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PSY 470 INDUSTRIAL PSYCHOLOGY
WEEK 12

SOCIALIZATION & WORKING IN GROUPS

Group Roles and Processes: Learning to Work in Groups

This presentation explores how groups function in work organizations. We'll examine roles, norms, socialization, and the four Cs: cooperation, competition, conflict, and cohesion.





Understanding Work Groups



Definition

Two or more individuals engaged in social interaction to achieve a goal.



Formal Groups

Created by organizations to perform specific tasks and responsibilities.



Informal Groups

Develop naturally, often for social relationships and work discussions.

Groups vs. Teams

Work Groups

Individuals working toward a goal, which may be work-related or social.

- May have individual objectives
- Members may work independently
- Less structured interdependence

Teams

Interdependent workers with complementary skills working toward a shared goal.

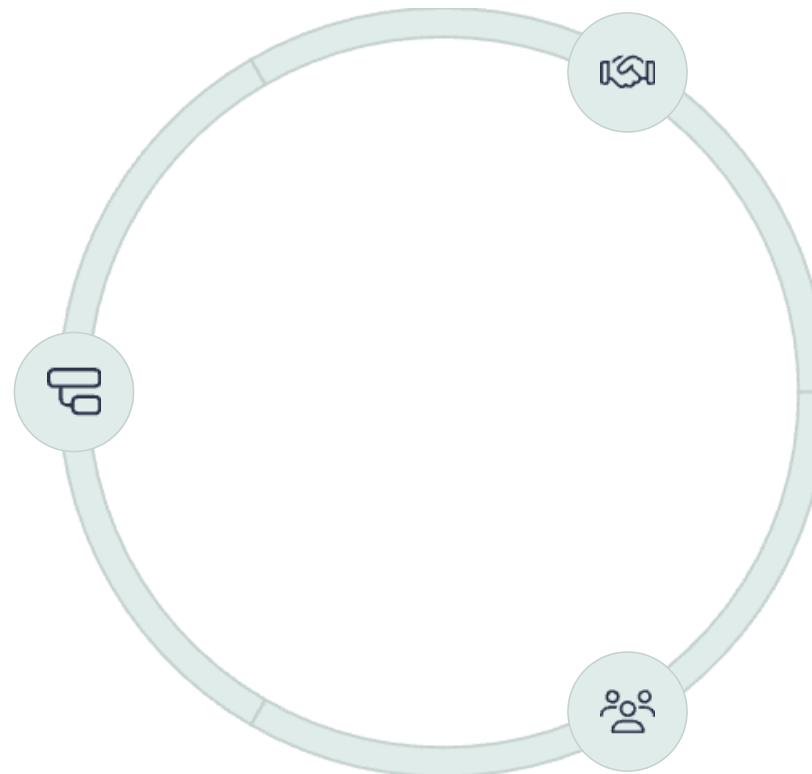
- Strong interdependence
- Complementary skills
- Shared outcomes and accountability

Roles in Work Groups

Group Task Roles

Focused on getting the job done

- Information giver
- Procedural technician
- Evaluator-critic



Group Building Roles

Maintain interpersonal relations

- Encourager
- Harmonizer
- Compromiser

Self-Centered Roles

Satisfy personal rather than group goals

- Recognition seeker
- Aggressor
- Help seeker

Table 11.1 The Various Roles Individuals Play in Work Groups.

Group Task Roles

Initiator-contributor: Recommends new ideas about, or novel solutions to, a problem

Information seeker: Emphasizes getting facts and other information from others

Opinion seeker: Solicits inputs concerning the attitudes or feelings about ideas under consideration

Information giver: Contributes relevant information to help in decision making

Opinion giver: Provides own opinions and feelings

Elaborator: Clarifies and expands on the points made by others

Coordinator: Integrates information from the group

Orientor: Guides the discussion and keeps it on the topic when the group digresses

Evaluator-critic: Uses some set of standards to evaluate the group's accomplishments

Energizer: Stimulates the group to take action

Procedural technician: Handles routine tasks such as providing materials or supplies

Recorder: Keeps track of the group's activities and takes minutes

Group Building and Maintenance Roles

Encourager: Encourages others' contributions

Harmonizer: Tries to resolve conflicts between group members

Compromiser: Tries to provide conflicting members with a mutually agreeable solution

Gatekeeper: Regulates the flow of communication so that all members can have a say

Standard setter: Sets standards or deadlines for group actions

Group observer: Makes objective observations about the tone of the group interaction

Follower: Accepts the ideas of others and goes along with group majority

Self-Centered Roles

Aggressor: Tries to promote own status within group by attacking others

Blocker: Tries to block all group actions and refuses to go along with group

Recognition seeker: Tries to play up own achievements to get group's attention

Self-confessor: Uses group discussion to deal with personal issues

Playboy: Engages in humor and irrelevant acts to draw attention away from the tasks

Dominator: Attempts to monopolize the group

Help seeker: Attempts to gain sympathy by expressing insecurity or inadequacy

Special interest pleader: Argues incessantly to further own desires

Source: Benne & Sheats, 1948.



Role Differentiation

Role Assignment

Members take on various defined roles based on position, status, tasks, or skills.

Role Expectations

Members learn responsibilities and requirements associated with their roles.

Role Performance

Members perform behaviors consistent with their assigned roles.



Role Challenges

Role Ambiguity

Uncertainty over role requirements leads to workplace stress. Workers are unclear about what's expected of them.

Role Conflict

Incompatible expectations from different roles. Example: supervisor balancing team needs versus management directives.

Work-Family Conflict

Competing demands between work roles and family/life roles. Affects job satisfaction and well-being.

Work–Family Conflict



Rising Workplace Demands

Increased expectations and technology enable work at all hours.



Technology Impact

Smartphones create pressure to respond to work messages anytime.



Work–Life Balance

Affects all individuals, not just parents. Impacts job satisfaction.



Organizational Issue

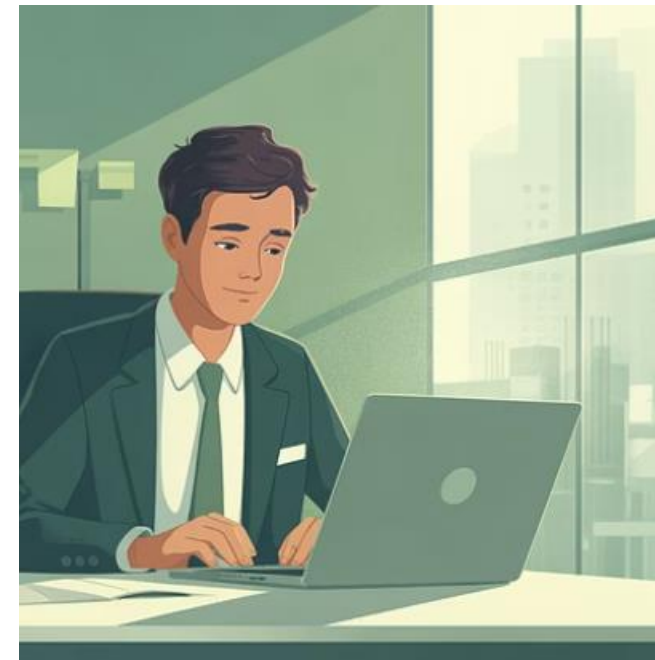
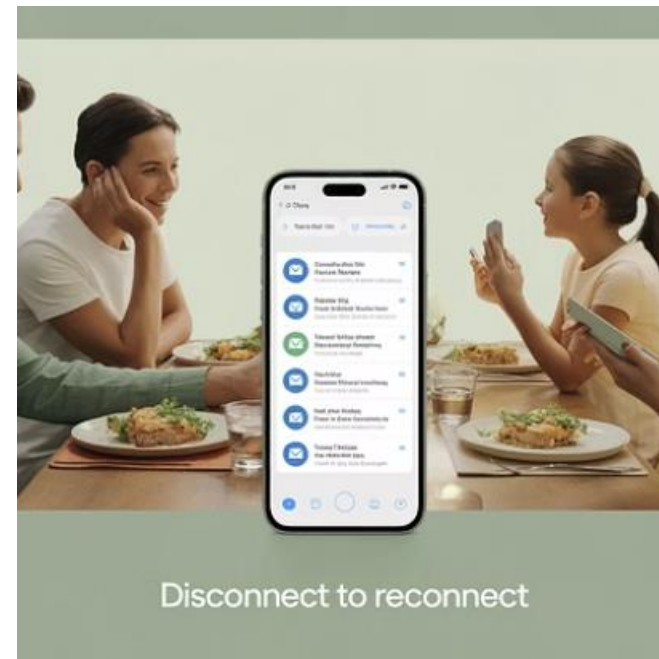
Organizations must address to retain talent and create thriving environments.



“Master your moments”

balancewell

Work-Family Conflict Factors



External factors like the COVID-19 pandemic, housing market issues, and limited parental leave policies intensify work-family conflict. The U.S. and Papua New Guinea are the only countries without required paid parental leave.

APPLYING I/O PSYCHOLOGY

Making Workplaces Work for Working Parents



Because of the pervasiveness of work–family conflict and the need to support parents with young children, the best companies have designed unique and creative ways of supporting parents. Even before children, some companies offer assistance with helping employees become parents. General Mills offers \$10,000 in adoption aid, while Abbott Laboratories offers \$20,000 in adoption aid. Avon offers \$10,000 in adoption aid and \$114,000 for fertility treatments. Ernst & Young (EY) offers \$25,000 for fertility treatments (or egg freezing), surrogacy, or adoption. For those who have just had children, Facebook offers “baby cash” of \$4,000. Google also offers some baby dollars. That helps with all of those diapers and childcare expenses that can be so stressful for new parents.

More commonly, many organizations offer some type of paid leave immediately following birth or adoption. At the time this was published, Virgin was among the most generous companies when it comes to leave, offering a year of paid parental leave. Etsy and Deloitte offer 6 months, and American Express and Twitter offer 5 months paid leave. EY and Bank of America offer 4 months. In addition, some companies offer resources for nursing mothers. Abbott Labs provides discounts on

breast pumps and lactation specialists. EY, Wegmans, and many other companies provide lactation rooms and milk delivery services for moms who are on the road traveling. Companies such as Intel, CA Technologies, EY, MetLife, and Etsy all have post-maternity leave integration programs and coaching.

As children get older, many organizations provide options to help care for children. For example, Boston Consulting Group and Salesforce offer emergency backup childcare in the case that childcare arrangements fall through. Wegmans offers paid leave when parents’ kids are sick. Campbell Soup offers on-site after-school programs, kindergarten classes, and summer programs for kids. Ultimate Software offers \$300 a year to pay for kids’ extracurricular activities, while Kimley-Horn offers tutoring assistance for children. Another common way that companies such as Salesforce, Boston Consulting Group, and Kimley-Horn help to reduce work–family conflict is by offering flexible work hours or compressed work weeks. Deloitte says that 90% of its employees have flexible work schedules. The reality is, however, that there can be a gap between the availability of policies and the use of policies if the organizational culture or supervisor does not support the use of flexibility.

Group Norms

Norms: rules that groups adopt governing appropriate and inappropriate behavior for Members.



Norms can govern work pace, dress code, conversation topics, and even seating arrangements. They provide structure and predictability for group behavior.



How Norms Develop



Explicit Statements

Supervisors or coworkers make direct statements about expectations.



Group History

Past experiences shape what behaviors are acceptable or taboo.



Imported Norms

Members bring norms from previous groups or experiences.



Influential Members

Leaders or powerful members establish and enforce norms.

Purpose of Norms



Group Survival

Ensure economic success and productivity of the group.



Production Regulation

Can facilitate or restrict output based on group needs.



Behavior Predictability

Create consistency in meetings, communication, and interactions.



Group Identity

Express shared values and beliefs that define the group.



Organizational Socialization



Develop Work Skills

Learn specific abilities needed for the job



Acquire Role Behaviors

Understand and adopt appropriate role expectations



Adjust to Group Norms

Adapt to the work group's values and standards

Also called "onboarding," this process integrates new employees into work groups through training, observation, and feedback.

Learning Roles and Norms



Observation and Imitation

Newcomers watch established workers as role models and copy successful behaviors.



Reinforcement

Employees learn through positive feedback for appropriate behaviors and correction for inappropriate actions.



Mentoring

Supervisors and coworkers establish positive relationships and guide newcomers through expectations.

Stages of Socialization

Anticipatory Socialization
Develop realistic expectations about
the job and organization

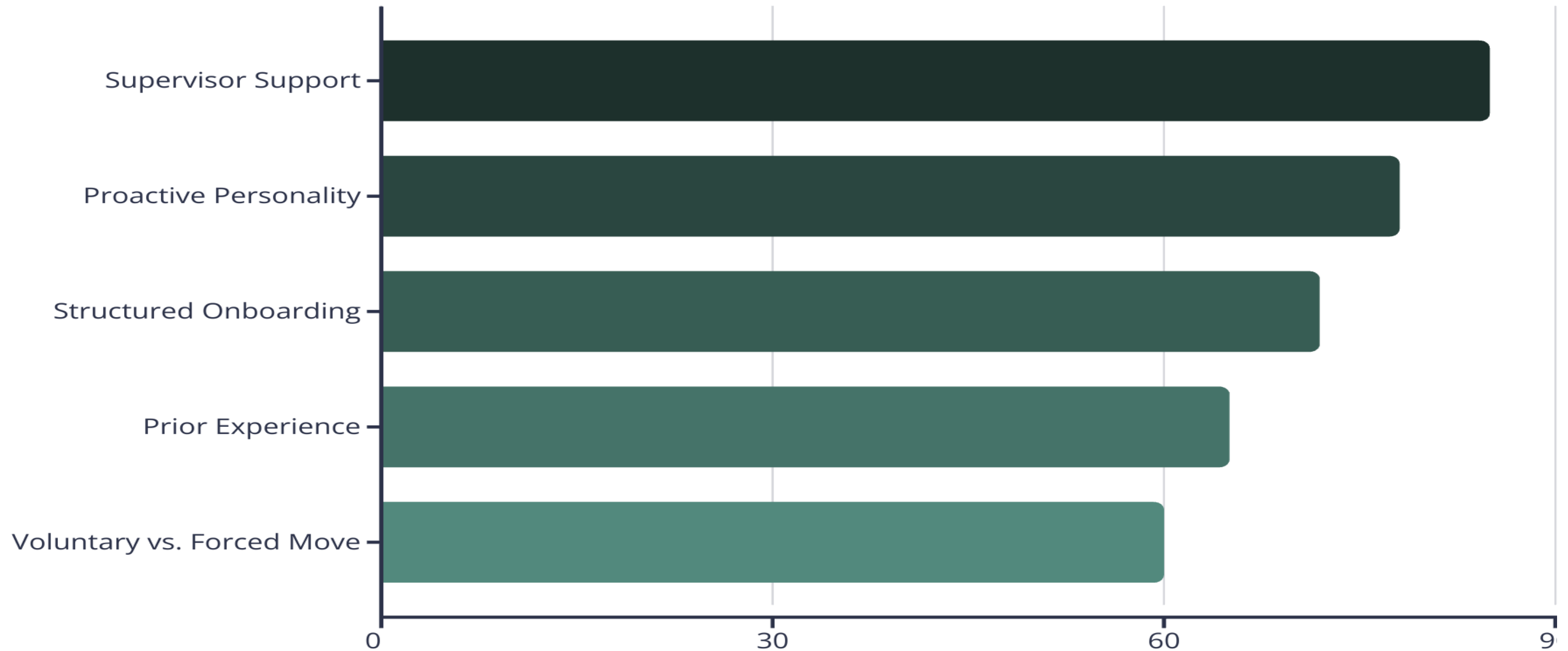
Full Integration
Thorough knowledge of all facets of
work group operations



Accommodation
Learn roles, norms, and begin
developing relationships

Role Management
Master tasks and transition to
regular member status

Factors Affecting Socialization



Employees may be socialized at different rates depending on worker characteristics and work environment. Structured and regular socialization focusing on job learning and career progression is most effective.

Workers can also play an active part in their own socialization:

Proactive Socialization



Information Seeking

Actively gathering knowledge about the organization and role.



Feedback Seeking

Requesting input on performance and behavior.

3

Socializing

Engaging with colleagues beyond required interactions.



Relationship Building

Developing connections with coworkers and supervisors.

New employees who engage in more proactive behaviors such as greater information seeking, feedback seeking, socializing, and relationship building over the first 6 months on the job enhanced their own socialization and job satisfaction (Bauer *et al.*, 2019).



BEFORE YOU START

- ☐ Return a signed contract
- ☐ Complete New Employee Packet
- ☐ Sign up for health insurance, etc.

DURING YOUR FIRST TWO WEEKS

- ☐ Obtain employee identification card
- ☐ Obtain access key card
- ☐ Complete benefits worksheet, etc.

AFTER YOUR FIRST THREE MONTHS, YOU SHOULD KNOW. . .

ABOUT YOUR JOB

- ☐ Department's goals and mission
- ☐ Department organization and personnel
- ☐ Your reporting lines
- ☐ Your duties and responsibilities, etc.

ABOUT YOUR WORK ENVIRONMENT

- ☐ Your work area and office
- ☐ Your colleagues and their job functions
- ☐ How to use e-mail and phones
- ☐ How to obtain/order office supplies and resources, etc.

ABOUT YOUR PAY

- ☐ Your pay rate
- ☐ Overtime policies and regulations
- ☐ Travel reimbursement procedures
- ☐ Accrual policies for sick and vacation days, etc.

ABOUT YOUR RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

- ☐ Benefits available to you and your family
- ☐ Organizational policies on equal employment opportunities, sexual harassment, etc.
- ☐ Formal training available to you
- ☐ Policies on discipline and procedures governing your employment, etc.

Figure 11.2 Example of a new employee orientation checklist.

Person-Environment Fit

Definition

The match between a worker's abilities, needs, and values and organizational demands, rewards, and values.

- Skills match job requirements
- Values align with culture
- Needs met by environment

Outcomes of Good Fit

Research shows positive correlation with:

- Organizational commitment
- Well-being and satisfaction
- Lower turnover intentions
- Reduced workplace stress

Poor Person–Environment Fit



Structure Mismatch

Employee needs structure but works in undefined, fast-paced environment.



Values Mismatch

Employee values creativity but organization prioritizes strict conformity.



Social Mismatch

Employee prefers independent work but organization requires constant collaboration.

Key Takeaways

Work groups and teams are fundamental building blocks of organizations

Roles provide structure and expectations for member behavior

Norms establish rules for appropriate group behavior

Socialization integrates new members into group culture

Person-environment fit affects satisfaction and well-being

The four Cs (cooperation, competition, conflict, cohesion) drive group dynamics





The Four Cs of Group Processes

1

Cooperation

Working together toward shared goals

2

Competition

Striving against others for resources or recognition

3

Conflict

Disagreement or opposition between members

4

Cohesion

Unity, togetherness, and group solidarity

Cooperation: Working Together



Goal Alignment

When workers share goals, cooperation naturally follows. Shared objectives unite team efforts.



Reciprocity Rule

"One good turn deserves another." Workers help each other expecting future assistance.



Task Interdependence

When work depends on others' efforts, cooperation increases. This distinguishes teams from groups.



Cooperation Example: Bookstore Team



Customer Service

Two employees work at the front desk, serving customers efficiently.



Inventory Management

Third worker opens boxes, prices books, and arranges them on shelves.



Schedule Coordination

Workers coordinate lunch breaks and develop mutually agreeable vacation schedules.



When Cooperation Fails: Social Loafing

Definition

Social loafing occurs when individuals working in a group put forth less effort than when working alone.

When It Happens

Most common when individual contributions aren't measured and on simple, non-interdependent tasks.

Contagious Effect

When group members perceive others loafing, they tend to reduce their own efforts too.

Competition: Striving to Win

Definition

Competition involves members working against one another to achieve individual goals, often at others' expense.

Example: In a sales competition, all members compete, but only one becomes top salesperson.

Cultural Context

Western organizations often encourage competition through individual reward systems.

Being competitive is highly valued in many industrialized Western nations.

Competition: Benefits and Drawbacks



Motivates Performance

Can drive people to improve their work output



May Reduce Creativity

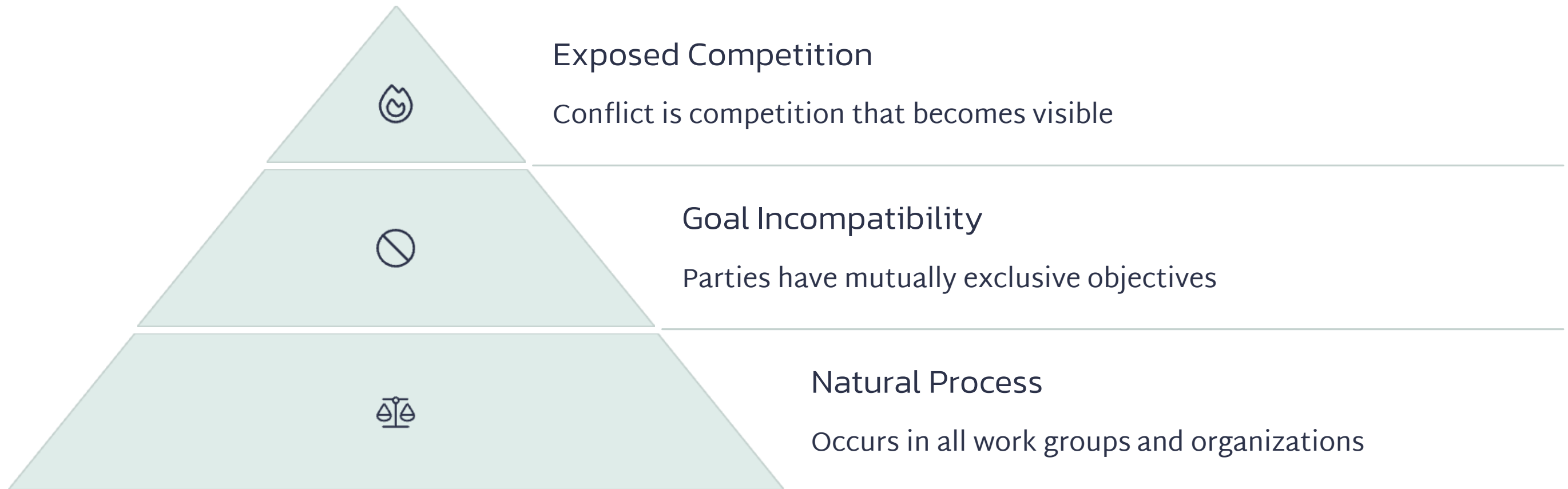
In knowledge-sharing environments, may limit synergy



Can Decrease Performance

When added to existing goals, may actually reduce results

Conflict: When Competition Surfaces



Sources of Workplace Conflict

Resource Scarcity

Competition for limited money, materials, tools, and supplies.



Interdependence

Relying on others to complete your own work.



Organizational Structure

Status differences and hierarchical issues.

Interpersonal Dislike

Simple personality clashes between individuals.

Positive Outcomes of Conflict



Increased Energy

A little conflict energizes members, increasing motivation to perform.



Stimulated Creativity

Challenging existing systems can produce better ideas and innovation.



Better Decisions

Considering opposing views often leads to higher quality decisions.



Increased Satisfaction

Having a voice in decisions can increase commitment to the group.





Negative Outcomes of Conflict



Reduced Cohesiveness

Too much conflict erodes group unity and ability to work together.



Communication Breakdown

Conflicting parties may avoid each other, hampering collaboration.



Decreased Satisfaction

Deceptive messages and rumors damage workplace relationships.



Neglected Work

Energy directed to conflict rather than job performance.

The Thomas–Kilmann Conflict Resolution Model



Dominating

Win-lose approach where one party achieves goals at other's expense.



Accommodation

Lose-win approach where one party gives in to save the relationship.



Compromise

Lose-lose approach where each party gives up something.



Collaboration

Win-win approach seeking mutually beneficial solutions.



Avoidance

Suppressing conflict or withdrawing from the situation.





Managerial Conflict Resolution Strategies

Force Resolution

Manager decides in favor of one party. Quick but may build resentment.

Mediate or Arbitrate

Manager acts as neutral third party to find satisfactory solution.

Introduce Superordinate Goal

Create common objective attractive to both parties to unite them.

Call for Vote

Let majority decide, but be prepared to manage disgruntled minority.

Conflict Stimulation Strategies



Sometimes managers need to stimulate productive conflict. Strategies include asking for suggestions, rotating personnel, creating performance competitions, and implementing group decision-making.



Cohesiveness: The Social Glue

Definition

The degree of attraction among group members that holds people together.



Satisfaction Link

Cohesive groups are usually more satisfied than non-cohesive groups.



Productivity Relationship

Weak link to productivity unless cohesiveness is work-related.



Positive Outcomes

Can increase satisfaction, commitment, and reduce turnover.



Factors That Increase Cohesiveness

1

Group Size

Smaller groups tend to be more cohesive than larger ones.

2

Status Equality

Similar status among members promotes harmony.

3

Member Stability

Low turnover allows stronger relationships to develop.

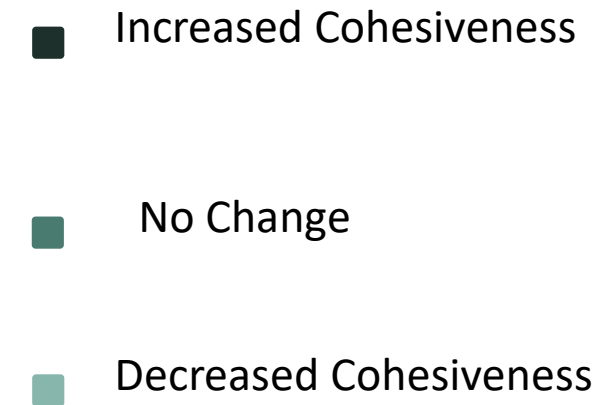
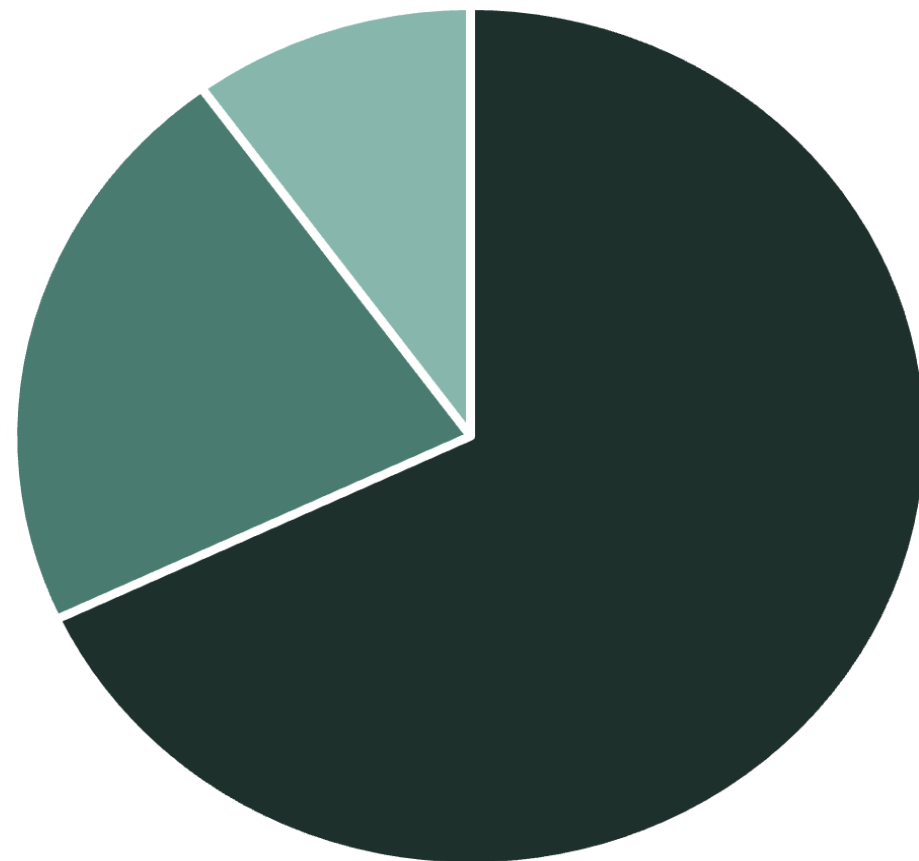
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Member Similarity

Similar backgrounds and attitudes foster closer ties.



External Threats and Cohesiveness



- When groups perceive an external threat or enemy, members tend to pull together.
- This "we-they" feeling can significantly increase cohesiveness as the group unites against a common adversary.

Balancing Diversity and Cohesiveness

Similarity Paradox

Similar members form closer bonds, increasing cohesiveness. However, this similarity can limit creativity and innovation.

Research shows diverse groups often produce more creative solutions and may be more productive overall.



Connect. Create. Conquer.

The challenge for organizations is balancing the cohesiveness that comes from similarity with the innovation that comes from diversity.

The Four Cs in Action: Case Study

Cooperation

Team members coordinate schedules and share knowledge to meet project deadlines.

Cohesiveness

Shared success builds team identity and commitment to future projects.



Competition

Healthy rivalry for recognition motivates higher performance standards.

Conflict

Disagreements about approach lead to better solutions through discussion.



Optimal Levels: Finding Balance

Process	Too Little	Optimal Level	Too Much
Cooperation	Inefficiency, missed goals	Coordinated effort	Groupthink, lack of innovation
Competition	Complacency, low motivation	Healthy motivation	Sabotage, unethical behavior
Conflict	Stagnation, poor decisions	Productive debate	Dysfunction, damaged relationships
Cohesiveness	Disconnection, turnover	Team identity	Resistance to change, conformity

Key Takeaways: Mastering Group Dynamics



Foster Cooperation

Create interdependent tasks and reward collaborative efforts to reduce social loafing.



Manage Conflict

Maintain optimal levels by resolving destructive conflict and stimulating productive disagreement.



Build Cohesiveness

Balance similarity for cohesion with diversity for innovation and creativity.