

# Understanding Groups

- Group

- Two or more interacting and interdependent individuals who come together to achieve specific goals.
- Formal groups
  - ❖ Work groups defined by the organization's structure that have designated work assignments and tasks.
    - Appropriate behaviors are defined by and directed toward organizational goals.
- Informal groups
  - ❖ Groups that are independently formed to meet the social needs of their members.

---

## Exhibit 15–1 Examples of Formal Groups

---

- **Command Groups**

- Groups that are determined by the organization chart and composed of individuals who report directly to a given manager.

- **Task Groups**

- Groups composed of individuals brought together to complete a specific job task; their existence is often temporary because once the task is completed, the group disbands.

---

## Exhibit 15–1 Examples of Formal Groups (cont'd)

---

- **Cross-Functional Teams**

- Groups that bring together the knowledge and skills of individuals from various work areas or groups whose members have been trained to do each others' jobs.

- **Self-Managed Teams**

- Groups that are essentially independent and in addition to their own tasks, take on traditional responsibilities such as hiring, planning and scheduling, and performance evaluations.

# Stages in Group Development

- **Forming**

- Members join and begin the process of defining the group's purpose, structure, and leadership.

- **Storming**

- Intragroup conflict occurs as individuals resist control by the group and disagree over leadership.

- **Norming**

- Close relationships develop as the group becomes cohesive and establishes its norms for acceptable behavior.

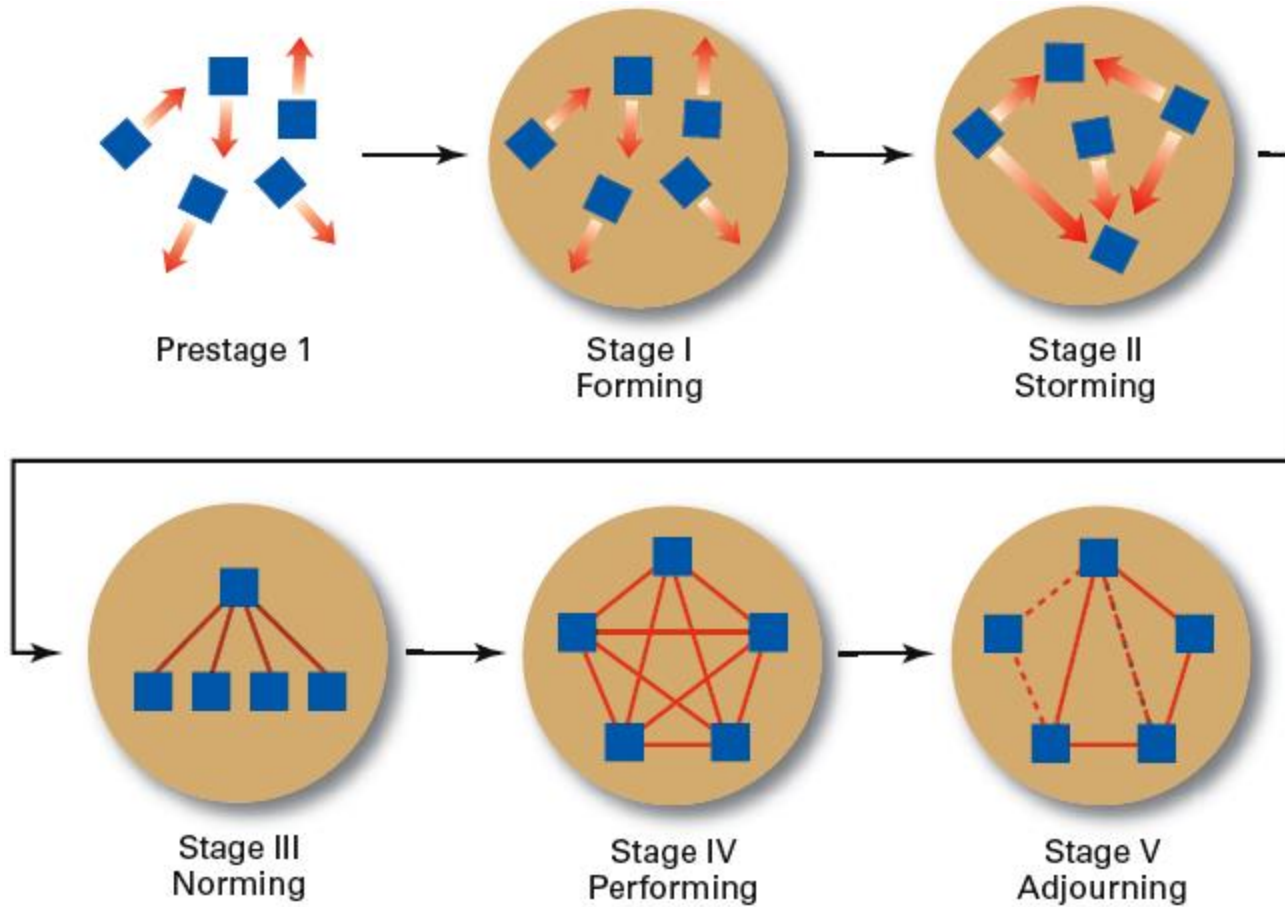
- **Performing**

- A fully functional group structure allows the group to focus on performing the task at hand.

- **Adjourning**

- The group prepares to disband and is no longer concerned with high levels of performance.

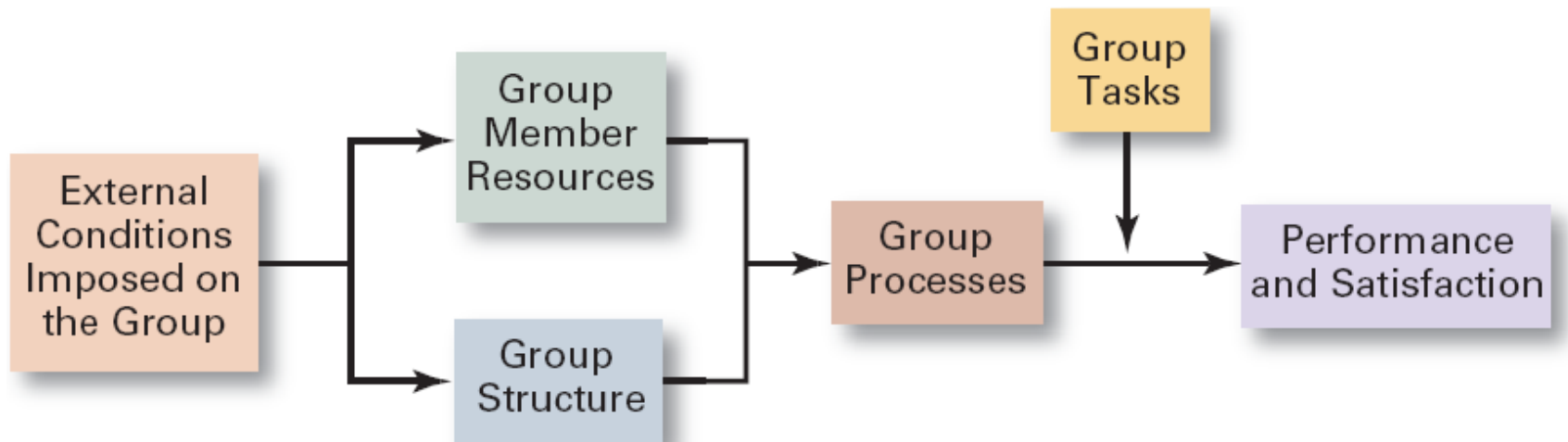
## Exhibit 15–2 Stages of Group Development



---

## Exhibit 15–3 Group Behavior Model

---



# Work Group Behavior

- Internal Variables Affecting Group Behavior
  - The individual abilities of the group's members
  - The size of the group
  - The level of conflict
  - The internal pressures on members to conform to the group's norms

# Conditions Affecting Group Behavior

- External (Organizational) Conditions

- Overall strategy
- Authority structures
- Formal regulations
- Available organizational resources
- Employee selection criteria
- Performance management (appraisal) system
- Organizational culture
- General physical layout

- Internal Group Variables

- Individual competencies and traits of members
- Group structure
- Size of the group
- Cohesiveness and the level of intragroup conflict
- Internal pressures on members to conform to the group's norms



# Group Structure

- Role

- The set of expected behavior patterns attributed to someone who occupies a given position in a social unit that assist the group in task accomplishment or maintaining group member satisfaction.
- Role conflict: experiencing differing role expectations
- Role ambiguity: uncertainty about role expectations

# Group Structure (cont'd)

- Norms

- Acceptable standards or expectations that are shared by the group's members.

- Common types of norms

- Effort and performance

- ❖ Output levels, absenteeism, promptness, socializing

- Dress

- Loyalty

# Group Structure (cont'd)

- **Conformity**

- Individuals conform in order to be accepted by groups.
- Group pressures can have an effect on an individual member's judgment and attitudes.
- The effect of conformity is not as strong as it once was, although still a powerful force.
- **Groupthink**
  - ❖ The extensive pressure of others in a strongly cohesive or threatened group that causes individual members to change their opinions to conform to that of the group.

# Group Structure: Group Size

- **Small groups**

- Complete tasks faster than larger groups.
- Make more effective use of facts.

- **Large groups**

- Solve problems better than small groups.
- Are good for getting diverse input.
- Are more effective in fact-finding.

- **Social Loafing**

- The tendency for individuals to expend less effort when working collectively than when work individually.



# Group Structure (cont'd)

- Group Cohesiveness

- The degree to which members are attracted to a group and share the group's goals.

- ❖ Highly cohesive groups are more effective and productive than less cohesive groups when their goals aligned with organizational goals.



# Group Processes: Group Decision Making

- **Advantages**

- **Generates more complete information and knowledge.**
- **Generates more diverse alternatives.**
- **Increases acceptance of a solution.**
- **Increases legitimacy of decision.**

- **Disadvantages**

- **Time consuming**
- **Minority domination**
- **Pressures to conform**
- **Ambiguous responsibility**

---

## Exhibit 15–6 Group versus Individual Decision Making

---

| <b>Criteria of Effectiveness</b> | <b>Groups</b> | <b>Individuals</b> |
|----------------------------------|---------------|--------------------|
| <b>Accuracy</b>                  | ✓             |                    |
| <b>Speed</b>                     |               | ✓                  |
| <b>Creativity</b>                | ✓             |                    |
| <b>Degree of acceptance</b>      | ✓             |                    |
| <b>Efficiency</b>                |               | ✓                  |

# Group Processes: Conflict Management

- Conflict

- The perceived incompatible differences in a group resulting in some form of interference with or opposition to its assigned tasks.

- ❖ **Traditional view:** conflict must be avoided.

- ❖ **Human relations view:** conflict is a natural and inevitable outcome in any group.

- ❖ **Interactionist view:** conflict can be a positive force and is absolutely necessary for effective group performance.



# Group Processes: Conflict Management (cont'd)

- Categories of Conflict

- Functional conflicts are constructive.
- Dysfunctional conflicts are destructive.

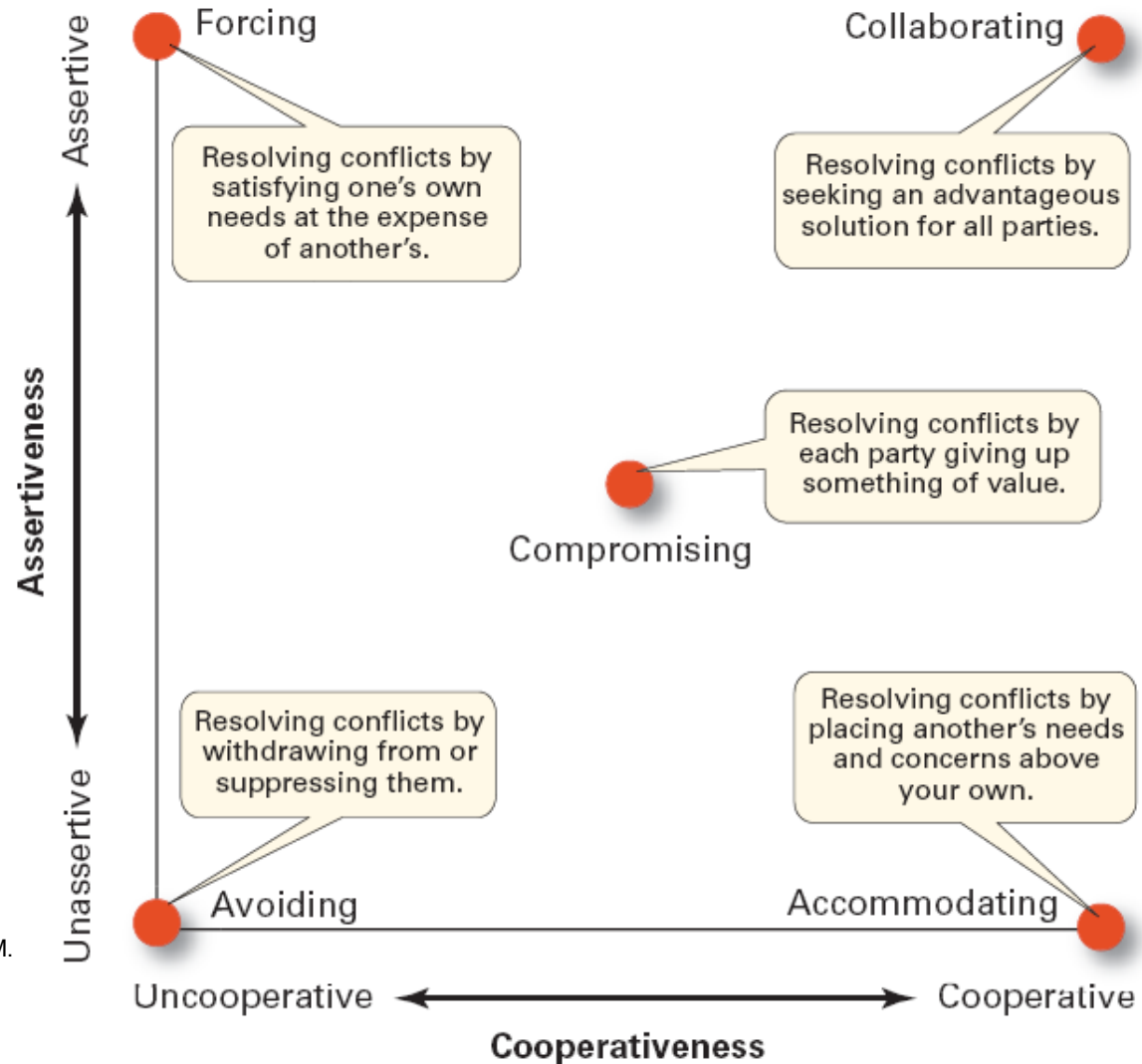
- Types of Conflict

- Task conflict: content and goals of the work
- Relationship conflict: interpersonal relationships
- Process conflict: how the work gets done

# Group Processes: Conflict Management (cont'd)

- Techniques to Reduce Conflict:
  - Avoidance
  - Accommodation
  - Forcing
  - Compromise
  - Collaboration

## Exhibit 15–9 Conflict-Management Techniques



**Source:** Adapted from K.W. Thomas, "Conflict and Negotiation Processes in Organizations," in M.D. Dunnette and L.M. Hough (eds.) *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, vol. 3, 2d ed. (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1992), p. 668. With permission

# Group Tasks and Group Effectiveness

- Highly complex and interdependent tasks require:
  - Effective communications: discussion among group members.
  - Controlled conflict: More interaction among group members.

# What Is a Team?

- **Work Team**

- A group whose members work intensely on a specific common goal using their positive synergy, individual and mutual accountability, and complementary skills.

- **Types of Teams**

- Problem-solving teams
- Self-managed work teams
- Cross-functional teams
- Virtual teams

---

## Exhibit 15–10 Groups versus Teams

---

### Work Group

- Strong, clearly focused leader
- Individual accountability
- The group's purpose is the same as the broader organizational mission
- Individual work products
- Runs efficient meetings
- Measures its effectiveness indirectly by its influence on others (such as financial performance of the business)
- Discusses, decides, and delegates together

### Team

- Shared leadership roles
- Individual and mutual accountability
- Specific team purpose that the team itself delivers
- Collective work products
- Encourages open-ended discussion and active problem-solving meetings
- Measures performance directly by assessing collective work products
- Discusses, decides, and does real work

# Types of Teams

- **Problem-solving Teams**
  - Employees from the same department and functional area who are involved in efforts to improve work activities or to solve specific problems.
- **Self-managed Work Teams**
  - A formal group of employees who operate without a manager and responsible for a complete work process or segment.

# Types of Teams (cont'd)

- Cross-functional Teams

- A hybrid grouping of individuals who are experts in various specialties and who work together on various tasks.

- Virtual Teams

- Teams that use computer technology to link physically dispersed members in order to achieve a common goal.



# Advantages of Using Teams

- Teams outperform individuals.
- Teams provide a way to better use employee talents.
- Teams are more flexible and responsive.
- Teams can be quickly assembled, deployed, refocused, and disbanded.



---

## Exhibit 15–11 Characteristics of Effective Teams

---



# Characteristics of Effective Teams

- Have a clear understanding of their goals.
- Have competent members with relevant technical and interpersonal skills.
- Exhibit high mutual trust in the character and integrity of their members.
- Are unified in their commitment to team goals.
- Have good communication systems.
- Possess effective negotiating skills
- Have appropriate leadership
- Have both internally and externally supportive environments

# Current Challenges in Managing Teams

- Getting employees to:
  - Cooperate with others
  - Share information
  - Confront differences
  - Sublimate personal interest for the greater good of the team



# Managing Global Teams

- **Group Member Resources**
  - Unique cultural characteristics of team members
  - Avoiding stereotyping
- **Group Structure**
  - Conformity—less groupthink
  - Status—varies in importance among cultures
  - Social loafing—predominately a Western bias
  - Cohesiveness—more difficult to achieve
- **Group processes—capitalize on diverse ideas**
- **Manager's role—a communicator sensitive to the type of globe team to use.**

---

## Exhibit 15–12 Drawbacks and Benefits of Global Teams

---

### Drawbacks

- Dislike team members
- Mistrust team members
- Stereotyping
- Communication problems
- Stress and tension

### Benefits

- Greater diversity of ideas
- Limited groupthink
- Increased attention on understanding others' ideas, perspectives, etc.

# Understanding Social Networks

- Social Network

- The patterns of informal connections among individuals within groups

- The Importance of Social Networks

- Relationships can help or hinder team effectiveness
- Relationships improve team goal attainment and increase member commitment to the team.

