



# chapter

## seven Groups and Teamwork

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

**After reading the material in this chapter, you should be able to:**

- Describe the five stages of Tuckman's theory of group development.
- Distinguish between role overload, role conflict, and role ambiguity.
- Contrast roles and norms, and specify four reasons norms are enforced in organizations.
- Explain how a work group becomes a team.
- List at least four things managers can do to build trust.
- Describe self-managed teams and virtual teams.
- Describe social loafing and explain how managers can prevent it.
- Describe high performance teams.

## TEAMS MAKE IT HAPPEN IN ONTARIO GOVERNMENTS

Team effort is transforming the way government does work. Teams are focusing on customer needs, collaboratively looking for solutions to problems, using data to make decisions, and data to measure outcomes. The Ontario Public Service (OPS) established a service quality standard in 1998 to respond in writing to any correspondence within 15 working days from date of receipt. When initially asked to meet this standard, the Ministry of Transportation (MTO) was unable to do so. In response to this challenge, a project team was created which included a large variety of MTO staff ranging from Assistant Deputy Ministers and Directors to staff from across the organization. The team developed an automated tool that provided the ability to monitor correspondence turnaround time for the Minister, Deputy Minister, Assistant

Deputy Ministers, and Directors. After only five months of implementation, average turnaround time for Ministers' correspondence had plummeted from 36.24 days to 9.45 days.

The Regional Municipality of Peel had a big problem: what to do with the Britannia Sanitary Landfill Site as scheduled closing dates arrived. To resolve community

issues, an innovative idea of creating an executive-length golf course on closed portions of the site was initiated. The course, officially opened in 1999, exemplifies the true spirit and result of what a dedicated team can achieve. The Landfill Team was presented with the coveted CAO

Teamwork Award, reinforcing the Region's core belief that, "Together We Are Better."

Source: M Strus, "Teams Make it Happen in Ontario Governments," *Excellence*, May 2002, pp 9-10.



Ontario Government groups use teamwork to collaboratively solve problems and find more efficient solutions.

## Fundamentals of Group Behaviour

### Group

Two or more freely interacting people with shared norms and goals and a common identity.

Drawing from the field of sociology, a **group** is defined as two or more freely interacting individuals who share collective norms and goals and have a common identity.<sup>1</sup> Organizational psychologist Edgar Schein shed additional light on this concept by drawing instructive distinctions between a group, a crowd, and an organization:

The size of a group is thus limited by the possibilities of mutual interaction and mutual awareness. Mere aggregates of people do not fit this definition because they do not interact and do not perceive themselves to be a group even if they are aware of each other as, for instance, a crowd on a street corner watching some event. A total department, a union, or a whole organization would not be a group in spite of thinking of themselves as “we,” because they generally do not all interact and are not all aware of each other. However, work teams, committees, subparts of departments, cliques, and various other informal associations among organizational members would fit this definition of a group.<sup>2</sup>

Take a moment now to think of various groups of which you are a member. Does each of your “groups” satisfy the four criteria in our definition?

### Formal and Informal Groups

Individuals join groups, or are assigned to groups, to accomplish various purposes. If the group is formed by a manager to help the organization accomplish its goals, then it qualifies as a formal group. Formal groups typically wear such labels as work group, team, committee, or task force. Formal groups fulfil two basic functions: *organizational* and *individual*.<sup>3</sup> The various functions are listed in Table 7–1. Complex combinations of these functions can be found in formal groups at any given time.

An informal group exists when the members’ overriding purpose of getting together is friendship or common interest.<sup>4</sup> Although formal and informal groups often overlap, such as a team of corporate auditors heading for the tennis courts after work, some employees are not friends with their co-workers. The desirability of overlapping formal and informal groups is problematic. Some managers firmly believe personal friendship fosters productive teamwork on the job while others view workplace “bull sessions” as a serious threat to productivity. Both situations are common, and it is the manager’s job to strike a workable balance, based on the maturity and goals of the people involved.

**TABLE 7–1** Formal Groups Fulfil Organizational and Individual Functions

Organizational Functions	Individual Functions
1. Accomplish complex, interdependent tasks that are beyond the capabilities of individuals.	1. Satisfy the individual's need for affiliation.
2. Generate new or creative ideas and solutions.	2. Develop, enhance, and confirm the individual's self-esteem and sense of identity.
3. Coordinate interdepartmental efforts.	3. Give individuals an opportunity to test and share their perceptions of social reality.
4. Provide a problem-solving mechanism for complex problems requiring varied information and assessments.	4. Reduce the individual's anxieties and feelings of insecurity and powerlessness.
5. Implement complex decisions.	5. Provide a problem-solving mechanism for personal and interpersonal problems.
6. Socialize and train newcomers.	

Source: Adapted from E H Schein, *Organizational Psychology*, 3rd ed (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1980), pp 149–51.

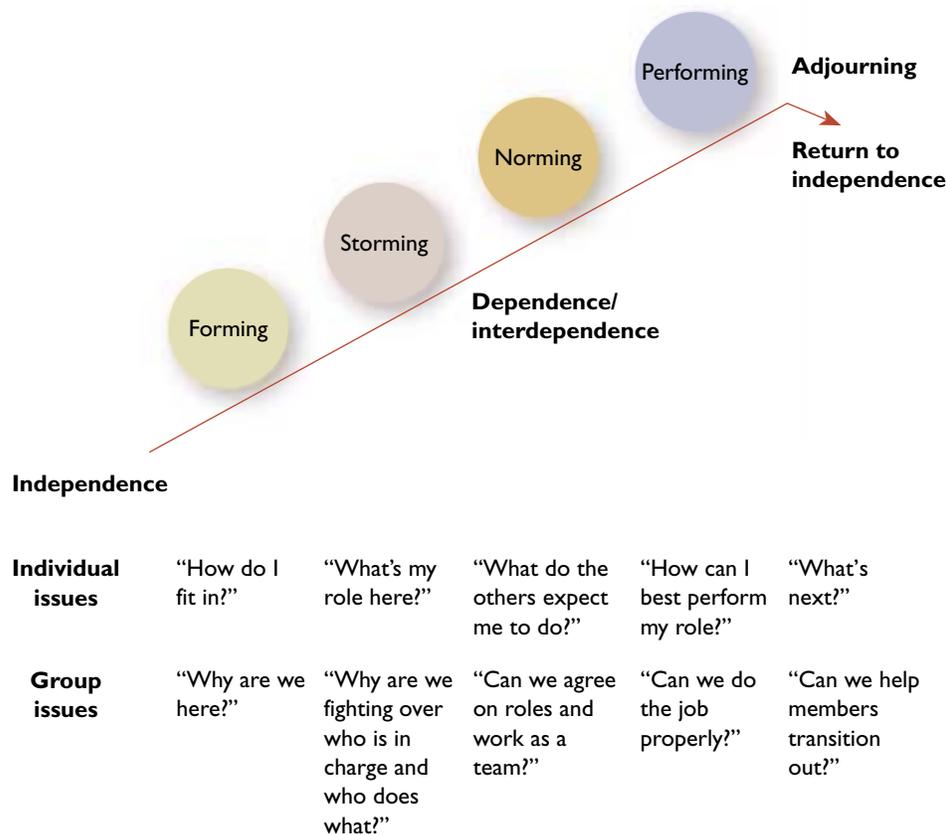
## The Group Development Process

Groups and teams in the workplace go through a maturation process, such as one would find in any life-cycle situation (e.g., humans, organizations, products). While there is general agreement among theorists that the group development process occurs in identifiable stages, they disagree about the exact number, sequence, length, and nature of those stages.<sup>5</sup> The five-stage model in Figure 7–1 indicates how individuals give up a measure of their independence when they join and participate in a group.<sup>6</sup> The various stages are not necessarily of the same duration or intensity. For instance, the storming stage may be practically nonexistent or painfully long, depending on the goal clarity and the commitment and maturity of the members. This process come to life when one relates the various stages to personal experiences with work groups, committees, athletic teams, social or religious groups, or class project teams. Some group happenings that were surprising when they occurred may now make sense or seem inevitable when seen as part of a natural development process.

**Stage I: Forming** During this “ice-breaking” stage, group members tend to be uncertain and anxious about such things as their roles, who is in charge, and the group’s goals. Mutual trust is low, and there is a good deal of holding back to see who takes charge and how. If the formal leader (e.g., a supervisor) does not assert his or her authority, an emergent leader will eventually step in to fulfil the group’s need

Five-Stage Model of Group Development

FIGURE 7–1





Group cohesiveness or a “we feeling” can help groups develop through the norming stage like this group from Herman Miller who, when faced with a problem, pulled together to find a solution.

### Group cohesiveness

A “we feeling” binding group members together.

### Role

Expected behaviours for a given position.

### Role overload

Other people’s expectations of someone exceed that individual’s ability.

for leadership and direction. Leaders typically mistake this honeymoon period as a mandate for permanent control. But later problems may force a leadership change.

**Stage 2: Storming** This is a time of testing. Individuals test the leader’s policies and assumptions as they try to determine how they fit into the power structure.<sup>7</sup> Subgroups take shape, and subtle forms of rebellion, such as procrastination, occur. Many groups stall in stage 2 because power politics erupts into open rebellion.

**Stage 3: Norming** Groups that make it through stage 2 generally do so because a respected member, other than the leader, challenges the group to resolve its power struggles so something can be accomplished. Questions about authority and power are resolved through unemotional, matter-of-fact group discussion. A feeling of team spirit is experienced because members believe they have found their proper roles.

**Group cohesiveness**, defined as the “we feeling” that binds members of a group together, is the principal by-product of stage 3.<sup>8</sup> Cohesiveness has a small but significant effect on performance, especially in small groups. Commitment to the task at hand has the most powerful impact on this link between cohesiveness and performance. Thus organizations are advised to ensure that performance standards and goals are clear and accepted, and to keep task groups small (no more than five members) unless there is a need for creativity, in which case the optimal group size would be somewhat larger.<sup>9</sup> Also, it must be remembered that too much cohesiveness creates the possibility of groupthink, as discussed in Chapter 6.

**Stage 4: Performing** Activity during this vital stage is focused on solving task problems. As members of a mature group, contributors get their work done without hampering others. There is a climate of open communication, strong cooperation, and lots of helping behaviour. Conflicts and job boundary disputes are handled constructively and efficiently. Cohesiveness and personal commitment to group goals help the group achieve more than could any one individual acting alone.

**Stage 5: Adjourning** The work is done; it is time to move on to other things. Having worked so hard to get along and get something done, many members feel a compelling sense of loss. The return to independence can be eased by rituals celebrating “the end” and “new beginnings.” Parties, award ceremonies, graduations, or mock funerals can provide the needed punctuation at the end of a significant group project.

Leaders need to emphasize valuable lessons learned in group dynamics to prepare everyone for future group and team efforts.

## Group Member Roles

**Roles** are sets of behaviours that persons expect of occupants of a position.<sup>10</sup> **Role overload** occurs when the total of what is expected from someone exceeds what he or she is able to do. Students who attempt to handle a full course load and maintain a social life while working 30 or

more hours a week know full well the consequences of role overload. As the individual tries to do more and more in less and less time, stress mounts and personal effectiveness slips.

Sometimes people feel like they are being torn apart by the conflicting demands of those around them. **Role conflict** is experienced when different people expect different things from one person. For example, employees often face conflicting demands between work and family.<sup>11</sup>

**Role ambiguity** occurs when an individual does not know what is expected of them. New employees often complain about unclear job descriptions and vague promotion criteria. Prolonged role ambiguity can foster job dissatisfaction, erode self-confidence, and hamper job performance.

**Task versus Maintenance Roles** As described in Table 7–2, both task and maintenance roles need to be performed if a work group is to accomplish anything.<sup>12</sup> **Task roles** enable the work group to define, clarify, and pursue a common purpose. Meanwhile, **maintenance roles** foster supportive and constructive interpersonal relationships. In short, task roles keep the group *on track* while maintenance roles keep the group *together*. A project team member is performing a task function when he or she says at an update meeting, “What is the real issue here? We don’t seem to be getting anywhere.” Another individual who

**Role conflict**

Other people have conflicting or inconsistent expectations of someone.

**Role ambiguity**

An individual does not know what is expected of them.

**Task role**

Task-oriented group behaviour.

**Maintenance role**

Relationship-building group behaviour.

Task and Maintenance Roles **TABLE 7-2**

Task Roles	Description
Initiator	Suggests new goals or ideas.
Information seeker/giver	Clarifies key issues.
Opinion seeker/giver	Clarifies pertinent values.
Elaborator	Promotes greater understanding through examples or exploration of implications.
Coordinator	Pulls together ideas and suggestions.
Orienter	Keeps group headed toward its stated goal(s).
Evaluator	Tests group’s accomplishments with various criteria such as logic and practicality.
Energizer	Prods group to move along or to accomplish more.
Procedural technician	Performs routine duties (e.g., handing out materials or rearranging seats).
Recorder	Performs a “group memory” function by documenting discussion and outcomes.
Maintenance Roles	Description
Encourager	Fosters group solidarity by accepting and praising various points of view.
Harmonizer	Mediates conflict through reconciliation or humour.
Compromiser	Helps resolve conflict by meeting others “half way.”
Gatekeeper	Encourages all group members to participate.
Standard setter	Evaluates the quality of group processes.
Commentator	Records and comments on group processes/dynamics.
Follower	Serves as a passive audience.

Source: Adapted from discussion in K D Benne and P Sheats, “Functional Roles of Group Members,” *Journal of Social Issues*, Spring 1948, pp 41–49.

## FOCUS ON DIVERSITY

### What Determines Leadership Behaviour in Gender-Diverse Groups?

Much of the research that has examined the behaviour of people in gender-diverse work groups suggests that men are more participative and influential in task-related behaviour. However, there has also been some indication that men emerge as leaders more often when the group's task is masculine-oriented, whereas women emerge as leaders more often when the group task is feminine-oriented.

Two researchers at the University of Toronto conducted a study that examined the effects of (1) level of gender diversity in a group, and (2) gender orientation of the group's task, on leadership behaviour in the group. Student participants were randomly assigned to male-dominated, female-dominated, and balanced-gender groups. Each group analyzed two business cases. One case emphasized a stereotypically male-oriented task (business-related negotiation) and the other case involved a female-oriented task (negotiation of job responsibilities with implications of sexual harassment).

The results showed that a group member whose gender was opposite to the gender orientation of the task exhibited lower levels of leadership behaviour. Thus being in a minority position in the group does not automatically result in withdrawn behaviour, as previously thought, particularly when the individual is viewed as possessing relative expertise on the group's task. However, being in the majority reduced the adverse effects of incongruence with the task on leadership behaviour.

The authors concluded that relative numbers of men and women in a group do matter, under certain conditions. Decreases in leadership behaviour were not as pronounced for men and women who performed gender-incongruent tasks while in the majority on a group. Also, in self-managing work teams that operate without formal role status distinctions among group members, perceptions of relative competence or expertise based on gender can potentially create differences in leadership behaviour.

Source: L Karakowsky and J P Siegel, "The Effects of Proportional Representation and Gender Orientation of the Task on Emergent Leadership Behaviour in Mixed-Gender Work Groups," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 84(4), 1999, 620–31.

says, "Let's hear from those who oppose this plan," is performing a maintenance function. Importantly, each of the various task and maintenance roles may be played in varying combinations and sequences by either the group's leader or any of its members.

International managers need to be sensitive to cultural differences regarding the relative importance of task and maintenance roles. In Japan, for example, cultural tradition calls for more emphasis on maintenance roles, especially the roles of harmonizer and compromiser:

Courtesy requires that members not be conspicuous or disputatious in a meeting or classroom. If two or more members discover that their views differ—a fact that is tactfully taken to be unfortunate—they adjourn to find more information and to work toward a stance that all can accept. They do not press their personal opinions through strong arguments, neat logic, or rewards and threats. And they do not hesitate to shift their beliefs if doing so will preserve smooth interpersonal relations. (To lose is to win.)<sup>13</sup>

## Norms

### Norm

Shared attitudes, opinions, feelings, or actions that guide social behaviour.

Norms are more encompassing than roles. While roles involve behavioural expectations for specific positions, norms help organizational members determine right from wrong and good from bad. According to one respected team of management consultants: "A **norm** is an attitude, opin-

ion, feeling, or action—shared by two or more people—that guides their behaviour.”<sup>14</sup> Although norms are typically unwritten and seldom discussed openly, they have a powerful influence on group and organizational behaviour.<sup>15</sup> For example, groups establish performance norms—some groups push each other to work hard, others to see who can do the least; appearance norms as to what is acceptable and unacceptable; and norms regarding punctuality and loyalty to the organization.

Group members positively reinforce those who adhere to current norms with friendship and acceptance. On the other hand, nonconformists experience criticism and even **ostracism**, or rejection by group members. Anyone who has experienced the “silent treatment” from a group of friends knows what a potent social weapon ostracism can be. Norms can be put into proper perspective by understanding how they develop and why they are enforced.

### Ostracism

Rejection by other group members.

**How Norms Are Developed** Experts say norms evolve in an informal manner as the group or organization determines what it takes to be effective. Generally speaking, norms develop in various combinations of the following four ways:

1. *Explicit statements by supervisors or co-workers.* For instance, a group leader might explicitly set norms about not drinking alcohol at lunch.
2. *Critical events in the group’s history.* At times there is a critical event in the group’s history that establishes an important precedent. (For example, a key recruit may have decided to work elsewhere because a group member said too many negative things about the organization. Hence, a norm against such “sour grapes” behaviour might evolve.)
3. *Primacy.* The first behaviour pattern that emerges in a group often sets group expectations. If the first group meeting is marked by very formal interaction between supervisors and employees, then the group often expects future meetings to be conducted in the same way.
4. *Carryover behaviours from past situations.* Such carryover of individual behaviours from past situations can increase the predictability of group members’ behaviours in new settings and

## Monkey See, Monkey Do

A study by researchers from Canada and the United States of 187 work group members from 20 different organizations uncovered a “monkey see, monkey do” effect relative to antisocial behaviour. Employees who observed their coworkers engaging in antisocial conduct at work tended to exhibit the same bad behaviour. Antisocial behaviour, as measured in this study, included the following acts:

- damaging company property
- saying hurtful things to coworkers
- doing poor work; working slowly
- complaining with coworkers
- bending or breaking rules
- criticizing coworkers
- doing something harmful to boss or employer
- starting an argument with a coworker
- saying rude things about the boss or organization.

According to the researchers, “The message for managers seems clear—antisocial groups encourage antisocial individual behaviour. It is crucial to nip behaviours deemed harmful in the bud so as to avoid a social influence effect. Managers who expect that isolating or ignoring antisocial groups will encourage them to change are probably mistaken.”

### You Decide . . .

Are these antisocial behaviours also unethical? As a manager, how would you handle these behaviours if they occurred in your work group?

Source: Quoted and adapted from S L Robinson and A M O’Leary-Kelly, “Monkey See, Monkey Do: The Influence of Work Groups on the Antisocial Behavior of Employees,” *Academy of Management Journal*, December 1998, pp 658–72.

facilitate task accomplishment. For instance, students and professors carry fairly constant sets of expectations from class to class.<sup>16</sup>

We would like you to take a few moments and think about the norms that are currently in effect in your classroom. List the norms on a sheet of paper. Do these norms help or hinder your ability to learn? Norms can affect performance either positively or negatively.

**Why Norms Are Enforced** Norms tend to be enforced by group members when they

- Help the group or organization survive.
- Clarify or simplify behavioural expectations.
- Help individuals avoid embarrassing situations.
- Clarify the group's or organization's central values and/or unique identity.<sup>17</sup>

## Teams, Trust, and Teamwork

The prevalence of teams and teamwork around the world are evident in this global sampling from the business press:

- *Siemens, the \$63 billion German manufacturing company*: “a new generation of managers is fostering cooperation across the company. They are setting up teams to develop products and attack new markets. They are trying hiking expeditions and weekend workshops to spur ideas and new work methods.”<sup>18</sup>
- *Motorola's walkie-talkie plants in Penang, Malaysia, and Plantation, Florida*: “The goal, pursued by Motorola worldwide, is to get employees at all levels to forget narrow job titles and work together in teams to identify and act on problems that hinder quality and productivity. . . . New applicants are screened on the basis of their attitude toward ‘teamwork’.”<sup>19</sup>
- *Fiat's new auto plant in Melfi, Italy*: “Fiat slashed the layers between plant managers and workers and spent \$64 million training its 7,000 workers and engineers to work in small teams. Now, the 31 independent teams—with 15 to 100 workers apiece—oversee car-assembly tasks from start to finish.”<sup>20</sup>
- *Ford Motor Company's product-development Web site*: “The Web brings 4,500 Ford engineers from labs in the United States, Germany, and England together in cyberspace to collaborate on projects. The idea is to break down the barriers between regional operations so basic auto components are designed once and used everywhere.”<sup>21</sup>

All of these huge global companies have staked their future competitiveness on teams and teamwork.

The team approach to managing organizations is having diverse and substantial impacts on organizations and individuals. Teams promise to be a cornerstone of progressive management for the foreseeable future. According to management expert Peter Drucker, tomorrow's organizations will be flatter, information based, and organized around teams.<sup>22</sup> This means virtually all employees will need to polish their team skills. Fortunately, the trend toward teams has a receptive audience today. Both women and younger employees, according to recent studies, thrive in team-oriented organizations.<sup>23</sup>

In this section, we define the term *team*, discuss trust as a key to real teamwork, and explore two evolving forms of teamwork—self-managed teams and virtual teams.

## A Team Is More Than Just a Group

Some experts say it is a mistake to use the terms *group* and *team* interchangeably. A **team** is “a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.”<sup>24</sup> A small number of people means between 2 and 25 team members. Effective teams typically have fewer than 10 members. A survey of 400 workplace team members in the United States and Canada found that the average North American team consists of 10 members and that eight is the most common size.<sup>25</sup>

Thus, a group becomes a team when the following criteria are met:

1. *Leadership* becomes a shared activity.
2. *Accountability* shifts from strictly individual to both individual and collective.
3. The group develops its own *purpose* or mission.
4. *Problem solving* becomes a way of life, not a part-time activity.
5. *Effectiveness* is measured by the group’s collective outcomes and products.<sup>26</sup>

Relative to the model of group development covered earlier—forming, storming, norming, performing, and adjourning—teams are task groups that have matured to the *performing* stage. Because of conflicts over power and authority and unstable interpersonal relations, many work groups never qualify as a real team.<sup>27</sup> The distinction has been described as follows: “The essence of a team is common commitment. Without it, groups perform as individuals; with it, they become a powerful unit of collective performance.”<sup>28</sup>

Table 7–3 contains a list of characteristics of effective teams. Work teams have a much greater chance of being effective if they are nurtured and facilitated by the organization. The team’s purpose needs to be consistent with the organization’s strategy. Similarly, the level of participation and autonomy needed for teams to be effective requires an organizational culture that values those processes. Team members also need appropriate technological tools and training. Teamwork needs to be reinforced by the organizational reward system, which means moving away from pay and bonuses related solely to individual performance.

## Trust: A Key Ingredient of Teamwork

These have not been good times for trust in the corporate world. Years of mergers, downsizings, layoffs, bloated executive bonuses, and broken promises have left many employees justly cynical about trusting management. While challenging readers of *Harvard Business Review* to do a better job of investing in what they call “social capital,” experts recently offered this constructive advice:

No one can manufacture trust or mandate it into existence. When someone says, “You can trust me,” we usually don’t, and rightly so. But leaders can make deliberate investments in trust. They can give people reasons to trust one another instead of reasons to watch their backs. They can refuse to reward successes that are built on untrusting behaviour. And they can display trust and trustworthiness in their own actions, both personally and on behalf of the company.<sup>29</sup>

**Three Dimensions of Trust** Trust is defined as reciprocal faith in others’ intentions and behaviour.<sup>30</sup> Experts on the subject explain the reciprocal (give-and-take) aspect of trust as follows:

### Team

Small group with complementary skills who hold themselves mutually accountable for common purpose, goals, and approach.

### Trust

Reciprocal faith in others’ intentions and behaviour.

**TABLE 7-3** Characteristics of an Effective Team

1. Clear purpose	The vision, mission, goal, or task of the team has been defined and is now accepted by everyone. There is an action plan.
2. Informality	The climate tends to be informal, comfortable, and relaxed. There are no obvious tensions or signs of boredom.
3. Participation	There is much discussion, and everyone is encouraged to participate.
4. Listening	The members use effective listening techniques such as questioning, paraphrasing, and summarizing to get out ideas.
5. Civilized disagreement	There is disagreement, but the team is comfortable with this and shows no signs of avoiding, smoothing over, or suppressing conflict.
6. Consensus decisions	For important decisions, the goal is substantial but not necessarily unanimous agreement through open discussion of everyone's ideas, avoidance of formal voting, or easy compromises.
7. Open communication	Team members feel free to express their feelings on the tasks as well as on the group's operation. There are few hidden agendas. Communication takes place outside of meetings.
8. Clear roles and work assignments	There are clear expectations about the roles played by each team member. When action is taken, clear assignments are made, accepted, and carried out. Work is fairly distributed among team members.
9. Shared leadership	While the team has a formal leader, leadership functions shift from time to time depending on the circumstances, the needs of the group, and the skills of the members. The formal leader models the appropriate behaviour and helps establish positive norms.
10. External relations	The team spends time developing key outside relationships, mobilizing resources, and building credibility with important players in other parts of the organization.
11. Style diversity	The team has a broad spectrum of team-player types including members who emphasize attention to task, goal setting, focus on process, and questions about how the team is functioning.
12. Self-assessment	Periodically, the team stops to examine how well it is functioning and what may be interfering with its effectiveness.

Source: G M Parker, *Team Players and Teamwork: The New Competitive Business Strategy* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990), Table 2, p 33. Copyright © 1990 by Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers. Reprinted by permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

When we see others acting in ways that imply that they trust us, we become more disposed to reciprocate by trusting in them more. Conversely, we come to distrust those whose actions appear to violate our trust or to distrust us.<sup>31</sup>

In short, we tend to give what we get: trust begets trust; distrust begets distrust.

Trust is expressed in different ways. Three dimensions of trust are *overall trust* (expecting fair play, the truth, and empathy), *emotional trust* (faith that someone will not misrepresent you to others or betray a confidence), and *reliableness* (believe that promises and appointments will be kept and commitments met).<sup>32</sup> These different dimensions contribute to a wide and complex range of trust, from very low to very high.



This group of people is learning the basic rule of trusting fellow colleagues: **Trust must be earned, not demanded.**

**How to Build Trust** Trust needs to be earned; it cannot be demanded. The following six guidelines relate to building and maintaining trust:

1. *Communication.* Keep team members and employees informed by explaining policies and decisions and providing accurate feedback. Be candid about one's own problems and limitations. Tell the truth.<sup>33</sup>
2. *Support.* Be available and approachable. Provide help, advice, coaching, and support for team members' ideas.
3. *Respect.* Delegation, in the form of real decision-making authority, is the most important expression of managerial respect. Actively listening to the ideas of others is a close second. (Empowerment is not possible without trust.)<sup>34</sup>
4. *Fairness.* Be quick to give credit and recognition to those who deserve it. Make sure all performance appraisals and evaluations are objective and impartial.<sup>35</sup>
5. *Predictability.* Be consistent and predictable in your daily affairs. Keep both expressed and implied promises.
6. *Competence.* Enhance your credibility by demonstrating good business sense, technical ability, and professionalism.<sup>36</sup>

## Self-Managed Teams

Entrepreneurs and artisans often boast of not having a supervisor. The same generally cannot be said for employees working in organizational offices and factories. But things are changing. In fact, an estimated half of the employees at *Fortune* 500 companies are working on teams.<sup>37</sup> A growing share of those teams are self-managing. Typically, managers are present to serve as trainers and facilitators. Self-managed teams come in every conceivable format today, some more autonomous than others. Honeywell

Canada implemented self-directed work teams and achieved impressive results—an 80% increase in productivity; a 90% reduction in scrap and rework; a 95% reduction in lost-time accidents; a 70% improvement in attendance; and employee satisfaction ratings in the 70 to 80% range. By linking self-directed work teams with the concept of lean manufacturing, work-in-process inventory was reduced by 80%, and cycle-time by 97%. The self-directed work team concept changed the culture of the factory workforce from one which was compelled by management to “leave their brain at the door” to the empowered, educated, thinking, committed teams which exist today.<sup>38</sup>

**Self-managed teams** are defined as groups of workers who are given administrative responsibility for their task domains. Administrative responsibility involves delegated activities such as planning, scheduling, monitoring, and staffing. These are activities normally performed by managers. In short, employees in these unique work groups act as their own supervisor.<sup>39</sup> Self-managed teams are variously referred to as semiautonomous work groups, autonomous work groups, and superteams.

### Self-managed teams

Groups of employees granted administrative responsibility for their work.

Something much more complex is involved than this apparently simple label suggests. The term *self-managed* does not mean simply turning workers loose to do their own thing. Indeed, an organization embracing self-managed teams should be prepared to undergo revolutionary changes in management philosophy, structure, staffing and training practices, and reward systems. Moreover, the traditional notions of managerial authority and control are turned on their heads. Not surprisingly, many managers strongly resist giving up the reins of power to people they view as subordinates. They see self-managed teams as a threat to their job security.<sup>40</sup>

**Cross-Functional Teams** A common feature of self-managed teams, particularly among those above the shop-floor or clerical level, is that they are **cross-functional teams**.<sup>41</sup> In other words, specialists from different areas are put on the same team. Among

### Cross-functional teams

Teams made up of technical specialists from different areas.

companies with self-managed teams, the most commonly delegated tasks are work scheduling and dealing directly with outside customers (see Table 7-4). The least common team activities are hiring and firing. Most of today’s self-managed teams remain bunched at the shop-floor level in factory set-

**TABLE 7-4** Survey Evidence: What Self-Managing Teams Manage

Percentage of Companies Saying Their Self-Managing Teams Perform These Traditional Management Functions by Themselves	
Schedule work assignments	67%
Work with outside customers	67
Conduct training	59
Set production goals/quotas	56
Work with suppliers/vendors	44
Purchase equipment/services	43
Develop budgets	39
Do performance appraisals	36
Hire co-workers	33
Fire co-workers	14

Source: Adapted from “1996 Industry Report: What Self-Managing Teams Manage,” *Training*, October 1996, p 69.

tings. Experts predict growth of the practice in the managerial ranks and in service operations.<sup>42</sup>

**Are Self-Managed Teams Effective? The Research Evidence** Much of what we know about self-managed teams comes from testimonials and case studies, but higher quality field research is slowly developing. So far, it has been concluded that self-managed teams have:

- A positive effect on productivity.
- A positive effect on specific attitudes such as responsibility and control.
- No significant effect on general attitudes such as job satisfaction and organizational commitment.
- No significant effect on absenteeism or turnover.<sup>43</sup>

Although encouraging, these results do not qualify as a sweeping endorsement of self-managed teams. Nonetheless, experts say the trend toward self-managed work teams will continue upward in North America because of a strong cultural bias in favour of direct participation. Managers need to be prepared for the resulting shift in organizational administration.

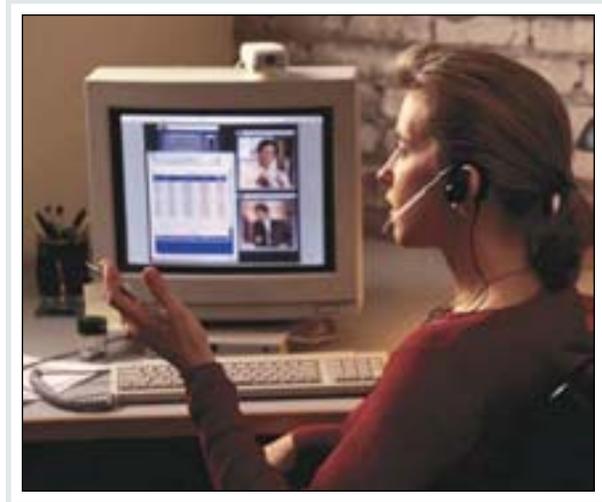
## Virtual Teams

Virtual teams are a product of modern times. Thanks to evolving information technologies such as the Internet, E-mail, videoconferencing, groupware, and fax machines, you can be a member of a work team without really being there.<sup>44</sup> Traditional team meetings are location specific. Team members are either physically present or absent. Virtual teams, in contrast, convene electronically with members reporting in from different locations, different organizations, and even different time zones.

Because virtual teams are so new, there is no consensual definition. Our working definition of a **virtual team** is a physically dispersed task group that conducts its business through modern information technology.<sup>45</sup> Advocates say virtual teams are very flexible and efficient because they are driven by information and skills, not by time and location. People with needed information and/or skills can be team members, regardless of where or when they actually do their work. On the negative side, lack of face-to-face interaction can weaken trust, communication, and accountability.

**Research Insights** Here is what has been learned so far from recent studies of computer-mediated groups:

- Virtual groups formed over the Internet follow a group development process similar to that for face-to-face groups.<sup>46</sup>
- Internet chat rooms create more work and yield poorer decisions than face-to-face meetings and telephone conferences.<sup>47</sup>
- Successful use of groupware (software that facilitates interaction among virtual group members) requires training and hands-on experience.<sup>48</sup>
- Inspirational leadership has a positive impact on creativity in electronic brainstorming groups.<sup>49</sup>



In today's "wired workplaces," it is possible to be a member of a virtual team while working alone.

### Virtual team

A physically dispersed task group that conducts its business through modern information technology.

### Technology, Protocol Keep Global Teams Going Without Face-To-Face Meetings

Technology offers global teams alternative methods of sharing information, discussing ideas and making decisions—from telephone and videoconferencing to a variety of online and Web-based options. To ensure an effective exchange of ideas and information, virtual meetings of global teams need to follow certain communication protocols. Before the meeting, the agenda and any document to be discussed during the meeting should be distributed. All team members should introduce themselves, and everyone should participate. It is important not to speak too fast and to clarify continuously. If English is the language being used, “standard” language should be used (i.e., no sports-related expressions like “covering all the bases”). All decisions and action steps should be repeated and followed up.

A German saying states: trust is not of particular importance until it is lost. Global teams need to establish and maintain trust between members to ensure that the efforts of all team members are aligned. This can be accomplished by ensuring that team members get to know one another, particularly when some come from cultures where business only takes place between people who know and like one another (e.g., Latin America); using videoconferencing from time to time; and agreeing on E-mail protocol such as who gets copied on what information.

Many global teams include members from culturally diverse countries. One of the most critical (and often least understood) differences lies in what it means to be a team. Indeed, the behaviour expected of good team players varies from country to country. In countries with collectivist cultures like Mexico and Japan, a good team player is expected to help a teammate. A team is “all for one and one for all.” In countries with individualistic cultures like Canada and the United States, a good team player is expected to focus on his or her area of responsibilities. Their motto is “let everyone take care of their tasks and responsibilities and we will win.” If team members do not realize they have different ideas of what a team is, they can misinterpret the actions and reactions of their colleagues, resulting in rapid erosion of trust. For example, the “jump in and help” behaviour of collectivist team members is often misinterpreted by individualist team members as an intrusion into their area of responsibility, usually with devastating consequences for the team.

When a global team is effective, it can capitalize on the cultural differences among its members: team members build on one another’s ideas and significant synergy is achieved. Keeping global teams going without face-to-face meetings is a challenge that can be managed effectively by using the right remote communication protocols; following good communication practices; making an explicit effort at building and maintaining trust across distance, and taking cultural differences into account.

Source: Adapted from L Laroche and C M Bing, “Technology, protocol keep global teams going without face-to-face meetings,” *Canadian HR Reporter*, October 22, 2001, pp 17, 19.

**Practical Considerations** Virtual teams may be in fashion, but they are not a cure-all. In fact, they may be a giant step backward for those not well versed in modern information technology. Managers who rely on virtual teams agree on one point: *Meaningful face-to-face contact, especially during early phases of the group development process, is absolutely essential.* Virtual group members need “faces” in their minds to go with names and electronic messages.<sup>50</sup> Additionally, virtual teams cannot succeed without some old-fashioned factors such as top-management support, hands-on training, a clear mission and specific objectives, effective leadership, and schedules and deadlines.<sup>51</sup>

## Why Do Work Teams Fail?

Advocates of the team approach to management paint a very optimistic and bright picture. Yet there is a dark side to teams.<sup>52</sup> They can and often do fail. Anyone contemplating the use of teams in the workplace needs a balanced perspective of their advantages and limitations.

There are a number of reasons why work teams can be ineffective. More than half a century ago, the tendency for reduced effort as group size increases was identified, and this continues to be a problem today. In the 1970s, the devastating effect of groupthink (discussed in Chapter 6) was documented. More recently, specific problems related to self-managed teams have been identified.

## Social Loafing

Is group performance less than, equal to, or greater than the sum of its parts? Can three people, for example, working together accomplish less than, the same as, or more than they would working separately? An interesting study conducted more than a half century ago found the answer to be “less than.”<sup>53</sup> In a rope-pulling exercise, the study found that three people pulling together could achieve only two and a half times the average individual rate. Eight pullers achieved less than four times the individual rate. This tendency for individual effort to decline as group size increases has come to be called **social loafing**.<sup>54</sup> Let us briefly analyze this threat to group effectiveness and synergy with an eye toward avoiding it.

### Social loafing

Decrease in individual effort as group size increases.

**Social Loafing Theory and Research** Among the theoretical explanations for the social loafing effect are (1) equity of effort (“Everyone else is goofing off, so why shouldn’t I?”), (2) loss of personal accountability (“I’m lost in the crowd, so who cares?”), (3) motivational loss due to the sharing of rewards (“Why should I work harder than the others when everyone gets the same reward?”), and (4) coordination loss as more people perform the task (“We’re getting in each other’s way.”).

Research studies refined these theories by showing that social loafing occurred when

- The task was perceived to be unimportant, simple, or not interesting.<sup>55</sup>
- Group members thought their individual output was not identifiable.<sup>56</sup>
- Group members expected their co-workers to loaf.<sup>57</sup>

But social loafing did *not* occur when group members expected to be evaluated.<sup>58</sup> Also, recent research suggests that self-reliant “individualists” are more prone to social loafing than are group-oriented “collectivists.” But individualists can be made more cooperative by keeping the group small and holding each member personally accountable for results.<sup>59</sup>

**Practical Implications** These findings demonstrate that social loafing is not an inevitable part of group effort. Management can curb this threat to group effectiveness by making sure the task is challenging and perceived as important. Additionally, it is a good idea to hold group members personally accountable for identifiable portions of the group’s task.<sup>60</sup>

## Problems With Self-Managed Teams

The main threats to team effectiveness arise from unrealistic expectations on the part of both management and team members. These unrealistic expectations create frustration, which in turn leads to the abandonment of teams. Mistakes by management usually involve doing a poor job of creating a supportive environment for teams and teamwork. For exam-

ple, reward plans that encourage individuals to compete with one another undermine teamwork, as can inadequate training in team skills. The environment may be hostile for teams if no attempts are made to change an existing command-and-control culture. Also, teams cannot overcome weak strategies and poor business practices. This can happen if teams are adopted as a fad with no long-term commitment on the part of management.

Team members themselves can drive failure when they take on too much too quickly and drive themselves too hard for fast results. Important group dynamics and team skills get lost in the rush for results. Poor interpersonal skills and lack of trust between members often lead to conflict that can undermine team effectiveness. Also, teams need to be counselled against quitting when they run into an unanticipated obstacle. Failure is part of the learning process with teams, as it is elsewhere in life.

## Team Building

Team building encompasses many activities intended to address these problems and improve the internal functioning of work groups. Team building workshops strive for greater cooperation, better communication, and less dysfunctional conflict. Experiential learning techniques such as interpersonal trust exercises, conflict-handling role-play sessions, and interactive games are common. In the mountains of British Columbia, DowElanco employees try to overcome fear and build trust as they help each other negotiate a difficult tree-top rope course.<sup>61</sup>

The goal of team building is to create high-performance teams with the following eight attributes:

1. *Participative leadership.* Creating interdependency by empowering, freeing up, and serving others.
2. *Shared responsibility.* Establishing an environment in which all team members feel as responsible as the manager for the performance of the work unit.
3. *Aligned on purpose.* Having a sense of common purpose about why the team exists and the function it serves.
4. *Strong communication.* Creating a climate of trust and open, honest communication.
5. *Future focused.* Seeing change as an opportunity for growth.
6. *Focused on task.* Keeping meetings focused on results.
7. *Creative talents.* Applying individual talents and creativity.
8. *Rapid response.* Identifying and acting on opportunities.<sup>62</sup>

These eight attributes effectively combine many of today's most progressive ideas on management, including participation, empowerment, service ethic, individual responsibility and development, self-management, trust, active listening, and envisioning. But patience and diligence are required, as it may take up to five years for a high-performance team to develop.<sup>63</sup>

It is unreasonable to expect employees who are accustomed to being managed and led to suddenly lead and manage themselves. Self-managed teams are likely to fail if team members are not expressly taught to engage in self-management behaviours. A key transition to self-management involves current managers engaging in self-management leadership behaviours such as encouraging others for good work; self-observation and evaluation; setting high expectations for oneself and the team; thinking about and practicing new tasks; and encouraging self-criticism.<sup>64</sup> Empowerment, not domination, is the goal of this type of leadership.

# summary of key concepts

- *Describe the five stages of group development.* The five stages are *forming* (the group comes together), *storming* (members test the limits and each other), *norming* (questions about authority and power are resolved as the group becomes more cohesive), *performing* (effective communication and cooperation help the group get things done), and *adjourning* (group members go their own way).
- *Distinguish between role overload, role conflict, and role ambiguity.* Organizational roles are sets of behaviours persons expect of occupants of a position. One may experience role overload (too much to do in too little time), role conflict (conflicting role expectations), and role ambiguity (unclear role expectations).
- *Contrast roles and norms, and specify four reasons norms are enforced in organizations.* While roles are specific to the person's position, norms are shared attitudes that differentiate appropriate from inappropriate behaviour in a variety of situations. Norms evolve informally and are enforced because they help the group or organization survive, clarify behavioural expectations, and clarify the group's or organization's central values.
- *Explain how a work group becomes a team.* A team is a mature group where leadership is shared, accountability is both individual and collective, the members have developed their own purpose, problem solving is a way of life, and effectiveness is measured by collective outcomes.
- *List at least four things managers can do to build trust.* Six recommended ways to build trust are through communication, support, respect (especially delegation), fairness, predictability, and competence.
- *Describe self-managed teams and virtual teams.* Self-managed teams are groups of workers who are given administrative responsibility for various activities normally performed by managers—such as planning, scheduling, monitoring, and staffing. They are typically cross functional, meaning they are staffed with a mix of specialists from different areas. Self-managed teams vary widely in the autonomy or freedom they enjoy. A virtual team is a physically dispersed task group that conducts its business through modern information technology such as the Internet. Periodic and meaningful face-to-face contact seems to be crucial for virtual team members, especially during the early stages of group development.
- *Define social loafing and explain how managers can prevent it.* Social loafing involves the tendency for individual effort to decrease as group size increases. This problem can be contained if the task is challenging and important, individuals are held accountable for results, and group members expect everyone to work hard.
- *Describe high-performance teams.* Eight attributes of high-performance teams are: participative leadership; shared responsibility; aligned on purpose; strong communication; future focused for growth; focused on task; creative talents applied; and rapid response.

# key terms

cross-functional teams, 160  
 group, 150  
 group cohesiveness, 152  
 maintenance role, 153  
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role, 152  
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task role, 153  
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# discussion questions

1. What is your opinion about employees being friends with their co-workers (overlapping formal and informal groups)?
2. Considering your current lifestyle, how many different roles are you playing? What kind of role conflict and role ambiguity are you experiencing?
3. Why is delegation so important to building organizational trust?
4. Are virtual teams likely to be just a passing fad?
5. How would you respond to a manager who said, "Why should I teach my people to manage themselves and work myself out of a job?"
6. Have you observed any social loafing recently? What were the circumstances and what could be done to correct the problem?

# internet exercises

[www.queendom.com](http://www.queendom.com)

## 1. Relationships and Communications Skills Testing

Managers, who are responsible for getting things accomplished with and through others, simply cannot be effective if they are unable to interact skillfully in social settings. As with any skill development program, you need to know *where you are* before constructing a learning agenda for *where you want to be*. Go to Body-Mind Queen-Dom ([www.queendom.com](http://www.queendom.com)), and select the category "Tests & Profiles." (Note: Our use of this site is for instructional purposes only and does not constitute an endorsement of any products that may or may not suit your needs. There is no obligation to buy anything.) Next, choose "Relationships" and select the "Communication Skills Test," read the brief instructions, complete all 34 items, and click on the "score" button for automatic scoring. It is possible, if you choose, to print a personal copy of your completed questionnaire and results.

If you have time, some of the other relationships tests are interesting and fun. We recommend trying the following

ones: Arguing Style Test; Assertiveness Test; and Conflict Management Test.

### QUESTIONS

1. How did you score? Are you pleasantly (or unpleasantly) surprised by your score?
2. What is your strongest social/communication skill?
3. Reviewing the questionnaire item by item, can you find obvious weak spots in your social/communication skills? For instance, are you a poor listener? Do you interrupt too often? Do you need to be more aware of others, both verbally and nonverbally? Do you have a hard time tuning into others' feelings or expressing your own feelings? How do you handle disagreement?
4. Based on the results of this questionnaire, what is your learning agenda for improving your social and communication skills?

[www.akgroup.com](http://www.akgroup.com)

## 2. Virtual Team Readiness Testing

Virtual teams, where members attempt to complete projects despite being geographically dispersed, will grow more common as advanced computer networks and communication technologies become even more sophisticated. Are you (and your organization) ready to work in this sort of electronically

connected team environment? You can find out, thanks to the Web site of The Applied Knowledge Group, a consulting company. Go to their home page ([www.akgroup.com](http://www.akgroup.com)) and select "Assessment Tool" from the main menu. Complete the single organizational question (for your current or past

employer), complete the next 25 individual questions, and then click on the “Score Test” button. You will be given a virtual team readiness score and a brief interpretation. A personal copy of the questionnaire and results can be also printed.

### QUESTIONS

1. How did you score? Are you pleasantly (or unpleasantly) surprised by your scores in Column A and Column B?
2. In what way are you ready for work on a virtual team? Review Column A and discuss your readiness with regard to communication and collaboration. Review Column B and discuss your level of comfort or discomfort with isolation.

## experiential exercises

### 1. Is This a Mature Work Group or Team?

#### Objectives

1. To increase your knowledge of group processes and dynamics.
2. To give you a tool for assessing the maturity of a work group or task team as well as a diagnostic tool for pinpointing group problems.
3. To help you become a more effective group leader or contributor.

#### Introduction

Group action is so common today that many of us take it for granted. But are the groups and teams to which we contribute much of our valuable time mature and hence more likely to be effective? Or do they waste our time? How can they be improved? We can and should become tough critical evaluators of group processes.

#### Instructions

Think of a work group or task team with which you are very familiar (preferably one you worked with in the past or are currently working with). Rate the group’s maturity on each of the 20 dimensions. Then add your circled responses to get your total group maturity score. The higher the score, the greater the group’s maturity.

	Very False (or Never)	Very True (or Always)
1. Members are clear about group goals.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
2. Members agree with the group’s goals.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
3. Members are clear about their roles.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
4. Members accept their roles and status.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
5. Role assignments match member abilities.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
6. The leadership style matches the group’s developmental level.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
7. The group has an open communication structure in which all members participate.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
8. The group gets, gives, and uses feedback about its effectiveness and productivity.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
9. The group spends time planning how it will solve problems and make decisions.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
10. Voluntary conformity is high.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
11. The group norms encourage high performance and quality.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
12. The group expects to be successful.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
13. The group pays attention to the details of its work.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
14. The group accepts coalition and subgroup formation.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	
15. Subgroups are integrated into the group as a whole.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5	

- 16. The group is highly cohesive. 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
- 17. Interpersonal attraction among members is high. 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
- 18. Members are cooperative. 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
- 19. Periods of conflict are frequent but brief. 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5
- 20. The group has effective conflict-management strategies. 1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5

Total score = \_\_\_\_\_

### Arbitrary Norms

- 20–39 “When in doubt, run in circles, scream and shout!”
- 40–59 A long way to go
- 60–79 On the right track
- 80–100 Ready for group dynamics graduate school

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Does your evaluation help explain why the group or team was successful or not? Explain.
2. Was (or is) there anything *you* could have done (or can do) to increase the maturity of this group? Explain.
3. How will this evaluation instrument help you be a more effective group member or leader in the future?

Source: Excerpted from S Wheelan and J M Hochberger, “Validation Studies of the Group Development Questionnaire,” *Small Group Research*, February 1996, pp 143–70.

## 2. How Autonomous Is Your Work Group?

### Instructions

Think of your current (or past) job and work group. Characterize the group’s situation by circling one number on the following scale for each statement. Add your responses for a total score:

Strongly Disagree						Strongly Agree
1	2	3	4	5	6	7

### Work Method Autonomy

- 1. My work group decides how to get the job done. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. My work group determines what procedures to use. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. My work group is free to choose its own methods when carrying out its work. \_\_\_\_\_

### Work Scheduling Autonomy

- 4. My work group controls the scheduling of its work. \_\_\_\_\_

- 5. My work group determines how its work is sequenced. \_\_\_\_\_
- 6. My work group decides when to do certain activities. \_\_\_\_\_

### Work Criteria Autonomy

- 7. My work group is allowed to modify the normal way it is evaluated so some of our activities are emphasized and some deemphasized. \_\_\_\_\_
- 8. My work group is able to modify its objectives (what it is supposed to accomplish). \_\_\_\_\_
- 9. My work group has some control over what it is supposed to accomplish. \_\_\_\_\_

Total score = \_\_\_\_\_

### Norms

- 9–26 = Low autonomy
- 27–45 = Moderate autonomy
- 46–63 = High autonomy

Source: Adapted from an individual autonomy scale in J A Breugh, “The Work Autonomy Scales: Additional Validity Evidence,” *Human Relations*, November 1989, pp 1033–56.

# personal awareness and growth exercises

## I. Measuring Role Conflict and Role Ambiguity

### Instructions

*Step 1.* While thinking of your current (or last) job, circle one response for each of the following statements. Please consider each statement carefully because some are worded positively and some negatively.

*Step 2.* In the space in the far right column, label each statement with either a "C" for role conflict or an "A" for role ambiguity. (See Ch. 7 endnote 65 for a correct categorization.)

*Step 3.* Calculate separate totals for role conflict and role ambiguity, and compare them with these arbitrary norms:

5–14 = low; 15–25 = moderate; 26–35 = high.

	Very False	Very True	
1. I feel certain about how much authority I have.	7 — 6 — 5 — 4 — 3 — 2 — 1		_____
2. I have to do things that should be done differently.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7		_____
3. I know that I have divided my time properly.	7 — 6 — 5 — 4 — 3 — 2 — 1		_____
4. I know what my responsibilities are.	7 — 6 — 5 — 4 — 3 — 2 — 1		_____
5. I have to buck a rule or policy in order to carry out an assignment.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7		_____
6. I feel certain how I will be evaluated for a raise or promotion.	7 — 6 — 5 — 4 — 3 — 2 — 1		_____
7. I work with two or more groups who operate quite differently.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7		_____
8. I know exactly what is expected of me.	7 — 6 — 5 — 4 — 3 — 2 — 1		_____
9. I do things that are apt to be accepted by one person and not accepted by others.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7		_____
10. I work on unnecessary things.	1 — 2 — 3 — 4 — 5 — 6 — 7		_____

Role conflict score = \_\_\_\_\_

Role ambiguity score = \_\_\_\_\_

Source: Adapted from J R Rizzo, R J House, and S I Lirtzman, "Role Conflict and Ambiguity in Complex Organizations," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, June 1970, p 156.

## 2. How Trusting Are You?

### Objectives

1. To introduce you to different dimensions of interpersonal trust.
2. To measure your trust in another person.
3. To discuss the managerial implications of your propensity to trust.

### Introduction

The trend toward more open and empowered organizations where teamwork and self-management are vital requires heightened interpersonal trust. Customers need to be able to trust organizations producing the goods and services they buy, managers need to trust nonmanagers to carry out the organization's mission, and team members need to trust each other in order to get the job done. As with any other interpersonal skill, we need to be able to measure and improve our ability to trust others. This exercise is a step in that direction.

### Instructions

Think of a specific individual who currently plays an important role in your life (e.g., current or future spouse, friend, supervisor, co-worker, team member, etc.), and rate his or her trustworthiness for each statement according to the following scale. Total your responses, and compare your score with the arbitrary norms provided.

Strongly Disagree	Strongly Agree
1	10
2	9
3	8
4	7
5	6
6	5
7	4
8	3
9	2

#### Overall Trust

- |  | Score |
|--|-------|
| 1. I can expect this person to play fair.                          | _____ |
| 2. I can confide in this person and know she/he desires to listen. | _____ |
| 3. I can expect this person to tell me the truth.                  | _____ |
| 4. This person takes time to listen to my problems and worries.    | _____ |

#### Emotional Trust

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 5. This person would never intentionally misrepresent my point of view to other people. | _____ |
|---|-------|

- |   |       |
|---|-------|
| 6. I can confide in this person and know that he/she will not discuss it with others. | _____ |
| 7. This person responds constructively and caringly to my problems.                   | _____ |

#### Reliability

- |  |       |
|--|-------|
| 8. If this person promised to do me a favour, she/he would carry out that promise.   | _____ |
| 9. If I had an appointment with this person, I could count on him/her showing up.    | _____ |
| 10. I could lend this person money and count on getting it back as soon as possible. | _____ |
| 11. I do not need a backup plan because I know this person will come through for me. | _____ |

Total score = \_\_\_\_\_

### Trustworthiness Scale

- 77–110 = High (Trust is a precious thing)
- 45–76 = Moderate (Be careful; get a rearview mirror.)
- 11–44 = Low (Lock up your valuables!)

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. Which particular items in this trust questionnaire are most central to your idea of trust? Why?
2. Does your score accurately depict the degree to which you trust (or distrust) the target person?
3. Why do you trust (or distrust) this individual?
4. If you trust this person to a high degree, how hard was it to build that trust? Explain. What would destroy that trust?
5. Based on your responses to this questionnaire, how would you rate your "propensity to trust"? Low? Moderate? High?
6. What are the managerial implications of your propensity to trust?

Source: Questionnaire items adapted from C Johnson-George and W C Swap, "Measurement of Specific Interpersonal Trust: Construction and Validation of a Scale to Assess Trust in Specific Other," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, December 1982, pp 1306–17; and D J McAllister, "Effect- and Cognition-based Trust as Foundations for Interpersonal Cooperation in Organizations," *Academy of Management Journal*, February 1995, pp 24–59.

# CBC video case



## Guest-Tek

The executive team at Guest-Tek, a Calgary-based software firm, is undergoing change as the company grows and faces the need to triple its staff. The founder, Arnon Levy, and his first employee, Kris Youell, Director of Sales and Marketing, who have been there from the start three years ago, form the nucleus of the executive team. They pride themselves on being honest with one another, even though they don't always see eye-to-eye. Guest-Tek recently received \$1.5 million from venture capital firm Launchworks Inc., who have placed some of their associates to work within Guest-Tek, and whose partners meet weekly with Arnon to offer advice.

Launchworks' advice has led to the hiring of older "corporate" types to help manage growth. A more difficult recommendation is that a Senior Vice President of Sales is needed, and that Kris is not the best person. This recommendation

puts Arnon in a difficult position—Kris has been at his side from the start, and he doesn't want her to leave the company because of her wealth of expertise in the industry. Arnon is able to work out a plan to provide Kris with mentoring and coaching from the Launchworks consultants, and Kris is willing to accept advice on improving her management skills.

### QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. How would you describe the executive team norms at Guest-Tek?
2. How would you describe the roles played by executive team members Arnon, Kris, and the advisors from Launchworks.
3. Analyze the changes on the executive team using the model of group development.

Source: Based on "Guest-Tek," *CBC Venture 736* (January 25, 2000).