



Group Tips

The following information has been compiled from various resources and training sessions attended by SEE-Change staff for the benefit of other SEE-Change members.

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Contents

More About Groups	2
Developing Effective Work Groups.....	4
Fostering The Effectiveness Of Groups At Work.....	5
Complexity, Collaboration and Business as UN-usual	16

More About Groups

- Groups can either help get the job done or work against achieving organisation goals.
- There are two types of groups – the formal and the informal.
 - The formal group is held together by the goals of the organisation.
 - The informal group is formed and is bound by the shared ideas and values of its individual members.
- Groups provide an environment that helps shape individual's attitudes to workmates, bosses and the work itself.
- The work group is often more powerful than are managers in determining how individuals think and act – based on the norms accepted and imposed by the group.
- When group thinking and acting relates to the quality of the work being done, managers need to be able to influence these group norms.
- Certain behaviours must take place before individuals can form groups.
 - First, they must interact with each other.
 - They can then see how they relate to others, whether they can get on together, and what ideas and attitudes they hold in common.
 - If they perceive that they share common goals – not necessarily work goals – they can then form a group.
- Managers should consider using the power of groups when they want decisions to be accepted, and implemented, by the group.
 - Sometimes a manager knows what the right solution is, but is wise to let a group work through the problem to see how it affects them. Even though they come up with the same solution, it is their idea, and they will be committed to making it work.
 - Sometimes, too, they will come up with a slightly better version of the manager's solution, because of their more detailed knowledge of the job to be done.
- Finally, managers need to understand how groups – and individuals – develop high or low morale, for if there is low morale throughout the workforce, you can't expect very high productivity.
 - On the other hand, high morale by itself isn't the whole answer either. Managers need to know how morale is generated, and how its power can be channeled into quality work.

Stages of Group Development

Often quoted, often misunderstood. Bruce Tuckman's classic description of the stages of group development is easy to understand and remember, but it helps to go back and look at what's behind each stage.

Bruce W Tuckman is a respected educational psychologist who first described the (then) four stages of group development in 1965, soon after leaving Princeton. Looking at the behaviour of small groups in a variety of environments, he recognised the distinct phases they go through, and suggested they need to experience all four stages before they achieve maximum effectiveness. He refined and developed the model in 1977 (in conjunction with Mary Ann Jensen) with the addition of a fifth stage. Since then, others have attempted to adapt and extend the model – although sometimes with more of an eye on rhyme than reason.

FOUR STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Tuckman described the four distinct stages that a group can go through as it comes together and starts to operate. This process can be subconscious, although an understanding of the stages can help a group reach effectiveness more quickly and less painfully.

Stage 1: Forming

Individual behaviour is driven by a desire to be accepted by the others, and avoid controversy or conflict. Serious issues and feelings are avoided, and people focus on being busy with routines, such as team organisation, who does what, then to meet, etc. But individuals are also gathering information and impressions – about each other, and about the scope of the task and how to approach it. This is a comfortable stage to be in, but the avoidance of conflict and threat means that not much actually gets done.

Stage 2: Storming

Individuals in the group can only remain nice to each other for so long, as important issues start to be addressed. Some people's patience will break early, and minor confrontations will arise that are quickly dealt with or glossed over. These may relate to the work of the group itself, or to roles and responsibilities within the group. Some will observe that it's good to be getting into the real issues, whilst others will wish to remain in the comfort and security of stage 1. Depending on the culture of the organisation and individuals, the conflict will be more or less suppressed, but it'll be there, under the surface. To deal with the conflict, individuals may feel they are winning or losing battles, and will look for structural clarity and rules to prevent the conflict persisting.

Stage 3: Norming

At Stage 2 evolves, the "rules of engagement" for the group become established, and the scope of the group's tasks or responsibilities are clear and agreed. Having had their arguments, they now understand each other better, and can appreciate each other's skills and experience. Individuals listen to each other, appreciate and support each other, and are prepared to change pre-conceived views: they feel they're part of a cohesive, effective group. However, individuals have had to work hard to attain this stage, and may resist any pressure to change – especially from the outside – for fear that the group will break up, or revert to a storm.

Stage 4: Performing

Not all groups reach this stage, characterised by a state of interdependence and flexibility. Everyone knows each other well enough to be able to work together, and trusts each other enough to allow independent activity. Roles and responsibilities change according to need in an almost seamless way. Group identity, loyalty and morale are all high, and everyone is equally task-orientated and people-orientated. This high degree of comfort means that all the energy of the group can be directed towards the task(s) in hand.

Ten years after first describing the four stages, Bruce Tuckman revisited his original work and described another, final, stage:

Stage 5: Adjourning

This is about completion and disengagement, both from the tasks and the group members. Individuals will be proud of having achieved much and glad to have been part of such an enjoyable group. They need to recognise what they've done, and consciously move on. Some authors describe stage 5 as "Defining and Mourning", recognising the sense of loss felt by group members.

Tuckman's original work simply described the way he had observed groups evolve, whether they were conscious of it or not. But for us the real value is in recognising where a group is in the process, and helping it to move to the Perform stage. In the real world, groups are often forming and changing, and each time that happens, they can move to a different Tuckman Stage. A group might be happily Norming or Performing, but a new member might force them back into Storming. Seasoned leaders will be ready for this, and will help the group get back to Performing as quickly as possible.

Many work groups live in the comfort of Norming, and are fearful of moving back into Storming, or forward into Performing. This will govern their behaviour towards each other, and especially their reaction to change.

Developing Effective Work Groups

Here are some useful techniques to choose from:

- Encourage freedom of speech amongst members and supervisors, do not punish honesty and constructive comment; be seen to act on problems.
- Treat all members equally, do not play favourites, value your people as your biggest asset.
- Place the group in a friendly, positive and supportive environment – paint the walls and encourage excellence and progressive ideas.
- Give over some decision-making autonomy to members, let them organise their jobs around the targets you set.
- Ensure the group has the technology and facilities to be their best.
- Keep groups smaller rather than larger, foster people getting to know each other so they can help each other.
- Reduce turnover of members, identify why people leave and act on controllable causes.
- Cultivate informal leaders in order that they (rather than you) bring the group along.
- Identify and develop talent within the ranks to build later loyalty and future leadership.
- Share knowledge and encourage others to do the same, don't build walls of fear.
- See differences settled with a win-win mentality amongst members.
- Praise frequently and sincerely – do not flatter.
- Carefully select new members on the basis of shared values – one wrong person
- If the group is stale or stuck, think about introducing a person who can act as an agent of change to chart a new direction.

Fostering The Effectiveness Of Groups At Work

By Patrick J. Ward and Robert C. Preziosi

It is clear that the mandate for organizational leaders is changing. The tasks of controlling and directing are evolving into facilitating-including coaching, encouraging, listening, and teaching. At the same time the focus on total quality management (TQM) and continuous improvement have given rise to an increasing emphasis on the development of groups. Yet danger lurks down the road for organizations if they do not understand how groups develop and function and if they do not recognize and plan for the complexity involved in fostering the group experience. Management training must prepare organizational leaders for their responsibilities as facilitators of group development.

Historically, many managers have begun their careers as line workers who have shown aptitude and/or loyalty in production. These characteristics, however, have not always been accompanied by interpersonal skills; people's experiences as line workers do not generally make them aware of the complexities of forming and working with groups, nor do these experiences teach them the skills they need to facilitate groups successfully.

The success of groups in the workplace depends on training managers-as well as line workers-in how groups develop and what skills are required to use a group effectively. Success also depends on an organizational environment that encourages communication, the exchange of ideas, and the ability to be self-critical in the interest of improvement. Organizational members must be open to feedback regarding themselves and their work groups. Groups must be tied to the goals and purposes of the organization, and these connections need to be clear. The function of each group needs to be supported by top management. Finally, after being trained, both supervisors and non-supervisory employees need to nurture communication skills. Group skills should become part of the criteria on which people's performance is evaluated. In fact, ideally, evaluation would be done with the group rather than the individual.

Instead, managers in the United States often have been trained to focus on numbers. They are usually evaluated according to whether they meet quotas and stay under budget. In other words, they are judged on their production, not their communication (D'Aprix, 1982). Consequently, in dealing with employees, they become more emotionally distant to maintain objectivity and to be "businesslike"; and this behaviour is sometimes interpreted as lacking emotion. The interpersonal skills needed for effective group work are often overtly as well as covertly discouraged. Under such norms, it is difficult to cultivate the skills necessary to enhance communication, to foster effective group work, and to be open to feedback concerning the needs of the organization.

When faced with problems within the organization, first-line supervisors may feel pressured and defensive in protecting their interests and advancement. This is particularly true if they are not properly trained in problem solving, communication, and systems practices. Managers and supervisors who lack such training may revert to rigidly doing as they are told without questioning (Argyris, 1991). This form of "learned helplessness" creates frustration but at the same time absolves them of responsibility. The organization achieves a sense of predictability and "control," but at the expense of responsiveness and continuous improvement.

Finally, managers and supervisors succumb to attribution-attributing the causes of difficulty to others-while

sensing that they have not been adequately prepared or supported. Thus, they may be blind to their own ineffectiveness and may lose contact with the overall goals of the organization. The primary focus of management-and, therefore, of the organization-ultimately becomes control in the interest of self-protection.

Without effective leadership, workers feel frustrated, ignored, and isolated. Lacking avenues of communication, they sublimate their anger and resentment, thus fostering resistance, sabotage, and passive-aggressive patterns.

To throw these groups together without appreciation for the complexity and power (both constructive and destructive) of the group process is a waste of time, money, and potential. If the proper organizational climate and support systems are not already in place, TQM, continuous improvement, and the use of groups should be postponed until training and team-building efforts can be completed.

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE GROUP EXPERIENCE IN ORGANIZATIONS

Groups can be a vital and important organizational tool. Gersick (1988) points out that “organizations largely consist of permanent and temporary groups,” from work units, to project teams, to special committees or task forces. Beckhard (1972) suggests the following major purposes for using groups in the workplace:

- To set goals or priorities;
- To analyse work and assign responsibility and accountability;
- To examine the norms, both formal and informal, of the organization; and
- To examine the relationships of the people doing the work.

The potential of groups to assist their organizations is enormous. For example, organizations are increasingly using task groups to meet the challenges of legal requirements. Employee input into job analysis, for instance, helps organizations in the U.S. to comply with laws regarding Equal Employment Opportunity, Affirmative Action, and rights regarding “protected groups.” Improper job analysis, along with lack of awareness of changing laws and regulations, can make an organization vulnerable to lawsuits and charges of noncompliance (veres, Locklear, & Sims, 1990). Similarly, groups can be used to meet other challenges, such as those of employee testing. Managers can be encouraged to work with groups in monitoring compliance with legal mandates governing employment tests, aptitude tests for promotion and advancement, lie-detector and drug-screen tests for potential employees, and treatment of employees and applicants with disabilities.

Knowledge of group development and dynamics can assist supervisors and employees in exploiting the opportunities presented in these cooperative experiences. The use of groups can be extremely effective in an organization, not only in protecting it from legal problems but also in:

- Helping to infuse new ideas and attitudes into the culture;
- Encouraging employee participation and nurturing a sense of involvement and increased personal investment;
- Providing employees with new insights regarding their own and their groups’ behaviors;
- Offering an alternative means for evaluating performance and evaluating the organization’s abilities to support employee efforts;
- Providing an opportunity for employees to learn through observation and modelling, thereby increasing their own skill levels and contributing more to their groups and the organization as a whole;
- Representing a microcosm and providing indicators of how clients and customers may view the

- organization; and
- Teaching employees how to listen and communicate-how to check their perceptions and avoid misconceptions.

It is important to note that groups also can have devastating effects if they are managed poorly, thereby driving communication underground, creating negative agendas, and setting up divisive alliances. If groups are to be used effectively, organizations must help all employees to understand the development and the life cycle of a group. For managers, such training could ease the pressures of supervising and could teach the skills associated with successful facilitating; for non-managerial employees, this training could teach them to derive maximum benefit from the group experience.

Success in this endeavour requires the cooperation and participation of all levels in the organization. Group leadership is a skill that can be taught, but the learner must be patient and dedicated and must grow to understand and respect the group process. It is equally important that senior management understand and respect the group process and lend it their support. For optimal effectiveness in group work to occur, the organization must consider such work to be part of a comprehensive attempt to enhance communication. Group work is not a panacea; it is one tool among many for increasing effectiveness in meeting tactical and strategic challenges.

THE STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

As every group is a collection of individuals, each experience is unique and requires special consideration. Despite the differences among groups, though, a certain developmental progression or life cycle can be expected. The stages of group life outlined in the remainder of this article – pre-group, initial, transition, working, final, and post-group – are meant to suggest the complexity of the group experience. This information is intended to define and describe some of the dynamics that can be expected in working with a group. The discussion is presented in terms of the leadership functions and the member functions that are applicable in each stage. In addition, Table 1 identifies the key issues at each stage.

Table 1. Key Issues at Each Stage of Group Development

Stage	Leader Issues	Member Issues	Leader/Member Issues
Pre-group	Gaining commitment from top management	Developing enthusiasm for the group	Needs assessment; diagnosis
Initial	Training for participation in group	Committing to organizational needs	Group-process skill development
Transition	Encouraging autonomy of group members	Working through conflicts	Conflict resolution; mediation
Working	Helping group members to interpret behaviors; facilitating and encouraging	Supporting one another	Esteem-building behaviour
Final	Reinforcing behavioural changes by asserting influence	Completing any unfinished business	Celebration of success
Post-group	Making resources for change available	Monitoring group effectiveness	Measurement

Although all stages of group work are important, it is most important to focus on pregroup and postgroup activities. The other stages occur naturally, while those efforts before and after the group experience require concerted energy and special effort. When the leader and the members know what to expect at various stages, they can accomplish more, follow through better in group meetings, and increase their chances of putting energy and ideas to use.

In addition to the leadership functions listed below, it is also important that the leader maintain communication with top management and with other groups. The leader is the primary linkage between the group and the other parts of the organization.

Pre-group Stage

It is imperative that every group have a purpose, a clear reason for being. Today many groups are formed as quality-improvement teams or task groups whose job is to tackle certain problems. However, a group must work on its own processes as well as the problems that it is assigned. Also, the group must be empowered to offer solutions and suggestions; and, regardless of whether these solutions and suggestions are accepted and acted on, the organization must validate and respond to them.

In addition to a reason for being, a group must have specific goals that are both understood and supported by top management. The group members must be able to answer “yes” to a number of questions:

- Do the members of the group have the assurance that their findings and recommendations will be considered?
- Do they have established parameters under which to operate?
- Do they understand not only the problem that they are to address but also the organization’s objectives in the identified area?
- Do they have a clear understanding of the organization’s goals?
- Do they have the assurance of top management that their work is of more than just passing interest and is truly important?

Leadership Functions in the Pre-group Stage

- Developing a clearly written proposal for the formation of the group, outlining its purpose and goals.
- Conducting needs-assessment interviews to gain input from potential members about needs, thereby decreasing resistance and promoting a sense of group ownership on the part of potential members.
- Presenting the proposal to top managers and obtaining their agreement concerning the group’s scheduling, purpose, and goals.
- Making decisions about the size of the group and who needs to be included in the membership. (The ideal group size is five to eight members, although as many as twelve may be included. If the group becomes too large, two groups may be formed to divide responsibilities and coordinate efforts; or the fact that many people need to be included may be an indication that the goals of the group need to be simplified and further narrowed.)
- Identifying other groups, departments, or external stakeholders who may need to be involved in group goals. For example, if the group is focused on an issue of production, do any suppliers or providers also need to have input?

- Organizing practical details for meetings, including arranging a comfortable setting and determining appropriate time frames. This organization also includes coordinating and developing any necessary audiovisual materials. The more prepared the leader is for the first sessions, the more seriously the members will take the group.
- Arranging preliminary group discussions to allow members to become acquainted and to orient and prepare them for a successful experience.
- Preparing psychologically for the leadership tasks and meeting with a co-facilitator if appropriate.

Group Members' Functions in the Pre-group Stage

- Including themselves in the discussions concerning the group and its work.
- Learning the facts about the group that might have an impact on them during their tenure.
- Deciding what they feel the outcome of their efforts should be. (Anxiety about the group may be lessened and enthusiasm strengthened if the group members feel that they can prepare. Also, the members will feel a greater sense of control and ownership.)

Initial Stage

During this stage the ground rules are set. The parameters of the group are established. Members identify appropriate issues to be considered as well as those that might be considered in the future. If the group is meeting on a specific production issue, for example, the members determine whether the concerns raised by group members have to do with that issue and whether the group can do anything about those concerns. It is important in this stage to clarify the parameters and narrow the group's focus.

The Central issue in this stage is trust. The members are testing the group for comfort and trying to determine identities for themselves. They display high degrees of "socially acceptable" or restrained behaviour, and facades may be strong. Negative feelings may arise as the members experiment to see which feelings are acceptable and as they learn group norms, both implicit and explicit. In addition, positive connections may begin to develop. Each member may ask himself or herself questions such as these:

- Will this group make a difference?
- Will it be beneficial to me?
- If I am expected to be honest, will my honesty be used against me if I disagree?
- If I disagree, is it safer to hide my opinion and simply go along with the other members?

The members may slip into problem solving or may attempt to explain away problems to avoid taking risks and identifying their own needs or concerns. They also may focus on other members' personal needs, thereby sublimating their own needs.

Leadership Functions in the Initial Stage

- Laying out general guidelines and teaching the group members how to participate actively (both by example and through didactic information): how to be specific, how to clarify, how to give and receive feedback appropriately. This function may include teaching the basics of group process, including the importance of active listening. (Some instruction may take place during pregroup sessions).
- Providing an activity through which the group members can become acquainted and can share their expectations of the group. “Brainstorming” activities also may be used to identify potential concerns. These concerns can then be prioritized by the group and placed on the group’s agenda.
- Assisting members in expressing themselves; pointing out linkages among the members’ ideas.
- Clarifying the division of responsibility; helping the members to identify their personal roles in the group.
- Giving positive feedback for member participation.
- Providing structure and direction for the group while allowing for member participation.
- Identifying the members’ verbal and nonverbal cues.
- Recognizing and providing an opportunity for discussion of mistrust or misgivings about the group process.
- Stressing the importance of confidentiality regarding discussions within the group. (In identifying problems with the organization, the group members can put themselves at risk. It is imperative that they feel safe to critically examine the organization.)

Group Members’ Functions in the Initial Stage

- Establishing a commitment to the needs of the organization, as opposed to purely personal needs.
- Participating in “brainstorming” and other team activities.
- Being responsible for their own reactions. For example, a group member who assumes responsibility says something like “I feel confused about what is happening right now” instead of “This group is confusing.”
- Listening.
- Offering suggestions for alternatives if they disagree with the group’s focus or procedures.
- Letting go of personal agendas. All members must guard against letting their personal agendas take precedence over group needs. At first the members may not be aware of their agendas, but in time these agendas become clearer.

Transition Stage

This phase in the group’s development is marked by the dropping of facades and restrained behaviour and may be characterized by challenges to the leader and other group members. Resistance and conflict become more apparent. Members may be experimenting with their group identities and checking to see how much disagreement or conflict will be accepted as well as how it will be handled. This is a critical stage. The leader may feel threatened and overwhelmed, with the sense that everything is falling apart.

Whenever roles or expectations or organizational members are changed, hidden agendas and informal power structures may come to the surface. Although this development may seem like regression, it is actually a sign that the group is advancing.

If the members represent different work areas, resistance may come from the supervisors of those areas, who feel threatened or left out. It is important to remember the “linking” function of the group leader in keeping top management and other organizational groups informed. If resistance is encountered from other managers or supervisors, it might be wise for the leader to try to enlist their support and “expertise.”

Leadership Functions in the Transition Stage

- Encouraging and rewarding the open sharing of group members' reactions during meetings.
- Validating feedback while keeping the superordinate goal of the organization in focus.
- Identifying subgroupings and ensuring that no members are taken advantage of or excluded.
- Assisting the members in recognizing their own patterns of defensiveness or resistance.
- Knowing when to direct interventions toward the group or toward individual members. For instance, examples of defensiveness may be presented to the total group rather than directed to one particular person. Also, directing interventions at the total group involves balanced communication and decreases the likelihood of dialogue between group members and the leader.
- Encouraging members to express ideas and feelings in the here-and-now and keeping them focused on the task at hand. Such encouragement keeps the group from digressing into a complaint session about past problems and maintains a focus on finding solutions to current problems.
- Encouraging the group members to be autonomous. The leader should be stepping back, allowing the members to do more and more of the communicating among themselves. The leader's task is to facilitate and to ensure that the communication continues to flow, while allowing the members more freedom in directing the conversation. If there are disagreements within the group, it is not the leader's responsibility to solve them; instead, the leader should simply facilitate to ensure that no members are treated abusively in any way.

Group Members' Functions in the Transition Stage

- Moving away from dependence on the leader and establishing more independence.
- Recognizing and expressing personal reactions and/or negative feelings.
- Learning how to confront other or others' ideas in a constructive manner.
- Learning to work through conflicts rather than avoiding them. Members may begin to form subgroups. If conflict is suppressed in a group, it may go more deeply "underground," with members communicating more outside the group. Members have a responsibility to bring outside or covert material to the surface and to assist in making it overt so that it may be processed or dealt with.

Working Stage

This stage of the group's development is indicated by increasing cohesiveness among members, with open communication about different viewpoints. Leadership functions are likely to be shared by the group members; interactions are balanced between and among members, not directed by the leader.

Feedback is given more freely, and it is met with less defensiveness than previously shown. Members display a willingness to work outside of the group to implement changes. They take ownership of their behaviour. Also, member empathy is high. The members assist one another in nonjudgmental ways and display greater identity with one another.

Problems at this stage may include a decreasing ability of the group to be self-critical regarding its effectiveness. Group members may have dual goals or purposes: (1) the effectiveness of the group and (2) acceptance by group members. Group members may avoid critical analysis or confrontation for fear of being ostracized.

Leadership Functions in the Working Stage

- Ensuring that the members do not collude to avoid conflict in order to maintain comfortable levels of group cohesiveness.
- Interpreting group behaviour to assist the members in attaining deeper levels of understanding.
- Linking members; pointing out the norms of the group, both formal and informal.
- Assisting in clarifying and assessing the goals and accomplishments of the group.
- Encouraging the members to turn new insights and ideas into action.
- Providing the members with needed information and materials to allow them to continue functioning effectively.
- Summarizing group process and interactions and assisting the members in clarifying emerging goals in behavioural terms.
- Helping the members to identify time lines and clarify responsibilities.

Group Members' Functions in the Working Stage

- Providing feedback, confrontation, and support to one another. The members monitor one another's feedback and work toward keeping one another involved.
- Taking turns in assuming leadership behaviors; directing topics, communication flow, and the assignment of responsibilities.
- Monitoring to ensure that the group does not become too comfortable with familiar relationships and that members continue to challenge one another when necessary.

Final Stage

One of the reasons for clearly specifying the objectives of the group at the outset is to be able to tell when it has served its purpose and needs to disband. If the urgency of the problem that brought about the group has lessened, energies may be lost. It is important to remind the members why the group was formed, to point out its accomplishments, and to stress the fragility of those accomplishments if actions are not carried through.

A number of questions need to be answered at this stage of group life:

- If new procedures have been put in place, are the responsibilities clear?
- Are there ways of monitoring the ongoing results or suggestions of the group?
- Are other support systems in the organization aware of their responsibilities in connection with the group's work?
- If the group was formed to deal with a human resource issue, has the human resources department been informed of the recommendations of the group?
- Has this department responded to the group's suggestions, given alternatives, or made a commitment to the suggested actions?
- Is top management aware of the accomplishments of the group and willing to support or at least respond to the group's suggestions?

As these questions illustrate, the group leader's linking function is again important at this stage.

The final stage brings about the possibility of another issue. Certain group members may feel that their concerns have not been attended to, and now time is running out. It is important to respond to their concerns and to assign them to future groups or include them in discussion. The members must know that the work of the group is only a beginning and that a much more important demonstration of the group's effectiveness lies before them in their behaviors and actions outside the group.

Members are likely to pull back, anticipating the end of the group. They may be feeling some sadness over that ending, or they may worry about being able to continue their new-found levels of communication.

Leadership Functions in the Final Stage

- Assisting in clarifying and summarizing group goals.
- Assisting members in dealing with any unfinished business.
- Reinforcing changes that the members have made.
- Ensuring that the members have information about resources to enable them to make desired, identified changes.
- Assisting the members in operationalizing changes, determining how they will put identified goals into action. This function may involve establishing member contracts or giving "homework" assignments.
- Providing the members with opportunities to give one another feedback.
- Re-emphasizing the importance of maintaining confidentiality; continuing to respect the rights of others outside the group.
- Summarizing, integrating, and consolidating what the members have achieved in the group.
- Providing more leadership, direction, and structure to decrease anxiety and to solidify group goals.

Group Members' Functions in the Final Stage

- Clarifying personal and group goals to which the members have committed.
- Completing any unfinished business.
- Clarifying the direction/decisions of the group.
- Evaluating the impact of the group.
- Making suggestions regarding future groups.
- Realizing that the group is not an end in itself and that most of the work identified within the group must take place outside.

Post-group Stage

Although the critical post-group stage is often overlooked, it may be the most important of the group-development stages. The group's major contribution to the organization is likely to occur during this stage. The impact of the decisions or actions of the team must be assessed in the wider context of the organization's systems and subsystems. Obstacles to group action need to be identified, attended to, and removed if possible. Also, work during this phase may provide information that will prove valuable in establishing future groups in the organization.

A concern at this stage is that if members have problems implementing the group's approved recommendations or if they lose patience, they may become frustrated and subsequently view the entire group process as negative. The ultimate effectiveness of a group is not shown in its process or in how it ends; it is shown in what it is able to accomplish once the group experience has been completed. The group is only a beginning.

Leadership Functions in the Post-group Stage

- Administering a post-group assessment to help determine the group's long-range impact. This assessment should be done in multiple, longer-term follow-up stages.
- Using the information from the group to help bring about needed changes for member effectiveness.
- Making sure that resources are available for desired changes.
- Encouraging the members to continue to find some avenue of support outside the group process.
- Providing follow-up group sessions, if needed.
- Using information from the group (other than personal) in future planning of groups and as a source of needs assessment.
- Meeting with the co-facilitator, if one exists, and individually with group members to assess the overall impact and effectiveness of the group.
- Assisting the members in using identified measures of change.
- Using information to identify future training/skill building.

Group Members' Functions in the Post-group Stage

- Finding ways of reinforcing new behaviors without the support of the formal group.
- Keeping records of changes, progress, problems, so that they can monitor the effectiveness of the group.
- Continuing relationships with one another to support individual programs for change.

SUMMARY

Traditional, autocratic leadership styles are obsolete in organizations in the United States. Although there is a place for decisive leadership at the top, the value of worker involvement and contribution must be fostered. Changes in work environments and technical developments require organizations that are proactive and responsive to change. And responsiveness depends on creative, effective communication skills—skills that are often overlooked if not covertly and even overtly discouraged.

The use of groups in the work place provides an avenue for enhancing communication skills, worker resiliency, and the effectiveness of organizations. Groups can foster more realistic job analysis, employee and job evaluation, assessment of training needs, increased motivation, and increased awareness of changes in the work environment. Groups must be considered as more than a “quick fix” or a fad, however. In order to manage groups effectively, organizations must train both supervisors and non-supervisory personnel in the stages of group development and in ways to exploit the full potential of groups. As shown in Table 2, a number of instruments and structured activities can be useful in providing necessary training during the various stages of group life.

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Table 2. Useful Learning Resources for Each Stage of Group Development

Stage	Instrument*	Experiential Learning Activity**
Pre-group	Organization Diagnosis	Color Me: Getting Acquainted
Initial	Feedback Rating Scales	A Note to My Teammate: Positive Feedback
Transition	Conflict Management Style Survey	The Hundredth Monkey: Shared Mind-Sets
Working	Group-Growth Evaluation Form	Starting the Issue: Practicing Ownership
Final	Self-Assessment Inventory: Behavior in Groups	Organizational Structure: A Simulation
Post-group	The Individual-Team-Organization Survey: Conscious Change for the Organization	Supporting Cast: Examining Personal Support Networks
<p>*All instruments can be found in the Instrumentation Kit, San Diego: Pfeiffer & Company, 1988. **All learning activities can be found in The 1992 Annual: Developing Human Resources, or The 1993 Annual: Developing Human Resources, J. William Pfeiffer (ed.), San Diego: Pfeiffer & Company, 1993.</p>		

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Complexity, Collaboration and Business as UN-usual

A Twyford's Pop-up session Canberra June 2014 Stuart Waters and Cath Blunt

Wicked, complex dilemmas

- Difficult to define clearly
- Multi-causal
- Many perspectives and different ways to look at the issues
- Social/cultural as well as technical complexity
- Every complex problem is unique and novel
- No obvious solutions
- No clear end to the problem-solving process
- Values and ethical considerations are key
- Solution requires behaviour change

Costs include

- Modifying the project
- Rework
- Legal and conflict expertise
- Specialist training
- Opportunity cost of all future work
- Disruption, delays
- Greater regulation, Scrutiny
- Staff time
- Morale, stress, sickness
- Recruitment, training, interviewing
- Reputation, trust

The alternative path

- Solutions, not decisions
 - Builds trust
 - Ownership
 - Creativity
 - Innovation
 - It works
 - Gets you where you need to go
- But... This path challenges our assumptions and shakes our world view

Some questions

- What are the issues about which my stakeholders couldn't teach me anything?
- What decisions could I not give up?
- What information could I not share?
- Which stakeholders must be prevented from disrupting things?

- What elements of my project are off-limits for my stakeholders?
- How did I respond and Why?
- What assumptions lie beneath my response?
- What would happen if my answer was otherwise?
- How do my assumptions influence my behaviour?
- What impact does this have on my stakeholder relationships?

Business as usual mindset

Stakeholders:

- Cannot grasp complex issues
- Are easily influenced by the activists and the media
- Have views shaped by narrow concerns
- Are mostly apathetic
- Are poorly educated
- Are self-interested
- Can't be objective

And therefore... it is futile and hazardous to collaborate

Alternative mindset

Stakeholders:

- Know things we don't
- Will provide us with a full range of useful and diverse perspectives
- Are the source of innovation and creativity
- Are very good at weighing things up and making wise decisions
- Can be trusted to do the right thing
- Will help us do this better

And therefore... it is essential to collaborate from the outset

Conventional	Collaborative
...deciding what can be influenced by the community and what can't	...determining the scope of the collaboration collectively
...identifying who is likely to be affected by this project so we can plan our process	...identifying who has an interest in this project so we can appreciate what they have to contribute to the process
...helping the community become more aware of an issue, our project or services	...working with the 'community of interest' to frame, test and convey messages
...providing reasonable opportunities for people to provide feedback or input	...co-designing how we will work with the 'community of interest' on this particular challenge
...trying to understand what people think about what we propose to do in relation to an issue, or a project, or our services	...building trust through shared responsibility of the process and the outcomes
...trying to obtain feedback about the merit of various options we are considering	...co-creating possible solutions collaboratively
...considering feedback provided by the community and possibly changing what we do, or plan to do, as a result.	...deliberating over possible solutions taking into account agreed criteria
...letting people know what we will do as a result of the consultation process	...working with the 'community of interest' to frame, test and convey messages
...building trust by doing what we say we'll do	...building trust through shared responsibility of the process and the outcomes

The path less travelled

- Is not an easy path
- Requires us to access different assumptions
- Requires us to open up to uncertainty and possibility
- Comes with costs and great benefits

What Twyfords Does

We provide clarity on the direction

- Situation analysis
- Build understanding about collaboration
- Allow a clear and informed choice about which path to take

We set up our clients for success

- Collaborative mindset (commitment)
- Co-Define the dilemma to be solved
- Co-design the process

We help our clients achieve a genuine solution, rather than a fragile decision

- Skill building
- Coaching and mentoring
- Co-create a solution
- Co-deliver actions