Chapter 2: Types of Teams and Their Functions

When students finish studying this part, they should be able to:
1. Define team types.
2. Distinguish between formal and informal groups.
3. Understand how to build a good team.
4. Explain team role in solving organizational problems.
5. Determine teams as an inevitable tool in performing business.
6. Understand the process of making use of diversity in teams.
7. Define the self-managed teams in organizations.

Types of Teams

2.1 Types of Teams

Teams can be classified according to their objective. The four most common forms of teams you are likely to find in an organization are problem-solving teams, self-managed teams, cross-functional teams, and virtual teams.

Problem-Solving Teams

A) Problem-Solving Teams

They are typically composed of 5 to 12 employees from the same department who meet for a few hours each week to discuss ways of improving quality, efficiency, and the work environment.

Organizations are relaying more and more on problem-solving teams to help solve organizational problems, as shown in Figure 2.1.
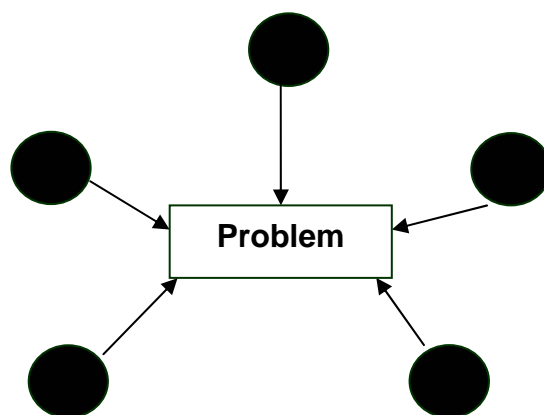
Figure 2.1: Problem-solving team

In problem-solving teams, members share ideas or offer suggestions on how work process and methods can be improved. Rarely, however, are these teams given the authority to unilaterally implement any of their suggested actions, as shown in Figure 2.2.

Figure 2.2: Team hoac

Self-Managed Teams

B) Self-Managed Teams

They are generally composed of 10 to 15 people who take on the responsibilities of their former supervisors. Typically, these responsibilities include:
   a) Collective control over the pace of work,
   b) Determination of work assignments,
   c) Organization of breaks, and
   d) Collective choice of inspection procedures used.

Fully self-managed teams select their own members, and the members evaluate each other's performance. As a result, supervisory positions take on decreased importance and may even be eliminated, see Figure 2.3.
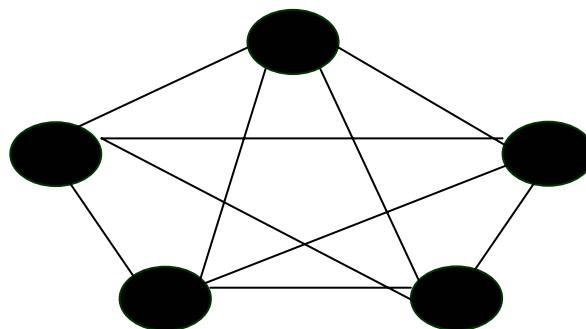

Figure 2.3: Self-managed team

Cross-Functional Teams

C) Cross - Functional Teams

Cross-functional teams are made of employees at about the same hierarchical level, but from different work areas, who come together to accomplish a task.

Cross-functional teams are an effective means of allowing people from diverse areas within an organization to exchange information, develop new ideas, solve problems, and coordinate complex projects. Cross-functional teams bring people with different functional specialties to better invent design, or deliver a product or service. The general goals of using cross-functional team include some combination of innovation, speed and quality that come from early coordination among the various specialties

Virtual Teams

D) Virtual Teams

Virtual teams use computers technology to tie tighter physically dispersed members in order to achieve a common goal. They allow people to collaborate online, whether they are only a room apart or separated by continents.

The three primary factors that differentiate virtual teams from face-to-face teams are:
   a) The absence of Para verbal and nonverbal cues.
   b) Limited social context.
   c) The ability to overcome time and space constraints.

Teams Role in Solving Organizational Problems
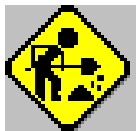
2.2 Teams Role in Solving Organizational Problems

Team decision-making process assists organization to solve non-routine problems. It is always said the ***"two brains are better than one."*** The advantages of team decision-making process are:
   a) **Problem definition:** teams can define the problem more clearly. Team members can visualize the problem from different perspectives. The integration of those perspectives helps the team to reach a clear definition of the problem.
   b) **Data collection:** teams are able to collect more data than individual.
   c) **Developing alternatives:** teams can develop more alternatives than individuals. Teams usually use different techniques such as brainstorming, nominal groupings, and Delphi techniques.
   d) **Evaluating and selecting alternatives:** team discussions can always produce more positive solutions of a problem. Teams also use more objectives criteria in selecting the right alternative.
   e) **Implementing the solution:** teams are able to define the roles of each team member in implementing the solution of the problem.

Formal and
Informal
Groups

2.3 Formal and Informal Groups

Groups come in many forms, shapes, and sizes. Most managers belong to several different groups at the same time, some at work, some at community, some formally organized, and some informal and social in nature. The most basic way of identifying types of groups is to distinguish between:

- ✓ Formal groups, and
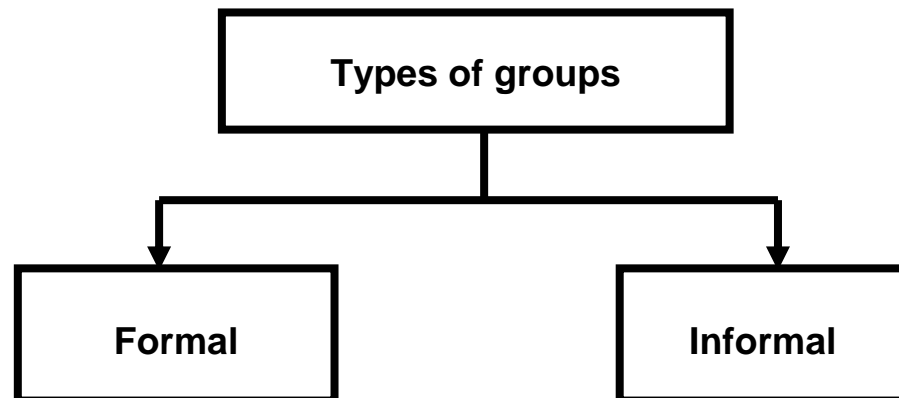- ✓ Informal groups, as shown in Figure 2.4.

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Figure 2.4: Types of groups

A) Formal Groups

Formal
Groups

The organization's managers to accomplish goals and serve the needs of the organization deliberately create formal groups. The major purpose of formal groups is to perform specific tasks and achieve specific objectives defined by the organization. The most common type of formal work group consists of individuals cooperating under the direction of a leader. Examples of formal groups are departments, divisions, taskforce, project groups, quality circles, committees, and boards of directors.

Formal groups are created by the organization and are intentionally designed to direct members toward some important organizational goal. One type of formal group is referred to as a command group (i.e., those who can legitimately give orders to others). Formal organizational group also may be formed around some specific task. Such a group is referred to as a task group. Unlike command groups, a task group may be composed of individuals with some special interest or expertise in a specific area regardless of their positions in the organizational hierarchy.

Informal
Groups

B) Informal Groups

Informal groups in organizations are not formed or planned by the organization's managers. Rather, they are self-created and evolve out of the formal organization for a variety of reasons, such as proximity,

common interests, or needs of individuals. It would be difficult for organization to prohibit informal working relationships from developing.

Informal groups develop naturally among an organization's personnel without any direction from management. One key factor in the emergence of informal groups is a common interest shared by its members. For example, a group of employees who band together to seek union representation may be called an interest group

Of course, sometimes the interests that bind individuals together are far more diffuse. Groups may develop out of a common interest in participating in sports, or going to the movies, or just getting together to talk. These kinds of informal groups are known as friendship groups.

2.4 Task Interdependence Types

Task Interdependence Types

There are three types of task interdependence groups, see Figure 2.5; these types are:

- **Pooled Task Interdependence**: members make separate, independent contributions to group. Group performance is the sum of member contributions.

- **Sequential Task Interdependence**: members perform tasks in a sequential order. It is hard to determine individual performance since one member depends on another.

- **Reciprocal Task Interdependence**: work performed by a member is dependent on work by others. Members share information and work closely together.
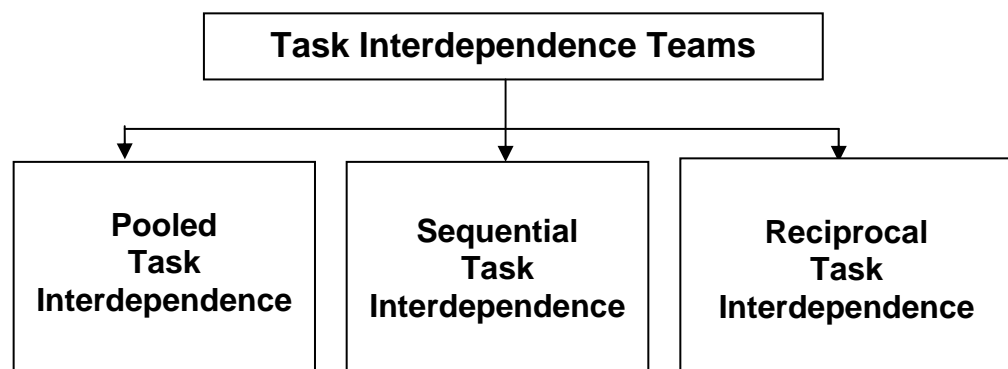
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Pooled Task Interdependence	Sequential Task Interdependence	Reciprocal Task Interdependence

Figure 2.5: Task interdependence teams

How to Build a Good Team

2.5 How to Build a Good Team

To build a good team, you should do as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Building a good team

Always	Never
1. Deliver on time and alert team ASAP when unexpected delays occur.	1. Tell your teammates or leader how much time and effort you are putting into your assignment.
2. Attend all team meetings on time.	2. Assume the role of resident critic and complainer.
3. Speak up, Speak out, and interact at all team meetings.	3. Wait for someone to tell/ask you what to do next.
4. Take personal interest in planning and problem solving.	4. Delay actions and make excuses.
5. Look for ways to go-the-second-mile on your own.	5. Isolate yourself from the others.

Can you tell more!!!!!!

Self-Managed Teams

2.6 Self-Managed Teams

Experts agree that tasks assigned to self-managed work teams should be complex and challenging, requiring high interdependence among team members for accomplishment. In general, these tasks should have the qualities of enriched jobs, thus, teams should see the task as significant, they should perform the task from beginning to end, and they should use a variety of skills. The point here is that self-managed teams have to have something useful to self-manage, and it is fairly complex tasks that capitalize on the diverse knowledge and skills of a group. If a theme runs through this discussion of tasks for self-managed teams, it is the breakdown of traditional, conventional, specialized roles in the group. Group members adopt roles that will make the group effective, not ones that are simply related to a narrow specialty.

The Composition of Self-Managed Teams

How should organizations assemble self-managed teams to ensure effectiveness? "Stable, small, and smart" might be a fast answer.

Stability. Self-managed teams require considerable interaction and high cohesiveness among their members. This, in turn, requires understanding and trust. To achieve this, group will cause it to fail to develop a true team identity.

Size. In keeping with the demands of the task, self-managed teams should be as small as is feasible. The goal here is to keep coordination problems and social loafing to a minimum

Expertise. It goes without saying that group members should have a high level of expertise about the task at hand. Everybody doesn't know everything but the group as a whole should be very knowledgeable about the task

Diversity. A team should have members who are similar enough to work well together and diverse enough to bring a variety of perspectives and skills to the task at hand.

Questions for
Discussion

Questions for Discussion

1- Where were your strongest (highest score) and weakest (lowest score) reasons for joining this group?
2- Besides the four reasons identified here, what other reasons did you have for joining this group?
3- Would your scores be different from those you thought about another group you may have joined? Repeat the questionnaire to find out.

Assessment 2.1

"Are You a Team Player?"

Direction:
The following assessment instrument asks you to examine your behavior as a team member in organizational setting. For each pair of items, place a check mark in the space in the column that best identifies how you behave in a working group at school, in student or community groups, or on your job, as shown in Table 2.2.

*Interpretation***:** in each pair of items, the items on the left are more associated with team behaviors than items on the right.

1. In what ways do these behaviors agree with your concept of team membership? How do they differ?
2. What strengths do you think you have working on a team? Weaknesses?

Are there times when you have preformed more effectively as a team member? If so, what events or circumstances made you behave differently in the different situation?

Table 2.2: Behavioral examination

	Very like me	Some what like me	Both describe me	Some what like me	Very like me	Some what like me	
Flexible in own ideas							Set in my own ideas
Open to new ideas							Avoid new ideas
Listen well to others							Tune out others
Trusting of others							Not trusting others
Prefer to raise differences and discuss them							Prefer to avoid discussing differences
Readily contribute in group meetings							Hold back from contributing in group meetings
Concerned for what happens to others							Not concerned for what happens to others
Fully committed to tasks							Have little commitment to tasks
Willing to help others to get the job done							Prefer to stick to my own task or job description
Share leadership with group							Maintaining full control of group
Encourage others to participate							Expect others to participate without encouragement
Group needs Group come before my individual needs							My individual My needs come before group needs

Assessment 2.2

Decision-Making & Creative Problem Solving

	Statement	Self	Group
01	I/we seek accuracy of information by adding to or questioning summaries.		
02	I/we seek elaboration by relating to familiar events or asking how others understand material.		
03	I/we ask for additional information or rationale.		
04	I/we seek clever ways of remembering ideas and facts (e.g., posters, visuals, notes, electronic devices, public agendas).		
05	I/we ask other members why and how they are reasoning.		
06	I/we encourage the assigning of specific roles to facilitate better group functioning (e.g., process observer).		
07	I/we ask for feedback in a non-confrontational way.		
08	I/we help to decide the next steps for the group.		
09	I/we diagnose group difficulties regarding tasks.		
10	I/we diagnose group difficulties regarding interpersonal problems.		
11	I/we encourage the generation and exploration of multiple solutions to problems through the use of creative problem-solving strategies.		