decrease motivation and effort by drawing attention away from tasks. In some cases storming (i.e., disagreements) can be resolved quickly. Other times a team never leaves this stage and becomes stuck and unable to do its work. Patience and consideration toward team members and their views go a long way toward avoiding this.

### The Norming Stage

Successfully moving through the storming stage means that a team has clarified its purpose and strategy for achieving its goals. It now transitions to a period focused on developing shared values about how team members will work together. These norms of collaboration can address issues ranging from when to use certain modes of communication, such as e-mail versus telephone, to how team meetings will be run and what to do when conflicts arise. Norms become a way of simplifying choices and facilitating collaboration, since members have shared expectations about how work will get done.

### The Performing Stage

Once norms are established and the team is functioning as a unit, it enters the performing stage. By now team members work together easily on interdependent tasks and are able to communicate and coordinate effectively. There are fewer time-consuming distractions based on interpersonal and group dynamics. For this reason, motivation is usually high and team members have confidence in their ability to attain goals.

While these four stages—forming, storming, norming, and performing—are distinct and generally sequential, they often blend into one another and even overlap. A team may pass through one phase only to return to it. For example, if a new member joins the team there may be a second brief period of formation while that person is integrated. A team may also need to return to an earlier stage if its performance declines. Team-building exercises are often done to help a team through its development process.

# Dan Rockwell's "The Three Pillars of High Performance Teams"

Dan Rockwell ends this brief essay with two recap questions. Make sure that you can answer them for yourself before moving on to the next reading.

## THE THREE PILLARS OF HIGH PERFORMANCE TEAMS



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"The more decisions a leader makes, the further he or she is from leading a high-performance team. ... Make too many command decisions, and you'll doom yourself and your team to mediocrity," Mark Miller in, "The Secret of Teams."

Everyone serious about success is serious about teams. Great teams lift organizations. Lousy teams drain everyone.

Mark Miller explains three pillars of successful teams.

**First**, *success begins with selection*. Every member must possess, "Attitude and aptitude for the job."

Always begin with attitude, not skills. I've made the mistake of becoming enamored with skills and abilities.

## **Bad attitudes ruin teams.**

People with bad attitudes:

1. Expect perfection from the beginning. They respond to imperfection by complaining or quitting. They can't grow and improve.
2. Hate it when others do well.
3. Complain about others while excusing themselves. They blame.
4. Explain why things can't be done. They're "can't do" rather than "can do" people. Favorite words include, "We can't do that because ..."
5. Gossip. Rather than supporting, they tear down.

Additionally, attitude without aptitude results in frustration and failure. If they can't perform, can they learn?

**Second**, *success requires constant training.* "Become a training machine," Mark Miller.

Training topics include:

1. Teamwork. Teach people how to work together if you expect them to work together.
2. Decision making.
3. Problem solving.
4. Leadership.
5. Management.

**Third**, *successful teams develop and enjoy esprit de corps.* Mark says it's the "secret sauce" of high performance teams; the *essential* ingredient. "This is the heart stuff."

"Your team will never perform at the highest possible level if the members of the team don't exhibit genuine care and concern for one another." Mark Miller

## **Surprising benefit:**

Great teams mean you're not alone.

# Leadership and Small Group Communication

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Discuss the various perspectives on how and why people become leaders.
2. Compare and contrast various leadership styles.
3. Discuss the types of power that a leader may tap into.

Leadership is one of the most studied aspects of group communication. Scholars in business, communication, psychology, and many other fields have written extensively about the qualities of leaders, theories of leadership, and how to build leadership skills. It's important to point out that although a group may have only one official leader, other group members play important leadership roles. Making this distinction also helps us differentiate between leaders and leadership. Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2011), 456. The leader is a group role that is associated with a high-status position and may be formally or informally recognized by group members. Leadership is a complex of beliefs, communication patterns, and behaviors that influence the functioning of a group and move a group toward the completion of its task. A person in the role of leader may provide no or poor leadership. Likewise, a person who is not recognized as a "leader" in title can provide excellent leadership. In the remainder of this section, we will discuss some approaches to the study of leadership, leadership styles, and leadership and group dynamics.

## Why and How People Become Leaders

Throughout human history, some people have grown into, taken, or been given positions as leaders. Many early leaders were believed to be divine in some way. In some indigenous cultures, shamans are considered leaders because they are believed to be bridges that can connect the spiritual and physical realms. Many early kings, queens, and military leaders were said to be approved by a god to lead the people. Today, many leaders are elected or appointed to positions of power, but most of them have already accumulated much experience in leadership roles. Some leaders are well respected,

some are feared, some are hated, and many elicit some combination of these reactions. This brief overview illustrates the centrality of leadership throughout human history, but it wasn't until the last hundred years that leadership became an object of systematic study.

Before we move onto specific approaches to studying leadership, let's distinguish between designated and emergent leaders. In general, some people gravitate more toward leadership roles than others, and some leaders are designated while others are emergent. Owen Hargie, *Skilled Interpersonal Interaction: Research, Theory, and Practice* (London: Routledge, 2011), 456. Designated leaders are officially recognized in their leadership role and may be appointed or elected by people inside or outside the group. Designated leaders can be especially successful when they are sought out by others to fulfill and are then accepted in leadership roles. On the other hand, some people seek out leadership positions not because they possess leadership skills and have been successful leaders in the past but because they have a drive to hold and wield power. Many groups are initially leaderless and must either designate a leader or wait for one to emerge organically. Emergent leaders gain status and respect through engagement with the group and its task and are turned to by others as a resource when leadership is needed. Emergent leaders may play an important role when a designated leader unexpectedly leaves. We will now turn our attention to three common perspectives on why some people are more likely to be designated leaders than others and how leaders emerge in the absence of or in addition to a designated leader.



*A group leader may be formally designated by someone inside or outside the group or may emerge naturally during early group meetings.*

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### **Leaders Emerge Because of Their Traits**

The trait approach to studying leadership distinguishes leaders from followers based on traits, or personal characteristics. Charles Pavitt, “Theorizing about the Group Communication-Leadership Relationship,” in *The Handbook of Group Communication Theory and Research*, ed. Lawrence R. Frey (Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1999), 313. Some traits that leaders, in general, share are related to physical appearance, communication ability, intelligence, and personality. John F. Cragan and David W. Wright, *Communication in Small Group Discussions: An Integrated Approach*, 3rd ed. (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1991), 120. In terms of physical appearance, designated leaders tend to be taller and more attractive than other group members. This could be

because we consciously and/or subconsciously associate a larger size (in terms of height and build, but not body fat) with strength and strength with good leadership. As far as communication abilities, leaders speak more fluently, have a more confident tone, and communicate more often than other group members. Leaders are also moderately more intelligent than other group members, which is attractive because leaders need good problem-solving skills. Interestingly, group members are not as likely to designate or recognize an emergent leader that they perceive to be exceedingly more intelligent than them. Last, leaders are usually more extroverted, assertive, and persistent than other group members. These personality traits help get these group members noticed by others, and expressivity is often seen as attractive and as a sign of communication competence.

The trait approach to studying leaders has provided some useful information regarding how people view ideal leaders, but it has not provided much insight into why some people become and are more successful leaders than others. The list of ideal traits is not final, because excellent leaders can have few, if any, of these traits and poor leaders can possess many. Additionally, these traits are difficult to change or control without much time and effort. Because these traits are enduring, there isn't much room for people to learn and develop leadership skills, which makes this approach less desirable for communication scholars who view leadership as a communication competence. Rather than viewing these traits as a guide for what to look for when choosing your next leader, view them as traits that are made meaningful through context and communication behaviors.

### **Leaders Emerge Because of the Situation**

The emergent approach to studying leadership considers how leaders emerge in groups that are initially leaderless and how situational contexts affect this process. Charles Pavitt, "Theorizing about the Group Communication-Leadership Relationship," in *The Handbook of Group Communication Theory and Research*, ed. Lawrence R. Frey

(Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage, 1999), 314. The situational context that surrounds a group influences what type of leader is best. Situations may be highly structured, highly unstructured, or anywhere in between. John F. Cragan and David W.

Wright, *Communication in Small Group Discussions: An Integrated Approach*, 3rd ed. (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1991), 126. Research has found that leaders with a high task orientation are likely to emerge in both highly structured contexts like a group that works to maintain a completely automated factory unit and highly unstructured contexts like a group that is responding to a crisis. Relational-oriented leaders are more likely to emerge in semistructured contexts that are less formal and in groups composed of people who have specific knowledge and are therefore be trusted to do much of their work independently. Fred E. Fiedler, *A Theory of Leadership Effectiveness* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967). For example, a group of local business owners who form a group for professional networking would likely prefer a leader with a relational-oriented style, since these group members are likely already leaders in their own right and therefore might resent a person who takes a rigid task-oriented style over a more collegial style.

Leaders emerge differently in different groups, but there are two stages common to each scenario. Ernest G. Bormann and Nancy C. Bormann, *Effective Small Group Communication*, 4th ed. (Santa Rosa, CA: Burgess CA, 1988), 130–33. The first stage only covers a brief period, perhaps no longer than a portion of one meeting. During this first stage, about half of the group's members are eliminated from the possibility of being the group's leader. Remember that this is an informal and implicit process—not like people being picked for a kickball team or intentionally vetted. But there are some communicative behaviors that influence who makes the cut to the next stage of informal leader consideration. People will likely be eliminated as leader candidates if they do not actively contribute to initial group interactions, if they contribute but communicate poorly, if they contribute but appear too rigid or inflexible in their beliefs, or if they seem uninformed about the task of the group.

The second stage of leader emergence is where a more or less pronounced struggle for leadership begins. In one scenario, a leader candidate picks up an ally in the group who acts as a supporter or lieutenant, reinforcing the ideas and contributions of the candidate. If there are no other leader candidates or the others fail to pick up a supporter, the candidate with the supporter will likely become the leader. In a second scenario, there are two leader candidates who both pick up supporters and who are both qualified leaders. This leads to a more intense and potentially prolonged struggle that can actually be uncomfortable for other group members. Although the two leader candidates don't overtly fight with each other or say, "I should be leader, not you!" they both take strong stances in regards to the group's purpose and try to influence the structure, procedures, and trajectory for the group. Group members not involved in this struggle may not know who to listen to, which can lead to low task and social cohesion and may cause a group to fail. In some cases, one candidate-supporter team will retreat, leaving a clear leader to step up. But the candidate who retreated will still enjoy a relatively high status in the group and be respected for vying for leadership. The second-place candidate may become a nuisance for the new emergent leader, questioning his or her decisions. Rather than excluding or punishing the second-place candidate, the new leader should give him or her responsibilities within the group to make use of the group member's respected status.

### **Leaders Emerge Based on Communication Skill and Competence**

This final approach to the study of leadership is considered a functional approach, because it focuses on how particular communication behaviors function to create the conditions of leadership. This last approach is the most useful for communication scholars and for people who want to improve their leadership skills, because leadership behaviors (which are learnable and adaptable) rather than traits or situations (which are often beyond our control) are the primary focus of study. As we've already learned, any group member can exhibit leadership behaviors, not just a designated or emergent leader. Therefore leadership behaviors are important for all of us to understand even if

we don't anticipate serving in leadership positions. John F. Cragan and David W. Wright, *Communication in Small Group Discussions: An Integrated Approach*, 3rd ed. (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1991), 126.

The communication behaviors that facilitate effective leadership encompass three main areas of group communication including task, procedural, and relational functions. Although any group member can perform leadership behaviors, groups usually have patterns of and expectations for behaviors once they get to the norming and performing stages of group development. Many groups only meet one or two times, and in these cases it is likely that a designated leader will perform many of the functions to get the group started and then step in to facilitate as needed.

Leadership behaviors that contribute to a group's task-related functions include providing, seeking, and evaluating information. Leaders may want to be cautious about contributing ideas before soliciting ideas from group members, since the leader's contribution may sway or influence others in the group, therefore diminishing the importance of varying perspectives. Likewise a leader may want to solicit evaluation of ideas from members before providing his or her own judgment. In group situations where creativity is needed to generate ideas or solutions to a problem, the task leader may be wise to facilitate brainstorming and discussion.

*A group leader with high communication competence can facilitate brainstorming and group discussion to enhance the creativity and quality of group members' ideas.*

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This can allow the leader to keep his or her eye on the "big picture" and challenge group members to make their ideas more concrete or discuss their implications beyond the group without adding his or her own opinion. To review, some of the key leadership

behaviors that contribute to the task-related functions of a group include the following: John F. Cragan and David W. Wright, *Communication in Small Group Discussions: An Integrated Approach*, 3rd ed. (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1991), 131–32.

- Contributing ideas
- Seeking ideas
- Evaluating ideas
- Seeking idea evaluation
- Visualizing abstract ideas
- Generalizing from specific ideas

Leadership behaviors that contribute to a group's procedural-related functions help guide the group as it proceeds from idea generation to implementation. Some leaders are better at facilitating and managing ideas than they are at managing the administrative functions of a group. So while a group leader may help establish the goals of the group and set the agenda, another group member with more experience in group operations may step in to periodically revisit and assess progress toward completion of goals and compare the group's performance against its agenda. It's also important to check in between idea-generating sessions to clarify, summarize, and gauge the agreement level of group members. A very skilled and experienced leader may take primary responsibility for all these behaviors, but it's often beneficial to share them with group members to avoid becoming overburdened. To review, some of the key leadership behaviors that contribute to the procedural functions of a group include the following: John F. Cragan and David W. Wright, *Communication in Small Group Discussions: An Integrated Approach*, 3rd ed. (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1991), 132–34.

- Goal setting
- Agenda making

- Clarifying
- Summarizing
- Verbalizing consensus
- Generalizing from specific ideas

Leadership behaviors that contribute to a group's relational functions include creating a participative and inclusive climate, establishing norms of reflection and self-analysis, and managing conflict. By encouraging participation among group members, a leader can help quell people who try to monopolize discussion and create an overall climate of openness and equality. Leaders want to make sure that people don't feel personally judged for their ideas and that criticism remains idea centered, not person centered. A safe and positive climate typically leads to higher-quality idea generation and decision making. Leaders also encourage group members to metacommunicate, or talk about the group's communication. This can help the group identify and begin to address any interpersonal or communication issues before they escalate and divert the group away from accomplishing its goal. A group with a well-established participative and inclusive climate will be better prepared to handle conflict when it emerges. Remember that conflict when handled competently can enhance group performance. Leaders may even instigate productive conflict by playing devil's advocate or facilitating civil debate of ideas. To review, some of the key leadership behaviors that contribute to the relational functions of a group include the following: John F. Cragan and David W.

Wright, *Communication in Small Group Discussions: An Integrated Approach*, 3rd ed. (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1991), 134–36.

- Regulating participation
- Climate making
- Instigating group self-analysis
- Resolving conflict
- Instigating productive conflict

## Leadership Styles

Given the large amount of research done on leadership, it is not surprising that there are several different ways to define or categorize leadership styles. In general, effective leaders do not fit solely into one style in any of the following classifications. Instead, they are able to adapt their leadership style to fit the relational and situational context. Julia T. Wood, "Leading in Purposive Discussions: A Study of Adaptive Behavior," *Communication Monographs* 44, no. 2 (1977): 152–65. One common way to study leadership style is to make a distinction among autocratic, democratic, and laissez-faire leaders. Kurt Lewin, Ronald Lippitt, and Ralph K. White, "Patterns of Aggressive Behavior in Experimentally Created 'Social Climates,'" *Journal of Social Psychology* 10, no. 2 (1939): 269–99. These leadership styles can be described as follows:

- Autocratic leaders set policies and make decisions primarily on their own, taking advantage of the power present in their title or status to set the agenda for the group.
- Democratic leaders facilitate group discussion and like to take input from all members before making a decision.
- Laissez-faire leaders take a "hands-off" approach, preferring to give group members freedom to reach and implement their own decisions.

While this is a frequently cited model of leadership styles, we will focus in more detail on a model that was developed a few years after this one. I choose to focus on this later model because it offers some more specifics in terms of the communicative elements of each leadership style. The four leadership styles used in this model are directive, participative, supportive, and achievement oriented. Robert J. House and Terrence R. Mitchell, "Path-Goal Theory of Leadership," *Journal of Contemporary Business* 3 (1974): 81–97.

## **Directive Leaders**

Directive leaders help provide psychological structure for their group members by clearly communicating expectations, keeping a schedule and agenda, providing specific guidance as group members work toward the completion of their task, and taking the lead on setting and communicating group rules and procedures. Although this is most similar to the autocratic leadership style mentioned before, it is more nuanced and flexible. The originators of this model note that a leader can be directive without being seen as authoritarian. To do this, directive leaders must be good motivators who encourage productivity through positive reinforcement or reward rather than through the threat of punishment.

*Directive leaders provide structure and clear expectations for their group. To be effective they must be skilled motivators.*

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A directive leadership style is effective in groups that do not have a history and may require direction to get started on their task. It can also be the most appropriate method during crisis situations in which decisions must be made under time constraints or other extraordinary pressures. When groups have an established history and are composed of people with unique skills and expertise, a directive approach may be seen as “micromanaging.” In these groups, a more participative style may be the best option.

## **Participative Leaders**

Participative leaders work to include group members in the decision-making process by soliciting and considering their opinions and suggestions. When group members feel included, their personal goals are more likely to align with the group and organization’s goals, which can help productivity. This style of leadership can also aid in group member socialization, as the members feel like they get to help establish group norms

and rules, which affects cohesion and climate. When group members participate more, they buy into the group's norms and goals more, which can increase conformity pressures for incoming group members. As we learned earlier, this is good to a point, but it can become negative when the pressures lead to unethical group member behavior. In addition to consulting group members for help with decision making, participative leaders also grant group members more freedom to work independently. This can lead group members to feel trusted and respected for their skills, which can increase their effort and output.

The participative method of leadership is similar to the democratic style discussed earlier, and it is a style of leadership practiced in many organizations that have established work groups that meet consistently over long periods of time. US companies began to adopt a more participative and less directive style of management in the 1980s after organizational scholars researched teamwork and efficiency in Japanese corporations. Japanese managers included employees in decision making, which blurred the line between the leader and other group members and enhanced productivity. These small groups were called quality circles, because they focused on group interaction intended to improve quality and productivity. John F. Cragan and David W. Wright, *Communication in Small Group Discussions: An Integrated Approach*, 3rd ed. (St. Paul, MN: West Publishing, 1991), 122–23.

### **Supportive Leaders**

Supportive leaders show concern for their followers' needs and emotions. They want to support group members' welfare through a positive and friendly group climate. These leaders are good at reducing the stress and frustration of the group, which helps create a positive climate and can help increase group members' positive feelings about the task and other group members. As we will learn later, some group roles function to maintain the relational climate of the group, and several group members often perform these role behaviors. With a supportive leader as a model, such behaviors would likely be

performed as part of established group norms, which can do much to enhance social cohesion. Supportive leaders do not provide unconditionally positive praise. They also competently provide constructive criticism in order to challenge and enhance group members' contributions.

A supportive leadership style is more likely in groups that are primarily relational rather than task focused. For example, support groups and therapy groups benefit from a supportive leader. While maintaining positive relationships is an important part of any group's functioning, most task-oriented groups need to spend more time on task than social functions in order to efficiently work toward the completion of their task. Skilled directive or participative leaders of task-oriented groups would be wise to employ supportive leadership behaviors when group members experience emotional stress to prevent relational stress from negatively impacting the group's climate and cohesion.

### **Achievement-Oriented Leaders**

Achievement-oriented leaders strive for excellence and set challenging goals, constantly seeking improvement and exhibiting confidence that group members can meet their high expectations. These leaders often engage in systematic social comparison, keeping tabs on other similar high-performing groups to assess their expectations and the group's progress. This type of leadership is similar to what other scholars call transformational or visionary leadership and is often associated with leaders like former Apple CEO Steve Jobs, talk show host and television network CEO Oprah Winfrey, former president Bill Clinton, and business magnate turned philanthropist Warren Buffett. Achievement-oriented leaders are likely less common than the other styles, as this style requires a high level of skill and commitment on the part of the leader and the group. Although rare, these leaders can be found at all levels of groups ranging from local school boards to *Fortune* 500 companies. Certain group dynamics must be in place in order to accommodate this leadership style. Groups for which an achievement-oriented leadership style would be effective are typically intentionally created and are

made up of members who are skilled and competent in regards to the group's task. In many cases, the leader is specifically chosen because of his or her reputation and expertise, and even though the group members may not have a history of working with the leader, the members and leader must have a high degree of mutual respect.

## **“Getting Plugged In”**

Steve Jobs as an Achievement-Oriented Leader

“Where can you find a leader with Jobs’ willingness to fail, his sheer tenacity, persistence, and resiliency, his grandiose ego, his overwhelming belief in himself?” Alan Deutschman, “Exit the King,” *The Daily Beast*, September 21, 2011, accessed August 23, 2012, <http://www.thedailybeast.com/newsweek/2011/08/28/steve-jobs-american-genius.html>. This closing line of an article following the death of Steve Jobs clearly illustrates the larger-than-life personality and extraordinary drive of achievement-oriented leaders. Jobs, who founded Apple Computers, was widely recognized as a visionary with a brilliant mind during his early years at the helm of Apple (from 1976 to 1985), but he hadn't yet gained respect as a business leader. Jobs left the company and later returned in 1997. After his return, Apple reached its height under his leadership, which was now enhanced by business knowledge and skills he gained during his time away from the company. The fact that Jobs was able to largely teach himself the ins and outs of business practices is a quality of achievement-oriented leaders, who are constantly self-reflective and evaluate their skills and performance, making adaptations as necessary.

Achievement-oriented leaders also often possess good instincts, allowing them to make decisions quickly while acknowledging the potential for failure but also showing a resiliency that allows them to bounce back from mistakes and come back stronger. Rather than bringing in panels of experts, presenting ideas to focus groups for feedback, or putting a new product through market research and testing, Jobs relied on his

instincts, which led to some embarrassing failures and some remarkable successes that overshadowed the failures. Although Jobs made unilateral decisions, he relied heavily on the creative and technical expertise of others who worked for him and were able to make his creative, innovative, and some say genius ideas reality. As do other achievement-oriented leaders, Jobs held his group members to exceptionally high standards and fostered a culture that mirrored his own perfectionism. Constant comparisons to other technological innovators like Bill Gates, CEO of Microsoft, pushed Jobs and those who worked for him to work tirelessly to produce the “next big thing.” Achievement-oriented leaders like Jobs have been described as maniacal, intense, workaholics, perfectionists, risk takers, narcissists, innovative, and visionary. These descriptors carry positive and negative connotations but often yield amazing results when possessed by a leader, the likes of which only seldom come around.

1. Do you think Jobs could have been as successful had he employed one of the other leadership styles? Why or why not? How might the achievement-oriented leadership style be well suited for a technology company like Apple or the technology field in general?
2. In what circumstances would you like to work for an achievement-oriented leader, and why? In what circumstances would you prefer not to work with an achievement-oriented leader, and why?
3. Do some research on another achievement-oriented leader. Discuss how that leader’s traits are similar to and/or different from those of Steve Jobs.

## **Leadership and Power**

Leaders help move group members toward the completion of their goal using various motivational strategies. The types of power leaders draw on to motivate have long been a topic of small group study. A leader may possess or draw on any of the following five types of power to varying degrees: legitimate, expert, referent, information, and reward/coercive. John R. P. French Jr. and Bertram Raven, “The Bases of Social Power,”

in *Studies in Social Power*, ed. Dorwin Cartwright (Ann Arbor, MI: Institute for Social Research, 1959), 150–67. Effective leaders do not need to possess all five types of power. Instead, competent leaders know how to draw on other group members who may be better able to exercise a type of power in a given situation.

### **Legitimate Power**

The very title of *leader* brings with it legitimate power, which is power that flows from the officially recognized position, status, or title of a group member. For example, the leader of the “Social Media Relations Department” of a retail chain receives legitimate power through the title “director of social media relations.” It is important to note though that being designated as someone with status or a position of power doesn’t mean that the group members respect or recognize that power. Even with a title, leaders must still earn the ability to provide leadership. Of the five types of power, however, the leader alone is most likely to possess legitimate power.

### **Expert Power**



*A group member with expertise in an area relevant to the group’s task may draw on expert power to lead the group. For example, a transplant surgeon may lead a team of other doctors*

*and nurses during the surgery while a critical care nurse may take the lead during postsurgery recovery.*

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Expert power comes from knowledge, skill, or expertise that a group member possesses and other group members do not. For example, even though all the workers in the Social Media Relations Department have experience with computers, the information technology (IT) officer has expert power when it comes to computer networking and programming. Because of this, even though the director may have a higher status, she or he must defer to the IT officer when the office network crashes. A leader who has legitimate and expert power may be able to take a central role in setting the group's direction, contributing to problem solving, and helping the group achieve its goal. In groups with a designated leader who relies primarily on legitimate power, a member with a significant amount of expert power may emerge as an unofficial secondary leader.

### **Referent Power**

Referent power comes from the attractiveness, likeability, and charisma of the group member. As we learned earlier, more physically attractive people and more outgoing people are often chosen as leaders. This could be due to their referent power. Referent power also derives from a person's reputation. A group member may have referent power if he or she is well respected outside of the group for previous accomplishments or even because he or she is known as a dependable and capable group member. Like legitimate power, the fact that a person possesses referent power doesn't mean he or she has the talent, skill, or other characteristic needed to actually lead the group. A person could just be likable but have no relevant knowledge about the group's task or leadership experience. Some groups actually desire this type of leader, especially if the person is meant to attract external attention and serve as more of a "figurehead" than a regularly functioning group member. For example, a group formed to raise funds for a

science and nature museum may choose a former mayor, local celebrity, or NASA astronaut as their leader because of his or her referent power. In this situation it would probably be best for the group to have a secondary leader who attends to task and problem-solving functions within the group.

### **Information Power**

Information power comes from a person's ability to access information that comes through informal channels and well-established social and professional networks. We have already learned that information networks are an important part of a group's structure and can affect a group's access to various resources. When a group member is said to have "know how," they possess information power. The knowledge may not always be official, but it helps the group solve problems and get things done. Individuals develop information power through years of interacting with others, making connections, and building and maintaining interpersonal and instrumental relationships. For example, the group formed to raise funds for the science and nature museum may need to draw on informal information networks to get leads on potential donors, to get information about what local science teachers would recommend for exhibits, or to book a band willing to perform for free at a fundraising concert.

### **Reward and Coercive Power**

The final two types of power, reward and coercive, are related. Reward power comes from the ability of a group member to provide a positive incentive as a compliance-gaining strategy, and coercive power comes from the ability of a group member to provide a negative incentive. These two types of power can be difficult for leaders and other group members to manage, because their use can lead to interpersonal conflict. Reward power can be used by nearly any group member if he or she gives another group member positive feedback on an idea, an appreciation card for hard work, or a pat on the back. Because of limited resources, many leaders are frustrated by their inability to

give worthwhile tangible rewards to group members such as prizes, bonuses, or raises. Additionally, the use of reward power may seem corny or paternalistic to some or may arouse accusations of favoritism or jealousy among group members who don't receive the award.

Coercive power, since it entails punishment or negative incentive, can lead to interpersonal conflict and a negative group climate if it is overused or used improperly. While any leader or group member could make threats to others, leaders with legitimate power are typically in the best position to use coercive power. In such cases, coercive power may manifest in loss of pay and/or privileges, being excluded from the group, or being fired (if the group work is job related). In many volunteer groups or groups that lack formal rules and procedures, leaders have a more difficult time using coercive power, since they can't issue official punishments. Instead, coercive power will likely take the form of interpersonal punishments such as ignoring group members or excluding them from group activities.

## **“Getting Real”**

### Leadership as the Foundation of a Career

As we've already learned, leaders share traits, some more innate and naturally tapped into than others. Successful leaders also develop and refine leadership skills and behaviors that they are not “born with.” Since much of leadership is skill and behavior based, it is never too early to start developing yourself as a leader. Whether you are planning to start your first career path fresh out of college, you've returned to college in order to switch career paths, or you're in college to help you advance more quickly in your current career path, you should have already been working on your leadership skills for years; it's not something you want to start your first day on the new job. Since leaders must be able to draw from a wealth of personal experience in order to solve problems, relate to others, and motivate others to achieve a task, you should start to

seek out leadership positions in school and/or community groups. Since you may not yet be sure of your exact career path, try to get a variety of positions over a few years that are generally transferrable to professional contexts. In these roles, work on building a reputation as an ethical leader and as a leader who takes responsibility rather than playing the “blame game.” Leaders still have to be good team players and often have to take on roles and responsibilities that other group members do not want. Instead of complaining or expecting recognition for your “extra work,” accept these responsibilities enthusiastically and be prepared for your hard work to go unnoticed. Much of what a good leader does occurs in the background and isn’t publicly praised or acknowledged. Even when the group succeeds because of your hard work as the leader, you still have to be willing to share that praise with others who helped, because even though you may have worked the hardest, you didn’t do it alone.

As you build up your experience and reputation as a leader, be prepared for your workload to grow and your interpersonal communication competence to become more important. Once you’re in your career path, you can draw on this previous leadership experience and volunteer or step up when the need arises, which can help you get noticed. Of course, you have to be able to follow through on your commitment, which takes discipline and dedication. While you may be excited to prove your leadership chops in your new career path, I caution you about taking on too much too fast. It’s easy for a young and/or new member of a work team to become overcommitted, as more experienced group members are excited to have a person to share some of their work responsibilities with. Hopefully, your previous leadership experience will give you confidence that your group members will notice. People are attracted to confidence and want to follow people who exhibit it. Aside from confidence, good leaders also develop dynamism, which is a set of communication behaviors that conveys enthusiasm and creates an energetic and positive climate. Once confidence and dynamism have attracted a good team of people, good leaders facilitate quality interaction among group members, build cohesion, and capitalize on the synergy of group communication in order to come

up with forward-thinking solutions to problems. Good leaders also continue to build skills in order to become better leaders. Leaders are excellent observers of human behavior and are able to assess situations using contextual clues and nonverbal communication. They can then use this knowledge to adapt their communication to the situation. Leaders also have a high degree of emotional intelligence, which allows them to better sense, understand, and respond to others' emotions and to have more control over their own displays of emotions. Last, good leaders further their careers by being reflexive and regularly evaluating their strengths and weaknesses as a leader. Since our perceptions are often skewed, it's also good to have colleagues and mentors/supervisors give you formal evaluations of your job performance, making explicit comments about leadership behaviors. As you can see, the work of a leader only grows more complex as one moves further along a career path. But with the skills gained through many years of increasingly challenging leadership roles, a leader can adapt to and manage this increasing complexity.

1. What leadership positions have you had so far? In what ways might they prepare you for more complex and career-specific leadership positions you may have later?
2. What communication competencies do you think are most important for a leader to have and why? How do you rate in terms of the competencies you ranked as most important?
3. Who do you know who would be able to give you constructive feedback on your leadership skills? What do you think this person would say? (You may want to consider actually asking the person for feedback).

## KEY TAKEAWAYS

- Leaders fulfill a group role that is associated with status and power within the group that may be formally or informally recognized by people inside and/or outside of the group. While there are usually only one or two official leaders within a group, all group

members can perform leadership functions, which are a complex of beliefs, communication patterns, and behaviors that influence the functioning of a group and move a group toward the completion of its tasks.

- There are many perspectives on how and why people become leaders:
  - Designated leaders are officially recognized in their leadership role and may be appointed or elected.
  - Emergent leaders gain status and respect through engagement with the group and its task and are turned to by others as a resource when leadership is needed.
  - The trait approach to studying leadership distinguishes leaders from followers based on traits or personal characteristics, such as physical appearance, communication ability, intelligence, and personality. While this approach is useful for understanding how people conceptualize ideal leaders, it doesn't offer communication scholars much insight into how leadership can be studied and developed as a skill.
  - Situational context also affects how leaders emerge. Different leadership styles and skills are needed based on the level of structure surrounding a group and on how group interactions play out in initial meetings and whether or not a leadership struggle occurs.
  - Leaders also emerge based on communication skill and competence, as certain communication behaviors function to create the conditions of leadership. This approach is most useful to communication scholars, because in it leadership is seen as a set of communication behaviors that are learnable and adaptable rather than traits or situational factors, which are often beyond our control.
- Leaders can adopt a directive, participative, supportive, or achievement-oriented style.
  - Directive leaders help provide psychological structure for their group members by clearly communicating expectations, keeping a schedule and agenda, providing

specific guidance as group members work toward the completion of their task, and taking the lead on setting and communicating group rules and procedures.

- Participative leaders work to include group members in the decision-making process by soliciting and considering their opinions and suggestions.
- Supportive leaders show concern for their followers' needs and emotions.
- Achievement-oriented leaders strive for excellence and set challenging goals, constantly seeking improvement and exhibiting confidence that group members can meet their high expectations.
- Leaders and other group members move their groups toward success and/or the completion of their task by tapping into various types of power.
  - Legitimate power flows from the officially recognized power, status, or title of a group member.
  - Expert power comes from knowledge, skill, or expertise that a group member possesses and other group members do not.
  - Referent power comes from the attractiveness, likeability, and charisma of the group member.
  - Information power comes from a person's ability to access information that comes through informal channels and well-established social and professional networks.
  - Reward power comes from the ability of a group member to provide a positive incentive as a compliance-gaining strategy, and coercive power comes from the ability of a group member to provide a negative incentive (punishment).

# Decision Making in Groups

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the pros and cons of individual and group decision making.
2. Learn to recognize the signs of groupthink.
3. Recognize different tools and techniques for making better decisions.

## When It Comes to Decision Making, Are Two Heads Better Than One?

When it comes to decision making, are two heads better than one? The answer to this question depends on several factors. Group decision making has the advantages of drawing from the experiences and perspectives of a larger number of individuals. Hence, they have the potential to be more creative and lead to a more effective decision. In fact, groups may sometimes achieve results beyond what they could have done as individuals. Groups also make the task more enjoyable for members in question. Finally, when the decision is made by a group rather than a single individual, implementation of the decision will be easier because group members will be invested in the decision. If the group is diverse, better decisions may be made because different group members may have different ideas based on their background and experiences. Research shows that for top management teams, groups that debate issues and that are diverse make decisions that are more comprehensive and better for the bottom line in terms of profitability and sales. Simons, T., Pelled, L. H., & Smith, K. A. (1999). Making use of difference: Diversity, debate, decision comprehensiveness in top management teams. *Academy of Management Journal*, 42, 662–673.

Despite its popularity within organizations, group decision making suffers from a number of disadvantages. We know that groups rarely outperform their best member. Miner, F. C. (1984). Group versus individual decision making: An investigation of performance measures, decision strategies, and process losses/gains. *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, 33, 112–124. While groups have the potential to

arrive at an effective decision, they often suffer from process losses. For example, groups may suffer from coordination problems. Anyone who has worked with a team of individuals on a project can attest to the difficulty of coordinating members' work or even coordinating everyone's presence in a team meeting. Furthermore, groups can suffer from social loafing, or the tendency of some members to put forth less effort while working within a group. Groups may also suffer from groupthink, the tendency to avoid critical evaluation of ideas the group favors. Finally, group decision making takes a longer time compared with individual decision making, given that all members need to discuss their thoughts regarding different alternatives.

Thus, whether an individual or a group decision is preferable will depend on the specifics of the situation. For example, if there is an emergency and a decision needs to be made quickly, individual decision making might be preferred. Individual decision making may also be appropriate if the individual in question has all the information needed to make the decision and if implementation problems are not expected. However, if one person does not have all the information and skills needed to make the decision, if implementing the decision will be difficult without the involvement of those who will be affected by the decision, and if time urgency is more modest, then decision making by a group may be more effective.

Figure 11.14 Advantages and Disadvantages of Different Levels of Decision Making

Individual Decision Making		Group Decision Making	
Pros	Cons	Pros	Cons
Typically faster than group decision making	Fewer ideas	Diversity of ideas and can piggyback on others' ideas	Takes longer
Best individual in a group usually outperforms the group	Identifying the best individual can be challenging	Greater commitment to ideas	Group dynamics such as groupthink can occur
Accountability is easier to determine	Possible to put off making decisions if left alone to do it	Interaction can be fun and serves as a team building task	Social loafing-harder to identify responsibility for decisions

## Groupthink

Have you ever been in a decision-making group that you felt was heading in the wrong direction, but you didn't speak up and say so? If so, you have already been a victim of groupthink. Groupthink is a group pressure phenomenon that increases the risk of the group making flawed decisions by leading to reduced mental efficiency, reality testing, and moral judgment. Groupthink is characterized by eight symptoms that include: Janis, I. L. (1972). *Victims of groupthink*. New York: Houghton Mifflin.

1. *Illusion of invulnerability* shared by most or all of the group members that creates excessive optimism and encourages them to take extreme risks.
2. *Collective rationalizations* where members downplay negative information or warnings that might cause them to reconsider their assumptions.
3. *An unquestioned belief in the group's inherent morality* that may incline members to ignore ethical or moral consequences of their actions.
4. *Stereotyped views of out-groups* are seen when groups discount rivals' abilities to make effective responses.

5. *Direct pressure* on any member who expresses strong arguments against any of the group's stereotypes, illusions, or commitments.
6. *Self-censorship* when members of the group minimize their own doubts and counterarguments.
7. *Illusions of unanimity* based on self-censorship and direct pressure on the group; the lack of dissent is viewed as unanimity.
8. *The emergence of self-appointed mindguards* where one or more members protect the group from information that runs counter to the group's assumptions and course of action.

*Figure 11.15*



*Avoiding groupthink can be a matter of life or death. In January 1986, the space shuttle Challenger exploded 73 seconds after liftoff, killing all seven astronauts aboard. The*

*decision to launch Challenger that day, despite problems with mechanical components of the vehicle and unfavorable weather conditions, is cited as an example of groupthink.*

Source: [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Challenger\\_flight\\_51-l\\_crew.jpg](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Challenger_flight_51-l_crew.jpg)

While research on groupthink has not confirmed all of the theory, groups do tend to suffer from symptoms of groupthink when they are large and when the group is cohesive because the members like each other. Esser, J. K. (1998). Alive and well after 25 years: A review of groupthink research. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 73, 116–141; Mullen, B., Anthony, T., Salas, E., & Driskell, J. E. (1994). Group cohesiveness and quality of decision making: An integration of tests of the groupthink hypothesis. *Small Group Research*, 25, 189–204. The assumption is that the more frequently a group displays one or more of the eight symptoms, the worse the quality of their decisions will be.

However, if your group is cohesive, it is not necessarily doomed to engage in groupthink.

## **Recommendations for Avoiding Groupthink**

### **Groups Should:**

- Discuss the symptoms of groupthink and how to avoid them.
- Assign a rotating devil's advocate to every meeting.
- Invite experts or qualified colleagues who are not part of the core decision-making group to attend meetings, and get reactions from outsiders on a regular basis and share these with the group.
- Encourage a culture of difference where different ideas are valued.
- Debate the ethical implications of the decisions and potential solutions being considered.

### **Individuals Should:**

- Monitor their own behavior for signs of groupthink and modify behavior if needed.
- Check themselves for self-censorship.
- Carefully avoid mindguard behaviors.
- Avoid putting pressure on other group members to conform.
- Remind members of the ground rules for avoiding groupthink if they get off track.

### **Group Leaders Should:**

- Break the group into two subgroups from time to time.
- Have more than one group work on the same problem if time and resources allow it. This makes sense for highly critical decisions.
- Remain impartial and refrain from stating preferences at the outset of decisions.
- Set a tone of encouraging critical evaluations throughout deliberations.
- Create an anonymous feedback channel where all group members can contribute to if desired.

### **Tools and Techniques for Making Better Decisions**

Nominal Group Technique (NGT) was developed to help with group decision making by ensuring that all members participate fully. NGT is not a technique to be used at all meetings routinely. Rather, it is used to structure group meetings when members are grappling with problem solving or idea generation. It follows four steps. Delbecq, A. L., Van de Ven, A. H., & Gustafson, D. H. (1975). *Group techniques for program planning: A guide to nominal group and Delphi processes*. Glenview, IL: Scott, Foresman. First, each member of the group engages in a period of independently and silently writing down ideas. Second, the group goes in order around the room to gather all the ideas that were generated. This goes on until all the ideas are shared. Third, a discussion takes place around each idea and members ask for and give clarification and make evaluative

statements. Finally, individuals vote for their favorite ideas by using either ranking or rating techniques. Following the four-step NGT helps to ensure that all members participate fully and avoids group decision-making problems such as groupthink.

Delphi Technique is unique because it is a group process using written responses to a series of questionnaires instead of physically bringing individuals together to make a decision. The first questionnaire asks individuals to respond to a broad question, such as stating the problem, outlining objectives, or proposing solutions. Each subsequent questionnaire is built from the information gathered in the previous one. The process ends when the group reaches a consensus. Facilitators can decide whether to keep responses anonymous. This process is often used to generate best practices from experts. For example, Purdue University professor Michael Campion used this process when he was editor of the research journal *Personnel Psychology* and wanted to determine the qualities that distinguished a good research article. Using the Delphi Technique, he was able to gather responses from hundreds of top researchers from around the world without ever having to leave his office and distill them into a checklist of criteria that he could use to evaluate articles submitted to the journal. Campion, M. A. (1993). Article review checklist: A criterion checklist for reviewing research articles in applied psychology. *Personnel Psychology*, 46, 705–718.

Majority rule refers to a decision-making rule where each member of the group is given a single vote, and the option that receives the greatest number of votes is selected. This technique has remained popular, perhaps because of its simplicity, speed, ease of use, and representational fairness. Research also supports majority rule as an effective decision-making technique. Hastie, R., & Kameda, T. (2005). The robust beauty of majority rules in group decisions. *Psychological Review*, 112, 494–508. However, those who did not vote in favor of the decision will be less likely to support it.

Consensus is another decision-making rule that groups may use when the goal is to gain support for an idea or plan of action. While consensus tends to take longer in the first

place, it may make sense when support is needed to enact the plan. The process works by discussing the issues, generating a proposal, calling for consensus, and discussing any concerns. If concerns still exist, the proposal is modified to accommodate them. These steps are repeated until consensus is reached. Thus, this decision-making rule is inclusive, participatory, cooperative, and democratic. Research shows that consensus can lead to better accuracy, Roch, S. G. (2007). Why convene rater teams: An investigation of the benefits of anticipated discussion, consensus, and rater motivation. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 104, 14–29. and it helps members feel greater satisfaction with decisions Mohammed, S., & Ringseis, E. (2001). Cognitive diversity and consensus in group decision making: The role of inputs, processes, and outcomes. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 85, 310–335. and to have greater acceptance. However, groups take longer with this approach and groups that cannot reach consensus become frustrated. Peterson, R. (1999). Can you have too much of a good thing? The limits of voice for improving satisfaction with leaders. *Personality and Social Psychology*, 25, 313–324.

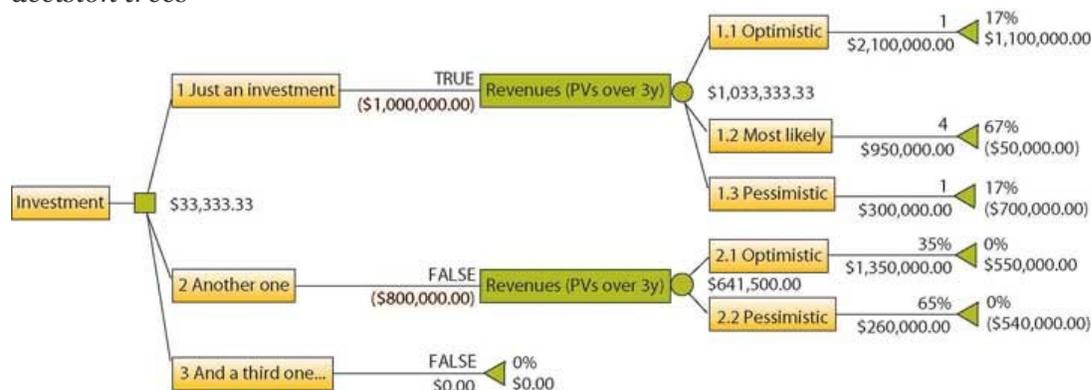
Group decision support systems (GDSS) are interactive computer-based systems that are able to combine communication and decision technologies to help groups make better decisions. Organizations know that having effective knowledge management systems to share information is important. Research shows that a GDSS can actually improve the output of group collaborative work through higher information sharing. Lam, S. S. K., & Schaubroeck, J. (2000). Improving group decisions by better pooling information: A comparative advantage of group decision support systems. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85, 565–573. Organizations know that having effective knowledge management systems to share information is important, and their spending reflects this reality. According to a 2002 article, businesses invested \$2.7 billion into new systems in 2002 and projections were for this number to double every five years. As the popularity of these systems grows, they risk becoming counterproductive. Humans can only process so many ideas and information at one

time. As virtual meetings grow larger, it is reasonable to assume that information overload can occur and good ideas will fall through the cracks, essentially recreating a problem that the GDSS was intended to solve that is to make sure every idea is heard. Another problem is the system possibly becoming too complicated. If the systems evolve to a point of uncomfortable complexity, it has recreated the problem of the bully pulpit and shyness. Those who understand the interface will control the narrative of the discussion, while those who are less savvy will only be along for the ride. Nunamaker, J. F., Jr., Dennis, A. R., Valacich, J. S., Vogel, D. R., George, J. F. (1991, July). Electronic meetings to support group work. *Communications of the ACM*, 34(7), 40–61. Lastly, many of these programs fail to take into account the factor of human psychology. These systems could make employees more reluctant to share information due to lack of control, lack of immediate feedback, the fear of “flaming” or harsher than normal criticism, and the desire to have original information hence more power. Babcock, P. (2004, May). Shedding light on knowledge management. *HR Magazine*, pp. 47–50.

Decision trees are diagrams in which answers to yes or no questions lead decision makers to address additional questions until they reach the end of the tree. Decision trees are helpful in avoiding errors such as framing bias. Wright, G., & Goodwin, P. (2002). Eliminating a framing bias by using simple instructions to “think harder” and respondents with managerial experience: Comment on “breaking the frame.” *Strategic Management Journal*, 23, 1059–1067. Decision trees tend to be helpful in guiding the decision maker to a predetermined alternative and ensuring consistency of decision making—that is, every time certain conditions are present, the decision maker will follow one course of action as opposed to others if the decision is made using a decision tree.

*Figure 11.17*

## decision trees



Using decision trees can improve investment decisions by optimizing them for maximum payoff. A decision tree consists of three types of nodes. Decision nodes are commonly represented by squares. Chance nodes are represented by circles. End nodes are represented by triangles.

Source: [http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/9/93/Investment\\_decision\\_Insight.png](http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/en/9/93/Investment_decision_Insight.png)

## KEY TAKEAWAY

There are trade-offs between making decisions alone and within a group. Groups have greater diversity of experiences and ideas than individuals, but they also have potential process losses such as groupthink. Groupthink can be avoided by recognizing the eight symptoms discussed. Finally, there are a variety of tools and techniques available for helping to make more effective decisions in groups, including the Nominal Group Technique, Delphi Technique, majority rule, consensus, GDSS, and decision trees. Understanding the link between managing teams and making decisions is an important aspect of a manager's leading function.

# Skip Weisman's "The 3 Levels of High-Performance Leadership Communication"

Read the article and differentiate among the three levels.

## Great Leaders Master "The 3 Levels of High-Performance Leadership Communication"

### Summary

National Hockey League Hall of Famer Mark Messier is recognized as one of the greatest leaders in the history of professional team sports. This reputation is backed by the fact Messier is the only player to captain two separate teams to the Stanley Cup Championship.

So, when Messier talks leadership, people should pay attention.

After winning his sixth Stanley Cup in 1994, and the first for his New York Rangers in 54 years, Messier was quoted in a Sports Illustrated article on how he gets the most out of the players as a team captain:

**"To lead effectively, you have to have the trust of those on your team, and to do that you have to find a way to connect with them, to find common ground with every individual. It's a people issue, not a sports (or business/job) issue. The way to find that common thread is compassion."**

Messier's quote describes the highest level of leadership communication, what I call **Level 3 Leadership Communication**.

As Messier's quote reveals, **Level 3 Leadership Communication** is about connecting with the individuals on a team so that the leader understands what uniquely motivates each.

One of the roadblocks to a leader embracing and engaging in **Level 3 Leadership Communication** comes from one of the earliest lessons children learn in life, something called the "Golden Rule."

To recount that lesson from early childhood, the "Golden Rule" states, "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

On the surface it seems like a great approach.

The challenge is that statement comes with a pre-supposition that every person a leader leads will have the same interests, desires and motivations. And those interests, desires, and motivates will remain constant throughout the term the individual is working with you.

These assumptions regularly cause misunderstandings between leaders and their respective team members, which causes the erosion of motivation, morale and trust.

An approach that champion leaders like Messier apply is called "the Champion Leaders' Rule," which states, "Do unto others as they want to be done unto."

This approach takes a concerted effort to invest time and energy in getting to know the personal aspirations and motivations of the individuals on the team, as Messier noted. But as Messier's six Stanley Cup Championships attest, the return on that investment can be tremendous.

There is a strong caveat to applying Leadership Communication Level 3, however, because a leader that has not invested time and energy in building the foundation in **Leadership Communication Level 1** (self-awareness and self-communication) will do more to demotivate team members and will sabotage the trust and commitment necessary to generate high-performance from individual team members.

To prove my point above, think about how many 1:1 'performance review' discussions fail to generate the positive feelings and the performance improvements discussed in the session with a team member. This is often the case even when a leader gets "agreement" from the team member regarding the improvements that need to be developed.

Too many performance review discussions end up creating animosity, distrust and confusion instead of the intended outcome of higher performance.

When a leader invests in themselves in **Leadership Communication Level 1** to:

- become self-aware of how they want and need to show up as a leader, and
- how they need to project themselves when they are in front of their team members (**Leadership Communication Level 2**), plus
- develop their personal internal and external communication, either individually or collectively,

the results received from the team will grow exponentially, and it will happen with you spending significantly less time trying to motivate the team as a unit because the team members will take ownership and responsibility of the effort.

# Martin White's "Virtual Teams: Benefits and Challenges"

Read the article and consider whether or not virtual teams benefit or harm group productivity. How should managers lead virtual teams, keeping in mind that team members or subordinates are at remote locations. Have you ever worked within a virtual team?

## Virtual Teams: Benefits & Challenges



Martin White is a well-known face in the information management world. He has been the Managing Director of [Intranet Focus](#), which provides consulting services related to intranet strategies, for over 15 years. In 2012 Intranet Focus launched a series of Research Notes on topics arising from their consulting work. Topics are broad ranging but often touch on areas of interest to those working remotely.

Martin recently published a research note on Managing Virtual Teams. The [extended research note \[PDF\]](#) provides an overview of good practice in managing virtual teams both in team meetings and between meetings. There are ten recommendations based on Martin's own experience of managing virtual teams dating back to 1975. Appendices set out the elements of a profile of virtual team members and also the structure of a training course that Intranet Focus deliver. An article by Martin on [The management of virtual teams and virtual meetings](#) was published in published in Business Information Review (unfortunately the journal is not open access but Martin is [happy to discuss](#) with those interested.)

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Although the current language of business speaks of 'collaboration' it does not speak of 'virtual collaboration' but of virtual teams. This is useful because not all teams work in a collaborative way with a common cause. A team can be defined as a collection of individuals who are interdependent in their tasks, who share responsibility for outcomes, who see themselves and who are seen by others as an intact social entity embedded in one or more larger social systems, and who manage their relationship across organisational boundaries. A team therefore has a unity of purpose, a social structure, and its members share a common responsibility for outcomes which is not necessarily a common cause.

Probably the most comprehensive survey of virtual team adoption currently available was undertaken by the [Economist Intelligence Unit](#) in late 2009.

The main reasons quoted in the report for establishing virtual teams were

- Improve collaboration with other business units
- Tap into a larger pool of expertise
- Improve competitiveness through a faster response to opportunities
- Cost reduction, especially travel costs and the need for internal meeting spaces
- Improve collaboration with customers, suppliers and partners

The challenges of working in virtual teams were seen as

- Misunderstandings due to differences in culture, language and an inability to read people's expressions
- Difficulty in leading teams remotely
- Difficulty in building camaraderie and trust
- Difficulty in managing the productivity of virtual teams
- Managing information overload

Building a virtual team takes a lot of care and effort. The considerations of language, location, time and culture have to be taken into account in not only the selection of the staff concerned but also in setting up and managing each meeting. There may be potentially a key member of the virtual team who does not have good spoken language skills and it may be necessary to bring in an interpreter who themselves may not have the security clearance to be participating in the meeting.

Adding someone to the team may be required but removing someone could be very difficult. In a physical meeting situation a quiet word to a manager may be effective but in a virtual team that call has to be made by 'phone, and the person who is asked to leave may feel that not enough has been done to enable them to contribute to the meeting. The newcomer may also change the dynamics and levels of trust in the team.

The word TEAM provides a useful mnemonic for virtual teams

- Trust between members of the team, and that their work is worthwhile, is essential. Once broken it cannot be rebuilt
- Engagement is very difficult to achieve in a virtual team and so has to be worked on in a step-by-step approach recognising that each member of the team is an individual
- Achievement, both personal and as a team, should be recognised and used to build engagement and trust

- Membership needs to be kept under continuous review, as just one person that fails to achieve and/or fails to engage and/or fails to understand the importance of trust will have a major impact on every other member

## **Culture, time and place**

Virtual teams have three dimensions to their operation

- National and organisational culture (which includes language)
- Time
- Location

These need to be taken into account at all times in the planning, execution and review of a virtual meeting. A simple '3D' graphic pinned to a desktop can be a valuable mnemonic.

Most multi-national companies adopt English as a corporate language for corporate communications, but certainly companies outside of the USA are made aware every day that this is a guideline and not a command. This is especially the case in Europe where it is difficult to travel more than 500 miles from a city centre without entering a country with a different language.

In meetings with attendees from different countries it is often easier for them to understand English spoken as a second (or even third) language than English spoken by a native speaker because of the use of idioms and inadvertently complex sentence constructions. An important point that is often overlooked is that native speakers of English need to allow time between sentences to give others a chance to 'translate' concepts (rather than words) into their own language.

When planning virtual team meetings it is important to understand that there are four elements of language skills

- The ability to speak
- The ability to understand what is being said
- The ability to write
- The ability to read

Individual team members may have different levels of skill in each of these four areas, and making an assumption to the contrary could lead to major problems with understanding and with decision making.

The concept of location is also complex. Members of the virtual team could be in different floors of the same building, in different buildings, in different countries and of course not even in a building at all but on a train, plane or in a hotel dining room. With audio or Skype

video conferences it might not be at all obvious where the attendees are actually sitting. The location may have an impact on ambient noise levels, on whether the attendee can be overhead by colleagues or strangers, and on whether it is possible for the attendee to write notes of the meeting. This mobile location component is increasingly important as mobile technology enables people to be away from their offices on a more extended basis.

Even a small company operating on a regional basis may want to include one or more of its employees with others in a virtual meeting. It is important to understand that even having one person 'phoning in to what otherwise would be a regular physical meeting will change the dynamics of the meeting. This is especially the case when the person leading the meeting tries to do so from a remote location, or even on vacation. This is because another aspect of location is the distribution effect. If the majority of the participants are in one location then they will be a dominant force in the discussion, especially if the leader of the meeting is also present at that location. They will also have the benefit of being able to see the body language of their colleagues and to time their contributions to the discussion.

Just some of the challenges of time in virtual meetings include different times to start and end the working day and public holidays being taken on different days (even in the UK!). We all want to manage our own diaries and feel uncomfortable when someone calls a meeting at an unsuitable time without prior consultation. Even if we can actually participate in the meeting we may do so in a less-than-constructive way. Even a small change in time, say from 09.00 to 08.30 could be very difficult for people commuting by public transport to accommodate easily.

### **Training requirements**

In view of the increasing importance of virtual teams companies should be providing training in how to manage virtual teams but very few do so. Team leaders in particular will need to gain some additional skills.

These include

- Understanding the skills and experience that team members need to have to be effective members of a virtual team
- Maintaining close working relationships with the managers of team members to ensure they are aware of the organisation and office environment in which team members are operating
- Taking additional time to prepare for a meeting so that for example all team members have the documents they need several days in advance
- Being adept at using conferencing and social media applications to help the team achieve objectives

- Being able to motivate team members that they have not met, and may not have chosen to be a member of the team
- Being ready to call team members by name to contribute, remembering which team members may not have spoken for a period of time
- Accepting that it is very difficult to concentrate on leading a virtual team meeting and make notes of the discussions and actions

A team leader who is excellent in managing physical meetings may not be equally as proficient when managing virtual team meetings. If leading or even participating in virtual teams is a core activity then their performance should be included in annual performance appraisals.

Some companies have built a certification process into virtual team participation so that employees (and managers) initially build up expertise in single country/same time zone virtual meetings and then progress to managing complex multi-national, multi-cultural teams in due course.

## **Recommendations**

My ten recommendations for getting the best out of virtual teams and virtual team meetings are

1. Recognise that virtual teams are going to be increasingly important to any organisation, and ensure that current and potential participants have access to training and mentoring on virtual team management and virtual team meetings.
2. Virtual teams should have very clear objectives so that it is possible to set the investment in the team against the outcome and also that team members bring appropriate skills, expertise and authority to take action.
3. Leadership skills that work for physical teams may not be as valuable in a virtual team environment. Other skills are needed and have to be acquired through practice, not just through reading or teaching.
4. Without good team meetings a virtual team is very unlikely to achieve its objectives and so particular care should be taken in developing guidelines for virtual meetings and for facilitating feedback.
5. Develop good profiles of each team member, taking into account local availability of technology and offices, which can be used to take part in virtual meetings (especially in the case of open-plan offices) and language expertise.
6. Ideally each team should have an opportunity to meet with other members of the team at the outset of the team being set up. Where this is not possible there should be an initial virtual meeting where team members can introduce themselves and gain experience with the technology being used before the first formal meeting of the team.

7. Team dynamics of virtual teams can be quite fragile, often depending on a very high level of trust in people they may not have met before. Introducing a new team member into an existing team may mean starting the process of building trust all over again.
8. Social media applications can be of value in supporting virtual teams but may need to be tailored to specific team requirements.
9. Issues of language and culture need careful consideration but should never be an excuse not to bring specific individuals into a team.
10. Every member of a virtual team should feel that they have gained from their participation the experience that is useful to their local situation and their personal career development.