Group Networks, Membership, and Leadership

Chapter 12

Group Role Classification Model

- Describes functions participants should seek to assume and avoid in groups
- Three categories of roles:
  - Task-oriented roles
  - Maintenance-oriented roles
  - Self-serving roles

Task-Oriented Roles

- Task-oriented roles help the group achieve its goals
  - Initiating
  - Information seeking
  - Opinion seeking
  - Information giving
  - Opinion giving
  - Clarifying
  - Coordinating
  - Evaluating
  - Consensus testing
Maintenance-Oriented Roles

- Maintenance-oriented roles help the group run smoothly
  - Encouraging
  - Gatekeeping
  - Harmonizing
  - Compromising
  - Standard setting

Self-Serving Roles

- Self-serving roles prevent the group from working effectively
  - Blocking
  - Aggression
  - Recognition seeking
  - Withdrawing
  - Dominating
  - Joking
  - Self-confessing
  - Help seeking

Leadership

- Leadership – the ability to influence others
  - Can be positive or negative
  - Groups need effective leadership
  - Effective leaders perform combinations of the task and maintenance roles and demonstrate role versatility
    - Designated leader – person given the authority to exert influence within a group
    - Achieved leader – engage in effective leadership behavior without being appointed
Leadership Styles

- **Type X** – leader who does not trust group members, and are not concerned with their personal achievement
- **Type Y** – more of a risk taker, more trusting of the group, and is concerned with their personal achievement
- **Autocratic (Authoritarian)** – directive leader
- **Laissez-faire** – non-directive leader
- **Democratic** – represents a reasonable compromise between autocratic and laissez-faire leaders

Theories of Leadership

- **Trait theory** – leaders are people who were born to lead
  - Special built-in, identifiable leadership traits
- **Situational theory** – depends on the situation
  - Can be affected by the nature of the problem, social climate, personalities of group members, size of the group, and time available to accomplish the task
- **Functional theory** – several group members should be ready
  - Any task or maintenance activity can be considered leadership

Diversity and Gender

- **Culture**
  - Influences the way group members communicate
  - Can both enhance and impede a group’s operation
    - Mexican, American, Japanese, Native American
- **Gender**
  - Men and women have different goals for communicating
  - Both genders working together enhances productivity
    - Women – more collaborative and participatory
    - Men – more directive
  - The same messages are evaluated differently based on gender
Cooperation vs. Competition

- Individual goals:
  - Congruent or coinciding goals \(\rightarrow\) cooperation
    - Cooperative goal structure – members work together to achieve their objectives
      - Agree that each has an equal right to satisfy needs
      - Each member can get what he or she wants at least some of the time
      - Plays for power are avoided
      - Do not attempt to manipulate each other by withholding information or dissembling
  - Contradictory goals \(\rightarrow\) competition
    - Competitive goal structure – members hinder one another's efforts to obtain a goal

Supportiveness vs. Defensiveness

- Defensive behavior – occurs when one perceives a threat or an attack on his or her “self-concept”
  - Evaluation vs. description
  - Control vs. problem orientation
  - Strategy vs. spontaneity
  - Neutrality vs. empathy
  - Superiority vs. equality
  - Certainty vs. provincialism
    - Defensive nonverbal cues
    - Supportive nonverbal cues

Cyberspace Groups

- Online groups experience many of the same problems that face-to-face groups experience
- Online group members perform roles:
  - Hackers
  - Phreakers
  - Moderators
  - Net police
- Continuous membership evolution
Improve Group Communication

- Encourage an open, supportive environment
  - Contributions and communication from all members
- Establish a cooperative climate
  - Coordination, not manipulation
- Be ready to perform needed leadership and membership roles
  - Task roles present and accounted for
  - Maintenance roles effectively carried out
  - Negative, individual, self-centered roles deemphasized
- Encourage continual improvement
  - Develop insights needed to facilitate more effective interaction