

11

Developing Groups

Key Concepts

After completing this chapter, you will be able to define these supervisory terms:

- cohesiveness
- cross-functional team
- emergent leader
- formal group
- group
- informal group
- problem-solving team
- self-managed work team
- social loafing
- team
- virtual team

CHAPTER

Chapter Outcomes and Learning Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- 11-1. Contrast a group and a team.
- 11-2. Define *norms*.
- 11-3. Explain the relationship between cohesiveness and group productivity.
- 11-4. Describe who is likely to become an emergent leader in an informal group.
- 11-5. Explain what a supervisor can do when group norms are hindering department performance.
- 11-6. Identify three categories of teams.
- 11-7. List the characteristics of real teams.
- 11-8. List actions a supervisor can take to improve team performance.
- 11-9. Describe the role of teams in continuous-improvement programs.

Leon Harris/Riser/Getty Images



Responding to a Supervisory Dilemma



ZUMA Press, Inc./Alamy

For more than six decades, Toyota Motor Corporation has been a shining example of employee collaboration and teamwork. Although many companies proudly proclaim their team culture, at Toyota, the endorsement seems well deserved and sincere.

Teamwork is one of Toyota's core values, along with trust, continuous improvement, long-term thinking, standardization, innovation, and problem solving. In addition, four management principles (the 4P model) guide employees: problem solving, people and partners, process, and philosophy. The idea behind these principles is that "Good Thinking Means Good Product." Another interesting detail about Toyota is its belief that efficiency alone cannot guarantee success. The company recognizes that teams of employees are more than several pairs of hands but represent *chie*—the wisdom of experience. For supervisors the question is, how does Toyota's culture reflect its emphasis on teamwork?

First, individualism, a prominent value in Western culture, is deemphasized. Instead, Toyota emphasizes systems in which people and processes and products are seen as intertwined value streams. Employees are trained to be problem solvers with an important responsibility to make the production system leaner and better.

Second, Toyota's hiring process "weeds out" those who aren't oriented to teamwork. Job applicants must not only be competent and possess technical skills, but must exhibit strong teamwork capabilities such as being able to trust their team, comfortable with solving problems collaboratively, and motivated to achieve collective outcomes.

Third, Toyota structures its work around teams. Every Toyota employee knows the adage, "All of us are smarter than any of us." Teams are used not only in production, but at every level and in every function. For instance, in the aftermath of the devastating tsunami, employees at Toyota GB (the corporate sales and marketing arm of Toyota and Lexus brands in the United Kingdom) all pulled together with a "team spirit of personal sacrifice to guarantee the stable employment of the collective."

Finally, Toyota considers employee teams to be the power center of the organization. The leader serves the team, not the other way around. When asked whether he would feature himself in an advertisement, the former CEO of Toyota USA said, "No. We want to show everybody in the company. The heroes. Not one single person."

What do you think? Has Toyota succeeded because of its team-oriented culture, or could it have succeeded without it? How does Toyota emphasize teamwork throughout the organization? How would the way supervisors manage be different in this team-based organization? Would you be comfortable working in such an environment as this? Why or why not?

Based on W. Shul Shim and R. M. Steers, "Symmetric and Asymmetric Leadership Cultures: A Comparative Study of Leadership and Organizational Culture at Hyundai and Toyota," *Journal of World Business*, October 2012, pp. 581–591; C. Chynoweth, "Team Toyota," *Business Case*, November 2011, pp. 36–39; C. Piper, "Real Labour-Management Teamwork: An Idea Whose Time Is Due," *Ivey Business Journal*, May/June 2009, p. 1+; A. Webb, "The Trials and Tribulations of Teamwork," *Automotive News*, March 2, 2009, <http://www.autonews.com/article/20090302/RETAIL07/303029738/the-trials-and-tribulations-of-teamwork> (accessed June 6, 2014); J. K. Liker and M. Hoseus, "Toyota's Powerful HR," *Human Resource Executive*, November 1, 2008, <http://www.hreonline.com/HRE/view/story.jhtml?id=142379335> (accessed June 6, 2014); H. Takeuchi, E. Osono, N. Shimizu, "The Contradictions That Drive Toyota's Success," *Harvard Business Review*, June 2008, pp. 96–104; and J. K. Liker and M. Hoseus, *Toyota Culture: The Heart and Soul of the Toyota Way* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 2008).

What Is a Group?

A **group** is defined as two or more interacting and interdependent individuals who come together to achieve particular objectives. **Formal groups** are workgroups established by the organization that have designated work assignments and established tasks. The behaviors in which one should engage are stipulated by and directed toward organizational goals. Formal groups include committees, group meetings, task forces, and work teams.

Formal groups can be either permanent or temporary. At Cedars-Sinai Hospital in New York, a permanent committee of nursing supervisors from the surgical unit meets every Monday morning on a planned and regular basis, whereas a temporary formal group of supervisors and employees who study ways to continually improve patient services dissolve after finishing their work and presenting their recommendations to the hospital's administrators.

Informal groups are of a social nature, appearing naturally in the work environment in response to the need for social contact. They tend to form around friendships and common interests. Carpool groups, shared interest groups, lunch buddies, or grief support groups are all examples of informal groups.

Formal workgroups are not the same as teams. Many formal workgroups are merely individuals who sporadically interact but who have no collective commitment that requires joint efforts. That is, the group's total performance is merely the summation of the individual group members' performance.

A **team** has members who are committed to a common purpose, has a set of specific performance goals, and holds itself mutually accountable for the team's results. Teams, in other words, are greater than the sum of their parts.

OBJECTIVE 11-1

Contrast a group and a team.

group

Two or more interacting and interdependent individuals who come together to achieve particular objectives.

formal group

A workgroup established by the organization and given designated work assignments and established tasks.

informal group

A social group that forms naturally in the work environment in response to the need for social contact.

team

A workgroup whose members are committed to a common purpose, have a set of specific performance goals, and hold themselves mutually accountable for the team's results.

Why Do People Join Groups?

People belong to a number of groups for a variety of reasons and it's obvious that different groups provide different benefits to their members. Most people join a group out of needs for security, status, self-esteem, affiliation, power, or goal achievement (see Exhibit 11-1).

By joining a group, individuals can reduce the insecurity of "standing alone." The group helps the individual to feel stronger, have fewer self-doubts, and be more resistant to threats. Inclusion in a group that others view as important provides

REASON

PERCEIVED BENEFIT

Security

Gaining strength in numbers; reducing the insecurity of standing alone

Status

Achieving some level of prestige from belonging to a particular group

Self-esteem

Enhancing one's feeling of self-worth—especially membership in a highly valued group

Affiliation

Satisfying one's social needs through social interaction

Power

Achieving something through a group action not possible individually; protecting group members from unreasonable demands of others

Goal achievement

Providing an opportunity to accomplish a particular task when it takes more than one person's talents, knowledge, or power to complete the job

Exhibit 11-1

Reasons people join groups.

recognition and status for its members. In addition to conveying status to those outside the group, membership can also raise feelings of self-esteem—being accepted into a highly valued group.

Affiliation with groups can fulfill one's social needs for regular interaction. For many people, on-the-job interactions are their primary means of fulfilling their need for affiliation. Workgroups contribute significantly to fulfilling their need for friendships and social relations. One appealing aspect of groups is that they represent power. What often cannot be achieved individually becomes possible through group action. This power might be used to make demands on others or it might be desired as a countermeasure. To protect themselves from unreasonable demands by supervisors, individuals may align with others. For individuals who desire to influence others, informal groups can offer power without a formal position of authority in the organization. A group leader might be able to make requests of group members and obtain compliance without any of the responsibilities that go with formal managerial positions. For people with a high power need, groups can be a vehicle for fulfillment. Finally, people may join a group for goal achievement, combining forces to accomplish a particular task when there is a need to pool talents, knowledge, or power to get a job completed.

Understanding Informal Workgroups

Supervisors must live with the fact that informal workgroups emerge naturally in organizations and must expect that employees will be members of many informal workgroups. You should be interested in the workings of informal groups because they can shape the behavior of employees and affect productivity in your department.

To begin our understanding of informal workgroups, we need to look at three factors: norms, cohesiveness, and emergent leadership.

OBJECTIVE 11-2 Define norms.

WHAT ARE NORMS AND HOW DO THEY AFFECT WORK BEHAVIOR?

Did you ever notice that golfers don't speak while their partners are putting on the green, or that employees generally don't criticize their bosses in public? This is because of *norms*. All groups have established norms, or acceptable standards that are shared by the group's members. Norms dictate things such as output levels, absenteeism rates, promptness or tardiness, and the amount of socializing allowed on the job.

Although each group has its own unique set of norms, common classes of norms appear in most organizations. These focus on effort and performance, dress, and loyalty. The most widespread norms are related to levels of effort and performance. Workgroups typically provide their members with explicit cues on how hard to work, what level of output to have, when to look busy, when it's acceptable to goof off, and the like. These norms affect an individual employee's performance. They are so powerful that performance predictions based solely on an employee's ability and level of personal motivation often prove to be wrong.

Some organizations have formal dress codes. However, even in their absence, norms frequently develop to dictate the kind of clothing that should be worn to work. College seniors, interviewing for their first postgraduate job, pick up this norm quickly; students who are interviewing for jobs can usually be spotted walking around in dark gray or blue suits. Of course, what connotes acceptable dress in one organization may be different from the norms in another.

Few supervisors appreciate employees who ridicule the organization and they view employees who actively look for another job unfavorably. Unhappy employees know they should keep their job searches secret. These examples demonstrate that loyalty norms are widespread in organizations. This loyalty norm often explains why ambitious candidates to positions of greater authority in an organization willingly take work

home at night, come in on weekends, and accept transfers to cities where they would otherwise not prefer to live.

Individuals desirous of acceptance by the groups to which they belong are susceptible to conformity pressures (see “News Flash! Solomon Asch and Group Conformity”). The impact that group pressures for conformity can have on an individual member’s judgment and attitudes was demonstrated in the now-classic studies by Solomon Asch.



News Flash!

SOLOMON ASCH AND GROUP CONFORMITY

Does one’s desire to be accepted as part of a group leave him or her susceptible to conforming to the group’s norms? Will the group place strong enough pressure to change a member’s attitude and behavior? In the research by Solomon Asch, the answer appears to be yes.

Asch’s study involved groups of seven or eight people who sat in a classroom and were asked to compare two cards held by an investigator. One card had one line; the other had three lines of varying length. As shown in Exhibit 11-2, one of the lines on the three-line card was identical to the line on the one-line card. Also, as shown in Exhibit 11-2, the difference in line length was quite obvious; under ordinary conditions, subjects made fewer than 1 percent errors. The object was to announce aloud which of the three lines matched the single line. But what happens if all the other members in the group begin to give incorrect answers? Will the pressure to conform cause the unsuspecting subject (USS) to alter their answers to align to those of the others? That was what Asch wanted to know. He arranged the group so that only the USS was unaware that the experiment was fixed. The seating was prearranged so that the USS was the last to announce their decision.

The experiment began with two sets of matching exercises. All the subjects gave the right answers. On the third set, however, the first subject gave an obviously wrong answer—for example, saying C in Exhibit 11-2. The next subject gave the same wrong answer, and so did the others, until it got to the USS. They knew that B was the same as X, but everyone else had said C. The decision confronting the USS was this: Do you publicly state a perception that differs from the announced position of the others? Or do you give an answer that you strongly believe is incorrect to have your response agree with the other group members? Asch’s subjects conformed in about 35 percent of many experiments and many trials. That is, the subjects gave answers that they knew were wrong but that were consistent with the replies of other group members.

For supervisors, the Asch study provides considerable insight into workgroup behaviors. The tendency, as Asch showed, is for individual members to go along with the “pack.” To diminish the negative aspects of conformity, supervisors should create a climate of openness in which employees are free to discuss problems without fear of retaliation.

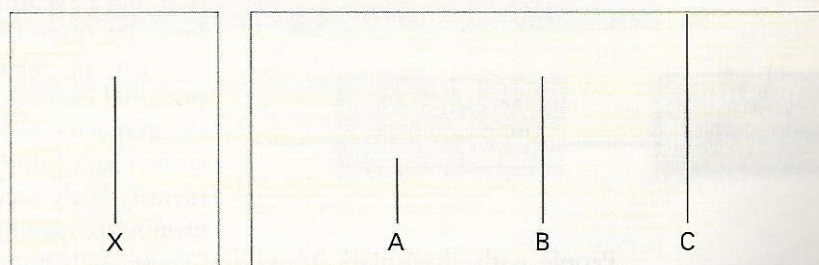


Exhibit 11-2

Examples of cards used in the Asch study.

Source: S. E. Asch, “Effects of Group Pressure upon the Modification and Distortion of Judgments,” in H. Gurewicz (ed.), *Groups, Leadership and Men* (Pittsburgh: Carnegie Press, 1951), 177–190.

Asch's results suggest that there are group norms that press us toward conformity.¹ We desire to be one of the group and avoid being visibly different. When an individual's opinion of objective data differs significantly from that of others in the group, they feel extensive pressure to align their opinion to conform to those of the others.

OBJECTIVE 11-3

Explain the relationship between cohesiveness and group productivity.

cohesiveness

The degree to which group members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the group.

ARE COHESIVE GROUPS MORE EFFECTIVE?

Cohesiveness is the degree to which members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the group. For instance, some workgroups are more cohesive because the members have spent a long time together; the group is small with high interaction; the group has survived threats, which brought them closer together; or the group has a history of previous success. Cohesiveness is important because it's related to the group's productivity.

Studies consistently show that a group's cohesiveness and productivity depend on the performance-related norms they establish. The more cohesive the group, the more its members will follow its goals. With performance-related norms of high output, quality work, and cooperation with individuals outside the group, a cohesive group is more productive than a less cohesive group. But if cohesiveness is high and performance norms are low, productivity will be low. If cohesiveness is low and performance norms are high, productivity will increase, but less than in the high cohesiveness-high norms situation. And where cohesiveness and performance-related norms are both low, productivity will tend to fall into the low to moderate range. These conclusions are summarized in Exhibit 11-3.

OBJECTIVE 11-4

Describe who is likely to become an emergent leader in an informal group.

emergent leader

A leader who emerges within a workgroup without having formal authority in the organization.

WHAT IS AN EMERGENT LEADER?

Leaders frequently emerge within workgroups, yet they have no formal authority in the organization. Despite their lack of formal authority, these **emergent leaders** are a force that supervisors must be prepared to reckon with.

Emergent leaders are ones that others like to be with and people gravitate to them. Others listen when they speak and they are often spokespersons for their groups.

Tending to be central links in the informal communication chain, important information reaches them early, and they pass on information to others. They may have become informal leaders because of their contacts in the organization and their ability to use those contacts to access important information.

Identify the emergent leaders within workgroups and build ties with them. Recognize that they have influence over their group members. By respecting their leadership positions and gaining their cooperation, you can turn potential enemies into allies. Remember to use the grapevine to identify needs that the formal system isn't fulfilling. This way you are able to identify fairly accurately which individuals and groups are gaining and losing influence.

People with charismatic traits and those with important but scarce knowledge about the organization or technical aspects of the group's work may be emergent leaders. Followers are attracted to those with self-confidence and the ability to articulate

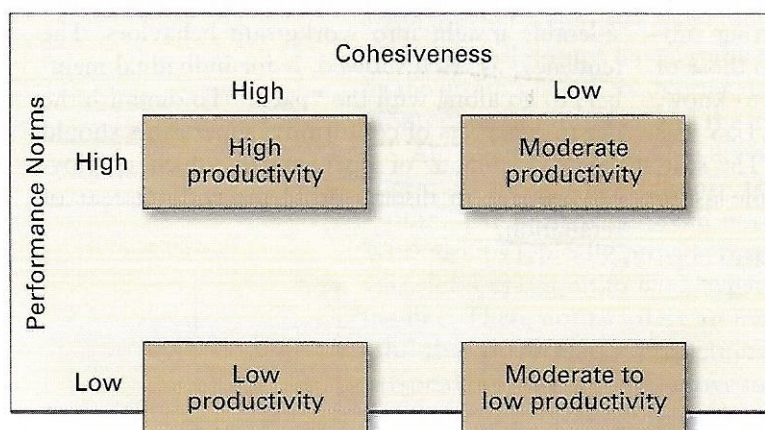


Exhibit 11-3

Relationship among group cohesiveness, performance norms, and productivity.

¹S. E. Asch, "Effects of Group Pressure upon the Modification and Distortion of Judgements," in H. Guetzkow (ed.), *Groups, Leadership and Men* (Pittsburgh, PA: Carnegie Press, 1951), pp. 177-190.

goals. Groups often project leadership status onto individuals who possess knowledge that group members believe they need to function well.

Remember that emergent leaders change over time. As issues, problems, and people change within a department and the organization, new leaders will arise. Ongoing monitoring of the grapevine will typically signal those changes to you. It is important to keep track because different leaders seek to impose different agendas on their groups.

HOW CAN INFORMAL GROUPS BE HELPFUL?

Every organization—no matter how well it's structured—has voids. Despite well-designed formal communication paths, departmental designations, and job descriptions, there will always be gaps. Informal groups fill these holes. For instance, in stressful occupations, informal groups often develop as a means for stressed employees to share their frustrations and let off steam. In jobs where everyone essentially does similar tasks, informal groups can fulfill the need for status, recognition, and prestige. And in departments or organizational units where formal communication with employees is limited, informal groups typically arise to fill the information void.

ARE THERE WAYS TO INFLUENCE THE INFORMAL WORKGROUP?

Some facets of informal groups are beyond a supervisor's control. But there are also some actions that supervisors can take to manage these groups and turn them into an asset for the department and the organization. Let's look at some of these.

Group Norms If performance-related norms are low, and hindering your department's performance, you can consider doing a few things. You can request transfers for one or more of the group's members. Physical separation can undermine the group's influence by reducing cohesiveness. Also consider rewarding departmental members who act against the dysfunctional norms. For example, give preferred work assignments, paid time off, or praise to employees who don't restrict their work output to satisfy the group's modest performance norms.

Department Goals When supervisors fail to make their department goals clear, or allow employees to lose sight of those goals, employee behaviors that hinder those goals don't tend to be too visible. In contrast, when supervisors consistently reiterate formal departmental goals and make clear which behaviors are consistent with achieving

OBJECTIVE 11-5

Explain what a supervisor can do when group norms are hindering department performance.

Comprehension Check 11-1

1. Two or more interacting and interdependent individuals who come together to achieve a particular objective are called a
 - a. team.
 - b. group.
 - c. task force.
 - d. all of the above.
2. Acceptable standards that are shared by team members are called
 - a. behaviors.
 - b. organization culture.
 - c. norms.
 - d. work rules.

3. Which one of the following is *not* a reason people join groups?
 - a. Self-esteem
 - b. Security
 - c. Money
 - d. Power
4. An emergent leader is one who
 - a. develops group norms for the group to follow.
 - b. establishes group goals to be achieved.
 - c. develops group cohesiveness.
 - d. leads without having formal authority in the organization.

those goals, dysfunctional behaviors become more readily evident (and employees are discouraged from engaging in those dysfunctional behaviors).

To overcome the low-performance-related norms of informal groups in your department you should emphasize quality, cooperation, customer satisfaction, safety, and respect for minority employees. This will make the department's formal goals clear and drive home what the department values and wishes to accomplish.

OBJECTIVE 11-6

Identify three categories of teams.

The Increasing Use of Teams

Because teams typically outperform individuals when the tasks being done require multiple skills, judgment, and experience they are becoming the prime vehicle around which work is being designed. As organizations restructure they are turning to teams as a way to use employee talents better. Teams are more flexible and responsive to changing events than other forms of permanent groupings. They can be quickly assembled, deployed, refocused, and disbanded.

Teams fall into three categories. Some organizations use teams to provide advice. For instance, they create temporary task forces to recommend ways to cut costs, improve quality, or select a site for a new plant. Some organizations use teams to manage. They introduce management teams at various levels in the organization to run things. However, supervisors are most likely to be involved with teams that are created to make or do things. They include production teams, design teams, and office teams that handle administrative work.

Many organizations have restructured work processes around teams because supervisors are looking for the positive synergy that will help the organization improve its performance.² The extensive use of teams creates the potential for an organization to generate greater outputs with no increase in inputs. However, it is important to remember that such increases are simply "potential." There is nothing inherent in the creation of work teams guaranteeing this positive synergy and its accompanying productivity will occur. Just calling a group a team doesn't automatically increase its performance.³

In organizations that are reorganizing work around work teams, supervisors must learn how to coordinate team activity effectively. In many cases, management's emphasis has been on creating self-managed teams and this is redefining the supervisor's managerial role.

²S. Adams and L. Kydonieffs, "Making Teams Work: Bureau of Labor Statistics Learns What Works and What Doesn't," *Quality Progress* (January 2000), pp. 43-49.

³T. Capozzoli, "How to Succeed with Self-Directed Work Teams," *Supervision* (February 2002), pp. 25-27.

WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF WORK TEAMS?

When work teams first became popular, most were **problem-solving teams**. These are teams from the same department or functional area involved in efforts to improve work activities or to solve specific problems. Team members share ideas or offer suggestions on how work processes and methods can be improved, but these teams are rarely given the authority to implement any of their suggested actions.

To get employees involved in work-related decisions and processes, organizations came up with the idea of a **self-managed work team**. This is a formal group of employees operating without a manager, but with responsibility for a complete work process or segment. This type of team is responsible for getting the work done and for managing themselves, and usually includes planning and scheduling of work, assigning tasks to members, collective control over the pace of work, making operating decisions, and taking action on problems. It's estimated that about 30 percent of U.S. employers now use this form of team; and among large firms, the number is probably closer to 50 percent.⁴ Most organizations that use self-managed teams find them to be effective.⁵

Another type of team is the **cross-functional team**, which is a work team composed of individuals from various specialties. Many organizations use cross-functional teams. For example, ArcelorMittal, the world's largest steel company, uses cross-functional teams of scientists, plant managers, and salespeople to review and monitor product innovations.⁶

The **virtual team** uses technology to link physically dispersed members to achieve a common goal. In a virtual team, members collaborate online with tools such as wide-area networks, videoconferencing, fax, e-mail, or websites where the team can hold online conferences.⁷ Virtual teams can do all the things that other teams can—share information, make decisions, and complete tasks; however, they lack the normal give-and-take of face-to-face discussions. That's why virtual teams tend to be more task-oriented, especially if the team members have never personally met.

TURNING GROUPS INTO TEAMS

Groups and teams are not necessarily the same thing. Exhibit 11-4 illustrates how a workgroup evolves into a real team. The primary force that moves a workgroup toward being a real high-performing team is its emphasis on performance.

A **working group** is merely a group of individuals who interact primarily to share information and to make decisions to help each other perform within a given area of responsibility. There is no need or opportunity to engage in collective work that requires joint effort, so performance is merely the summation of each group member's individual contribution.

A **pseudo team** is the product of negative synergy. The sum of the whole is less than the potential of the individual parts because of factors such as poor communication,

problem-solving teams

A team from the same department or functional area that's involved in efforts to improve work activities or to solve specific problems.

self-managed work team

A type of work team that operates without a manager and is responsible for a complete work process or segment.

cross-functional team

A work team composed of individuals from various specialties.

virtual team

A type of work team that uses technology to link physically dispersed members to achieve a common goal.

OBJECTIVE 11-7

List the characteristics of real teams.

⁴C. Joinson, "Teams at Work," p. 30; and "Teams," *Training* (October 1996), p. 69.

⁵J. P. Millikin, P. W. Hom, and C. C. Manz, "Self-Management Competencies in Self-Managing Teams: Their Impact on Multi-Team System Productivity," *Leadership Quarterly*, October 2010, pp. 687–702; O. Turel and Y. Zhang, "Does Virtual Team Composition Matter? Trait and Problem-Solving Configuration Effects on Team Performance," *Behavior & Information Technology*, July–August 2010, pp. 363–375; J. S. Bunderson and P. Boumgarden, "Structure and Learning in Self-Managed Teams: Why 'Bureaucratic' Teams Can Be Better Learners," *Organization Science*, May–June 2010, pp. 609–624; and G. M. Spreitzer, S. G. Cohen, and G. E. Ledford, Jr., "Developing Effective Self-Managing Work Teams in Service Organizations," *Group & Organization Management*, September 1999, pp. 340–366.

⁶"Meet the New Steel," *Fortune*, October 1, 2007, pp. 68–71.

⁷"Virtual Team Collaboration and Innovation in Organizations," *Team Performance Management*, March 2011, pp. 109–119; M. Flammia, Y. Cleary, and D. M. Slattery, "Leadership Roles, Socioemotional Strategies, and Technology Use of Irish and US Students in Virtual Teams," *IEEE Transactions on Professional Communication*, June 2010, pp. 89–101; P. Evans, "The Wiki Factor," *BizEd*, January–February 2006, pp. 28–32; and M. McCafferty, "A Human Inventory," *CFO*, April 2005, pp. 83–85.

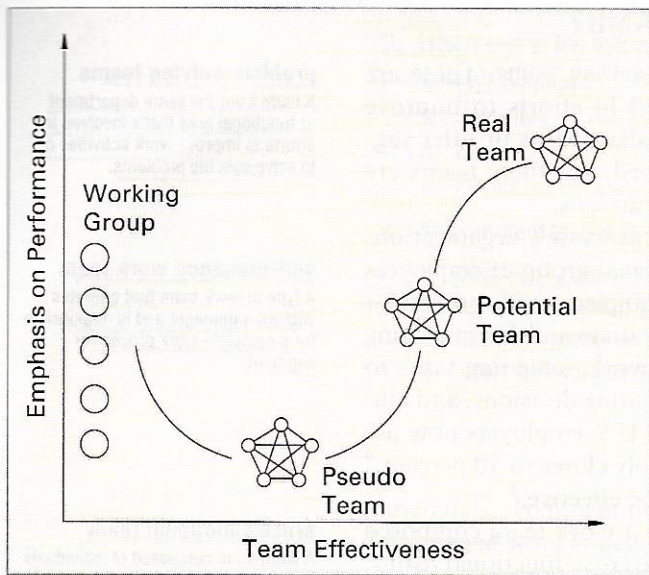


Exhibit 11-4
Comparing groups and teams.

antagonistic conflicts, and avoidance of responsibilities. This is not a team because it doesn't focus on collective performance and members have no interest in shaping a common purpose.

A *potential team* is going in the right direction. It recognizes the need for higher performance and is really trying hard to achieve it, but its purpose and goals need greater clarity or the team may need better coordination. The result is that it has not yet established a sense of collective accountability.

A *real team* is the ultimate goal. This is a unit with a set of common characteristics that lead to consistently high performance.

THE FIVE-STAGE MODEL OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Groups tend to pass through developmental stages as they mature. One popular model of group development was formulated by Tuckman and Jensen in 1977.

Their model proposes five distinct stages of group development, and the suggestion is that groups must experience the first four stages to achieve their maximum development. The five stages are Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and Adjourning. Supervisors with knowledge of the stages can facilitate their group, thereby speeding progress to the performing stage.

Stage 1: Forming In the Forming stage, individuals know little about the other members of the group, and even though they display independent behavior, they are on their best behavior because they want to be accepted by others and avoid conflict. Individuals are motivated but unclear or uncertain about what they are supposed to do in the group. Individuals focus on the duties of group members and what needs to be done while simultaneously gathering information and forming impressions of each other and the task of the group. Mature, experienced group members model appropriate group behavior. This stage is important because members get to know one another and make new friends.

This stage is directed by the supervisor, and the leader sets goals while providing guidance and direction. Supervisors can learn how individuals work and respond to pressure while they spend time explaining the purpose, objectives, and external relationships. Group members learn about the opportunity and challenges, agree on goals, and begin to tackle the tasks. Sharing group development information with the group members is helpful during this stage, but there is not much task accomplishment.

Stage 2: Storming In the Storming stage supervisors direct and guide decision making while modeling professional behavior. Supervisors must focus the group on its goals to keep members from becoming distracted by relationship and emotional issues. The supervisor helps the group address issues surrounding the problems they are supposed to solve, determine how to function independently and together, and define the leadership model they are willing to accept. The supervisor uses this stage to coach the group members and sell them on the importance of the task.

The Storming stage can be destructive for the group and can lower motivation if allowed to get out of control. Occasionally groups never leave this stage. Decisions are difficult, with individuals remaining cordial only if issues are addressed. Uncertainties related to the work or to roles and responsibilities within the group may require compromise to enable progress. This stage will be contentious and even painful to group members averse to conflict, and some people's patience may break early. Minor

confrontations will arise and be dealt with or glossed over, but some team members may continue to focus on minutiae to evade real issues. Many group members may feel relieved to be getting into the real issues, whereas others will prefer to remain in the comfort and security of stage 1.

The tolerance of each team member and their differences needs to be emphasized to avert failure. Group members will confront the ideas and perspectives of others as they vie for position in an attempt to establish themselves within the group. In-groups and factions often form, and power struggles may arise as members challenge the leader. Many group members look for structure and rules to end emerging conflict. Although group conflict may appear to be suppressed it often exists under the surface. Individual maturity is a factor in determining whether the group will move out of this stage. Immature members of the group may act out to demonstrate their knowledge and convince others their ideas are correct.

Stage 3: Norming The Norming stage begins after the group members have worked through their arguments and learned to understand each other better. Appreciating each other's skills and experience, they listen, appreciate, and support and are prepared to change preconceived views. In this stage, cohesion grows, effectiveness increases, commitment and unity is strong, and roles and responsibilities clear and accepted. The scope of the group's tasks or responsibilities is clear and agreed on. Big decisions are made by group consensus but smaller decisions may be delegated to individuals or small teams within the group.

Now the group may become more gregarious, often engaging in social activities as they discuss and develop their processes and working style. Group members change behaviors and develop work habits that make group work seem easier. Agreement on rules, values, professional behavior, shared methods, working tools, and even taboos occurs. Trust develops and individual motivation increases as the group gets more acquainted with the project.

Respect for the leader increases with group members beginning to take responsibility for making decisions and for their professional behavior. Supervisors become more participative, often doing more facilitating and empowering the group to make decisions. Because group members have worked hard to attain this stage they may resist internal and external pressure to change because they fear the group might break up or revert to a storm. Groups in this phase may lose their creativity if the norming behaviors are so strong that they begin to stifle healthy dissent and exhibit groupthink.

Stage 4: Performing The Performing stage is marked by the flexibility of the group as it works toward the accomplishment of its tasks. The group appears strategically aware and knows why it is doing what it is doing. This shared vision, coupled with the motivation and knowledge of the group, results in autonomous behavior and the ability to work through the decision-making process without supervision. Extremely task oriented, the group works to achieve goals and makes most task-related decisions by judging against criteria agreed on with the leader.

Dissent is expected, and when disagreements occur, they are resolved in a positive manner with changes to processes and structure made by the group. The group is in a high-performance mode and functions as a unit to get the job done smoothly and effectively. The group also attends to relationship, style, and process issues along the way. There is a high level of group identity, loyalty, and morale with everyone trusting each other enough to allow independent activity. This high comfort level results in all of the group's energy being directed toward the task(s).

The group requires supervisor-delegated tasks and projects but does not need to be instructed or assisted. However, the group may ask the leader for assistance with personal and interpersonal development. Be aware that even high-performing groups will revert to previous stages, going through the stages many times as a reaction to changing circumstances. For example, if a new supervisor challenges existing norms and dynamics of the group it can revert to storming.

Stage 5: Adjourning The Adjourning stage addresses the group from a perspective beyond the purpose of the first four stages and is relevant to the people in the group and their well-being. In this stage, group members recognize the task is completed and begin to disengage from each other. Group members should recognize what they have done and consciously prepare to move on. Supervisors should encourage group members to be proud of their achievements and of having the opportunity to be part of such a productive group. However, there may be a sense of loss felt by group members, and there is the potential for group members to feel vulnerable, often feeling a sense of insecurity or threat from adjournment of the group.

The five-stage model assumes that groups progress through the stages and become more effective as they persist to completion of a task, but groups do not always move cleanly from one stage to the next. Groups may be in several stages simultaneously and may regress and move ahead unpredictably. Remember that the process is dynamic rather than static and that even though progression through the stages appears linear, groups can move back and forth between stages as group membership changes. Experienced supervisors always strive to lead groups back to the performance stage, while remaining aware that groups may become comfortable with a particular stage and resist moving to a new stage.⁸

A MODEL OF DEVELOPMENT FOR DEADLINE-DRIVEN AD HOC GROUPS

Ad hoc groups facing tight deadlines appear to have a two-phase development cycle all their own. This cycle is referred to as the *punctuated-equilibrium model*. The first phase includes the initial meeting of the group and determines the direction of the group. In this initial period, many norms of behavior as well as assumptions regarding the process of the group are established. Even though these norms may be dysfunctional, they usually continue to guide the group during the project. During this period, the group is locked into a process that resists change even if new information is discovered. The group continues to operate this way until it reaches the midpoint of the time allotted for the existence of the group (for student groups this could be halfway through the semester).

At the halfway point in the existence of the group, a crisis of personality conflict, dissatisfaction with the progress or direction of the project, or some other internal or external force results in a wake-up call of awareness that something needs to be accomplished, and soon! This crisis is the beginning of the second phase of the cycle. During the second phase, the group becomes highly effective, functioning as a team instead of a group of disconnected individuals. This heightened effort continues until the last meeting of the group when there is usually a last-minute burst of frenzied effort to complete the task.

Supervisors must realize this model is limited to deadline-driven ad hoc groups, and they should pay attention to the task and behavior tone set during the startup phase of the project. Because groups reach the crisis point halfway through the duration of the project, supervisors must plan for it, monitor for signs of it, and outline steps for a positive transition out of the crisis. Because group members are often frustrated by an apparent lack of progress, supervisors should periodically apprise the group of its progress toward the goal.⁹

⁸S. Robbins and T. Judge, *Organizational Behavior*, 13th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009), 286–287; B. Tuckman, “Developmental Sequences in Small Groups,” *Psychological Bulletin* 63, no. 6 (June 1965), 384–399; and B. Tuckman and M. Jensen, “Stages of Small-Group Development Revisited,” *Group and Organizational Studies* 2, no. 4 (December 1977), 419–427.

⁹Robbins and Judge, *Organizational Behavior*, 287–288; C. Gersick, “Time and Transition in Work Teams: Toward a New Model of Group Development,” *Academy of Management Journal* 31, no. 1 (March 1998), 9–41; and A. Seers and S. Woodruff, “Temporal Pacing in Task Forces: Group Development or Deadline Pressure?” *Journal of Management* 23, no. 2 (March–April 1997), 169–187, findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_m4256/is_n2_v23/ai_19498953 (accessed June 21, 2008).

HOW DO YOU BUILD EFFECTIVE TEAMS?

Studies of effective teams find they contain a small number of people with complementary skills who are equally committed to a common purpose, common goals, and a common working approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.¹⁰

Small Size The best teams tend to be small. Teams with more than ten members can have difficulty getting anything done. Large numbers of people usually cannot develop the common purpose, goals, approach, and mutual accountability of a real team. They tend merely to go through the motions. In designing effective teams keep them to ten or fewer people. If the natural working unit is larger, and you want a team effort, break the group into subteams.

Complementary Skills To perform effectively, a team requires three types of skills. First, it needs people with *technical expertise*. Second, it needs people with *problem-solving and decision-making skills* to identify problems, generate alternatives, evaluate those alternatives, and make competent choices. Finally, teams need people with good *interpersonal skills* (listening, feedback, conflict resolution). No team can achieve its performance potential without developing all three types of skills. However, too much of one at the expense of others results in lower team performance. Incidentally, teams don't need to have all the complementary skills at the beginning; they can be developed.

Common Purpose Does the team have a vision? Broader than any specific goals, high-performing teams have a common and meaningful purpose that provides direction, momentum, and commitment for members.

Members of successful teams put a tremendous amount of time and effort into discussing, shaping, and agreeing on a purpose that belongs to them collectively and individually. This common purpose, when accepted by the team, becomes the equivalent of what navigation is to a ship captain—it provides direction and guidance under any and all conditions.

Specific Goals Successful teams translate their common purpose into specific, measurable, and realistic performance goals. Specific goals facilitate clear communication and help teams maintain their focus on getting results. Examples of specific team goals might be responding to all customers within twenty-four hours, cutting production-cycle time by 30 percent over the next six months, or maintaining equipment at a level of zero downtime every month.

Common Approach Goals are the ends a team strives to attain. Defining and agreeing on a common approach ensures that the team is unified on the means for achieving those ends.

Team members must contribute equally in sharing the workload and agree on who is to do what. Additionally, the team needs to determine how schedules will be set, what skills need to be developed, how conflicts will be resolved, and how decisions will be made and modified. Integrating individual skills to further the team's performance is the essence of shaping a common approach.

Mutual Accountability The final characteristic of high-performing teams is accountability at both the individual and group levels. Successful teams make members individually and jointly accountable for the team's purpose, goals, and approach. Members understand what they are individually responsible for and what they are jointly responsible for.

Studies have shown that when teams focus only on group-level performance targets, and ignore individual contributions and responsibilities, team members often engage in

¹⁰P. Strozniak, "Teams at Work," *Industry Week*, September 18, 2000, 47–50.

social loafing

Becoming a free rider in a group because individual contributions to the group effort cannot be identified. As a result, the overall team's performance suffers.

social loafing.¹¹ They reduce their efforts because their individual contributions can't be identified. In effect, they become "free riders" and coast on the group's effort. The result is that the team's overall performance suffers. This reaffirms the importance of measuring individual contributions to the team as well as the team's overall performance. Successful teams have members who collectively feel responsible for their team's performance.

OBJECTIVE 11-8

List actions a supervisor can take to improve team performance.

Team Challenges for Supervisors

Teams have long been popular in Japan. When U.S. managers began to broadly introduce them into the United States in the late 1980s, critics warned that they were destined to fail: Japan is a collectivist society. U.S. culture is based on the values of individualism. U.S. workers won't sublimate their needs for individual responsibility and recognition to be anonymous parts of a team. Although the introduction of work teams in some organizations has met with resistance and disappointment, the overall picture has been encouraging. When teams are properly used in organizations and when the organization's internal climate is consistent with a team approach, the results have been largely positive.

WHAT OBSTACLES EXIST IN CREATING EFFECTIVE TEAMS?

The following critical obstacles can prevent your teams from becoming high performers.

A Weak Sense of Direction Teams perform poorly when members are not sure of their purpose, goals, and approach. Nothing undermines enthusiasm for the team concept as quickly as the frustration of being an involuntary member of a team that has no focus.

Infighting When team members are spending time bickering and undermining their colleagues, energy is being misdirected. Effective teams must have members who respect each other and are willing to put aside petty differences to facilitate goal achievement.

Shirking of Responsibilities Members may exhibit a lack of commitment to the team, maneuver to have others do part of their job, or be quick to blame colleagues or management for any personal or team failures. The result is a pseudo team—a team in name only and one that consistently underperforms even what the members could accomplish independently.

Lack of Trust When there is trust, team members believe in each other's integrity, character, and ability. When this is lacking, members cannot depend on each other and their trust tends to be short lived.

Critical Skill Gaps When skill gaps occur and the team doesn't fill those gaps, the team flounders. Members have trouble communicating with each other, destructive conflicts aren't resolved, decisions are never made, or technical problems overwhelm the team.

Lack of External Support Existing within the larger organization, teams rely on that larger organization for a variety of resources—money, people, equipment—and if those

¹¹R. Albanese and D. D. Van Fleet, "Rational Behavior in Groups: The Free Riding Tendency," *Academy of Management Review* 10, no. 2 (April 1985), 244–255.

Something to Think about (and promote class discussion)

FAST TIMES!

Imagine working for an organization that employs more than 2,700 individuals with each one having the identical focus.* Imagine, too, that company supervisors in this organization want you to work hard *and* be the best at what you do. If you're employed by Ferrari S.p.A., such realities aren't hard to imagine.

When most people hear the name *Ferrari*, they think of expensive, super-fast sports cars. That reputation for speed is why Ferraris continue to be well known and respected in racing groups around the world. The Italian company was founded by Enzo Ferrari in 1928, and even in its early days, racing was an important part of the Ferrari legend. Today, Luca Cordero, president and managing director of the company, believes that his employees truly make a difference in producing one of the world's greatest sports cars. He recognizes that to be the best, he needs employees who understand how to work together and how to achieve common goals. At Ferrari, employee teams combine their efforts to produce an outstanding automobile, with quality befitting its iconic reputation. You won't find traditional assembly lines in the Ferrari factory, nor will you find production quotas. With prices for a Ferrari starting at \$140,000, auto assembly time isn't measured in seconds. Rather, team tasks often last more than ninety minutes for each portion of a car. Then the team proudly passes its finished work to the next team so its work can begin. Average time to manufacture one car: three days. The company produces around 6,000 Ferraris in any one year, although the company hopes to boost that number to 10,000 cars in the future. To achieve that goal, the company is expanding current capacity, although its singular focus on quality and teamwork won't change.

Employees at Ferrari truly enjoy being part of a team. They say that working toward a common goal is one of the most satisfying elements in their jobs. They also appreciate what the company does for them. They enjoy a state-of-the-art fitness center, annual physicals at the company's on-site clinic, an employee cafeteria, and home-based training for employees to learn English. They feel as if Cordero and his team treat them as associates, not just as cogs in the Ferrari wheel. As one employee stated, "For many of us working for Ferrari is like working in the Vatican." Recently, the company won an award for Best Place to Work in Europe. The prize resulted from the company's "Formula-1-inspired workplace initiative called Formula Uomo," which took the principles of Ferrari's success in Formula 1 racing and applied them to the workplace. The main thrust was recognizing its people as the "fulcrum of the company's work system."

Is the team concept at Ferrari working? By all accounts, yes. The company has achieved more than \$2.3 billion in sales. And more importantly, the car still retains its appeal as one of the best and most desired in the world. Although profits have been nominal during the global economic downturn, there are always going to be customers who want to own the car with the rearing-horse logo.

Like company executives at Ferrari, many supervisors today believe the use of teams allows their organizations to increase sales or manufacture better products faster and at lower costs. Although the effort to create teams isn't always successful, well-planned teams can reinvigorate productivity and better position an organization to deal with a rapidly changing environment.

*"Ferrari London Store Opening Stops Traffic," *License Magazine Online*, June 2009; S. Oster, "Open a Bank Account and Test Drive a Ferrari," *Wall Street Journal*, June 1, 2007, B3; N. Joseph, "Paradise: Ferrari named Best Place to Work," *Autoblog*, May 3, 2007, <http://www.autoblog.com/2007/05/03/paradise-ferrari-named-best-place-to-work> (accessed June 6, 2014); and M. Moskowitz and R. Levering, "100 Best Companies to Work For," "10 Great Companies to Work for in Europe," "Ferrari: Good Food, Good People, Lots of Fun—Sound Like a European Holiday? No, It's a Great Job," *Fortune*, January 7, 2003.

resources aren't there, it's difficult for teams to reach their potential. For example, if the employee selection process, formal rules and regulations, budgeting procedures, and compensation system are inconsistent with the team's needs and goals, the team suffers.

HOW CAN TEAM OBSTACLES BE OVERCOME?

Supervisors can do a number of things to overcome the obstacles mentioned and help teams to reach their full potential. These are listed in Exhibit 11-5.

Create a Clear Purpose and Goals High-performance teams have both a clear understanding of their goals and a belief that the goals embody a worthwhile or important result. These goals encourage individuals to sublimate personal concerns to the team goals. In effective teams, members are committed to the team's goals, know what they are expected to accomplish, and understand how they will work together to achieve these goals.

Encourage Small Wins Building a real team takes time. Team members have to learn to think and work as a team. Help the team to identify and set attainable goals. Large goals can be reduced to smaller and more easily attainable goals. As the smaller goals are attained, the team's success is reinforced. Cohesiveness is increased and morale improves. Confidence builds. Success breeds success, but it's easier for young teams to reach their goals if they start with small wins.

Build Mutual Trust Trust is fragile. It takes a long time to build and can be easily destroyed. There are things a supervisor can do to create a climate of mutual trust.¹²

Keep team members informed by explaining upper-management decisions and policies and by providing accurate feedback. Create a climate of openness where employees are free to discuss problems without fear of retaliation. Be candid about your own problems and limitations. Make sure you're available and approachable when employees need support. Be respectful and listen to team members' ideas. Develop a reputation for

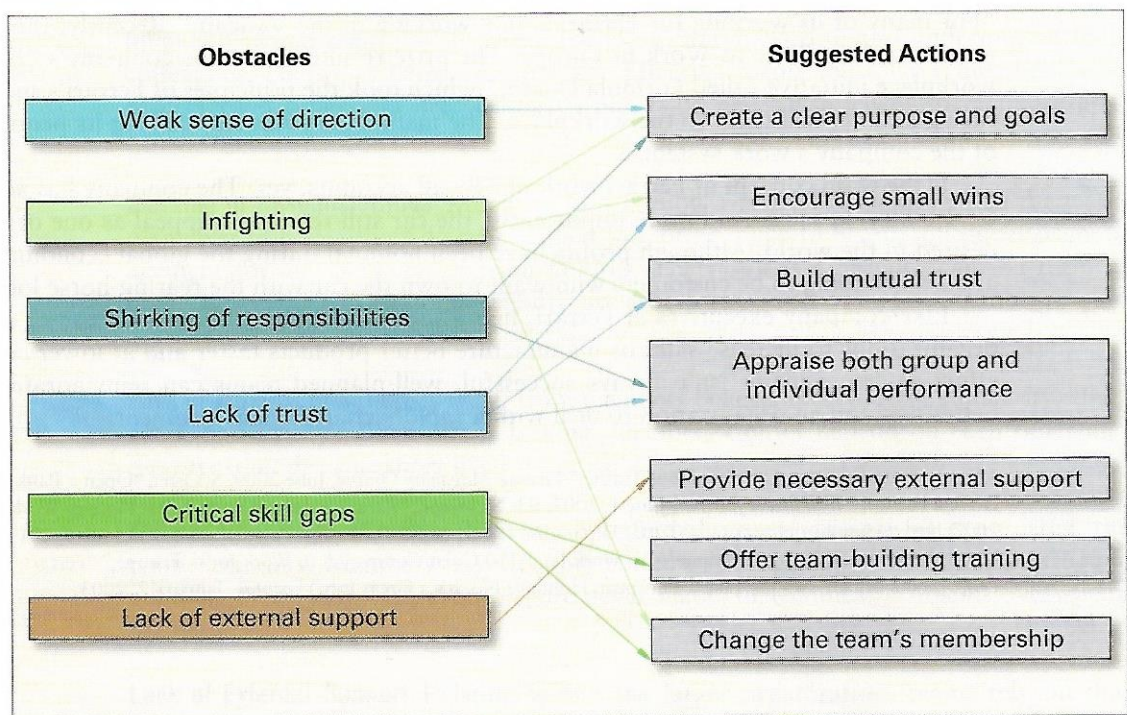


Exhibit 11-5

Creating effective teams.

¹²K. T. Dirks, "The Effects of Interpersonal Trust on Work Group Performance," *Journal of Applied Psychology* 54, no. 3 (June 1999), 445-455.

being fair, objective, and impartial in your treatment of team members. Show consistency in your actions, and avoid erratic and unpredictable behavior. Coach team members as needed. Finally, be dependable and honest and follow through on all explicit and implied promises.

Appraise Both Group and Individual Performance Team members should all share in the glory when their team succeeds, and they should share in the blame when it fails. So, a large measure of each member's performance appraisal should be based on the overall team's performance. But members need to know that they can't ride on the backs of others. Therefore, each member's individual contribution should be identified and made part of their overall performance appraisal.

Provide Necessary External Support Supervisors link teams and upper management. It's your responsibility to make sure teams have the necessary organizational resources to accomplish their goals. You should be prepared to make the case to your boss and other key decision makers in the organization for tools, equipment, training, personnel, physical space, or other resources that teams may require.

Offer Team-Building Training Teams need training to build their skills. Typically, these include problem-solving, communication, negotiation, conflict resolution, and group-processing skills. If you can't provide this skill training for your team members, look to specialists in your organization who can, or secure funds to bring in outside facilitators who specialize in this kind of training.

Change the Team's Membership When teams get bogged down in their own inertia or internal fighting, allow them to rotate members. Manage this change by considering how certain personalities mesh and re-forming teams in ways that better complement skills. If lack of leadership is the problem, use your knowledge of the people involved to create teams in which there is high probability that a leader will emerge.

Contemporary Team Issues

As we close this chapter, we address several issues related to supervising teams: continuous-improvement programs, diversity, global teams, and understanding when teams are not the answer.

OBJECTIVE 11-9

Describe the role of teams in continuous-improvement programs.

WHY ARE TEAMS CENTRAL TO CONTINUOUS-IMPROVEMENT PROGRAMS?

The essence of continuous improvement is process improvement, and employee participation is the linchpin of process improvement. In other words, continuous improvement requires management to encourage employees to share ideas and to act on what the employees suggest.

Teams provide the natural vehicle for employees to share ideas and implement improvements. For example, at BASF, the world's largest chemical company, a process called *Verbund* permits all of the company's 385 facilities and more than 100,000 employees worldwide to be connected to each other. One project team tested thirteen different production factors using thirty-two experiments. As a result of their work, more than \$700,000 was cut from annual production costs, and nearly \$1 million for a one-time capital improvement expenditure was eliminated. On a global scale, BASF realizes annual savings of around 1 billion through its *Verbund* concept.¹³

¹³See BASF's website (www.basf.com); and D. Drickhamer, "BASF Breaks Through with Statistics," *Industry Week*, June 2002, 81–82.

HOW DOES WORKFORCE DIVERSITY AFFECT TEAMS?

Managing diversity on teams is a balancing act. Diversity typically provides fresh perspectives on issues, but it makes it more difficult to unify the team and reach agreements. Although many of us hold the optimistic view that diversity is desirable, research seems to show the opposite. “Studies on diversity in teams from the last fifty years have shown that surface-level social-category differences such as race/ethnicity, gender, and age tend to...have negative effects” on the performance of teams.¹⁴ Some evidence does show that the disruptive effects of diversity decline over time, but does not confirm that diverse teams perform better eventually.

The strongest case for diversity is when teams are engaged in problem-solving and decision-making tasks. Heterogeneous teams bring multiple perspectives to the discussion, thus increasing the likelihood that the team will identify creative or unique solutions. The lack of a common perspective usually means that diverse teams spend more time discussing issues, which decreases the chances that a weak alternative will be chosen. However, the positive contribution that diversity makes to decision-making teams undoubtedly declines over time. Diverse groups have more difficulty working together and solving problems, but this dissipates with time.¹⁵

Studies tell us that members of cohesive teams have greater satisfaction, lower absenteeism, and lower attrition from the group.¹⁶ Yet cohesiveness is likely to be lower on diverse teams. So, here is a potential negative of diversity: It may be detrimental to group cohesiveness.¹⁷ However, if the norms of the team support diversity, a team can maximize the value of heterogeneity while also achieving the benefits of high cohesiveness.¹⁸ This makes a strong case for team members to participate in diversity training.

WHAT CHALLENGES EXIST WHEN SUPERVISING GLOBAL TEAMS?

Today’s organizations are global and any supervisor is likely to have to manage a global team. So, in addition to recognizing team members’ abilities, skills, knowledge, and personality, supervisors need to be familiar with and clearly understand the cultural characteristics of the groups and the group members they manage.¹⁹ Some of the areas where there are differences in supervising global teams include conformity, status, social loafing, cohesiveness, communication, and conflict.

¹⁴K. H. T. Yu and D. M. Cable, “Unpacking Cooperation in Diverse Teams,” *Team Performance Management*, March 2011, pp. 63–82; A. Nederveen Pieterse, D. van Knippenberg, and W. P. van Ginkel, “Diversity in Goal Orientation, Team Reflexivity, and Team Performance,” *Organizational Behavior and Human Performance*, March 2011, pp. 153–164; M.-E. Roberge and R. van Dick, “Recognizing the Benefits of Diversity: When and How Does Diversity Increase Group Performance,” *Human Resource Management Review*, December 2010, pp. 295–208; and E. Mannix and M. A. Neale, “What Differences Make a Difference: The Promise and Reality of Diverse Teams in Organizations,” *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, October 2005, pp. 31–55.

¹⁵“Diversity Enhances Decision-Making,” *Industry Week*, April 2, 2001, 9.

¹⁶See S. G. Barsade, A. J. Ward, J. D. F. Turner, and J. A. Sonnenfeld, “To Your Heart’s Content: A Model of Effective Diversity in Top Management Teams,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 45 (December 2000), 802.

¹⁷L. H. Pelled, K. M. Eisenhardt, and K. R. Xin, “Exploring the Black Box: An Analysis of Work Group Diversity, Conflict, and Performance,” *Administrative Science Quarterly* 46, no. 2 (March 1999), 128.

¹⁸H. E. Joy, D. Joyendu, and M. Bhadury, “Maximizing Workforce Diversity in Project Teams: A Network Flow Approach,” *Omega* 28, no. 2 (April 2000), 143–155.

¹⁹F. Niederman and F. B. Tan, “Emerging Markets Managing Global IT Teams: Considering Cultural Dynamics,” *Communications of the ACM*, April 2011, pp. 24–27; R. M. B. Boyle and S. Nicholas, “Cross-Cultural Group Performance,” *The Learning Organization*, March 2011, pp. 94–101; G. K. Stahl, M. L. Maznevski, A. Voigt, and K. Jonsen, “Unraveling the Effects of Cultural Diversity in Teams: A Meta-Analysis of Research on Multicultural Work Groups,” *Journal of International Business Studies* (May 2010), pp. 690–709; and M. R. Haas, “The Double-Edged Sword of Autonomy and External Knowledge: Analyzing Team Effectiveness in a Multinational Organization,” *Academy of Management Journal* (October 2010), 53:5, pp. 989–1008.

Research on conformity suggests that Asch's findings are culture-bound.²⁰ For instance, as might be expected, conformity to social norms tends to be higher in collectivistic cultures than in individualistic cultures. However, groupthink tends to be less of a problem in global teams because members are less likely to feel pressured to conform to the ideas, conclusions, and decisions of the group.²¹

The importance of status varies between cultures. The French are extremely status conscious; in Latin America and Asia, status tends to come from family position and formal roles held in organizations; in the United States and Australia status tends to be less "in your face" and based more on accomplishments. Supervisors must understand who and what holds status when interacting with people from a culture different from their own. A supervisor who doesn't understand that is likely to unintentionally offend others and lessen their interpersonal effectiveness.

Social loafing is consistent with individualistic cultures, which are dominated by self-interest. It's not consistent with collectivistic societies in which individuals are motivated by group goals. Compared to employees from the United States, the Chinese and Israelis showed no propensity to engage in social loafing. In fact, they actually performed better in a group than when working alone.²²

Cohesive groups may create special challenges for supervisors because members are unified and "act as one." There's a great deal of camaraderie and group identity is high. In global teams, however, cohesiveness is often more difficult to achieve because of higher levels of "mistrust, miscommunication, and stress."²³

Communication issues often arise because team members lack fluency in the team's working language, which can lead to inaccuracies, misunderstandings, and inefficiencies.²⁴ On the other hand, research also shows that a multicultural global team is better able to capitalize on the diversity of ideas represented if a wide range of information is used.²⁵

Finally, dealing with conflict in global teams isn't easy. Conflict can interfere with how information is used by the team. However, research shows that in collectivistic cultures, a collaborative conflict management style can be most effective.²⁶

WHEN ARE TEAMS NOT THE ANSWER?

Teamwork takes more time and often more resources than individual work.²⁷ Because teams require supervisors to communicate more, manage conflicts, and run meetings, the benefits of using teams need to exceed the costs, but that's not always the case.²⁸ Some supervisors have introduced teams into situations where it would have been better to have individuals do the work. Before implementing teams, supervisors should carefully evaluate whether the work requires or will benefit from a collective effort.

²⁰R. Bond and P. B. Smith, "Culture and Conformity: A Meta-Analysis of Studies Using Asch's [1952, 1956] Line Judgment Task," *Psychological Bulletin*, January 1996, pp. 111–137.

²¹I. L. Janis, *Groupthink*, 2nd ed. (New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1982), p. 175.

²²See P. C. Earley, "Social Loafing and Collectivism: A Comparison of the United States and the People's Republic of China," *Administrative Science Quarterly*, December 1989, pp. 565–581; and P. C. Earley, "East Meets West Meets Mideast: Further Explorations of Collectivistic and Individualistic Work Groups," *Academy of Management Journal* (April 1993), pp. 319–348.

²³N. J. Adler, *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior*, 4th ed. (Cincinnati: Southwestern, 2002), p. 142.

²⁴K. B. Dahlin, L. R. Weingart, and P. J. Hinds, "Team Diversity and Information Use," *Academy of Management Journal* (December 2005), pp. 1107–1123.

²⁵Adler, *International Dimensions of Organizational Behavior*, p. 142.

²⁶S. Paul, I. M. Samarah, P. Seetharaman, and P. P. Mykytyn, "An Empirical Investigation of Collaborative Conflict Management Style in Group Support System-Based Global Virtual Teams," *Journal of Management Information Systems* (Winter 2005), pp. 185–222.

²⁷S. P. Robbins and T. A. Judge, *Organizational Behavior*, 14th ed. (Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2011).

²⁸C. E. Naquin and R. O. Tynan, "The Team Halo Effect: Why Teams Are Not Blamed for Their Failures," *Journal of Applied Psychology* (April 2003), pp. 332–340.

Three “tests” have been suggested to determine whether work is better done individually or by a group.²⁹ First, can the work be done better by more than one person? Task complexity would be a good indicator of a need for different perspectives. Simple tasks are probably better done by individuals. Second, does the work create a common purpose or set of goals for the people in the group that’s more than the sum of individual goals? Finally, supervisors assess whether teams or individuals are better suited for doing work by looking at the interdependence of the individuals. Using teams makes sense when there’s interdependence between tasks.

Comprehension Check 11-2

5. A potential team is one that
 - a. represents a group of individuals who interact primarily to share information and make decisions.
 - b. is heavily influenced by negative synergy.
 - c. is moving in the right direction but is not quite there yet.
 - d. has a set of common characteristics that lead to consistently high performance.
6. Becoming a “free rider” in a group is frequently called
 - a. social loafing.
 - b. social norming.
 - c. social work teams.
 - d. none of the above.
7. Which one of the following is *not* an obstacle to effective teams?
 - a. Lack of trust
 - b. Lack of infighting
 - c. Lack of external support
 - d. Weak sense of direction
8. Why are teams central to continuous-improvement programs?
 - a. They allow for specific goals to be set.
 - b. They provide a natural vehicle for employees to share ideas and implement improvements.
 - c. They allow for greater efficiencies and better use of resources.
 - d. They promote workforce diversity.

²⁹A. B. Drexler and R. Forrester, “Teamwork—Not Necessarily the Answer,” *HR Magazine*, January 1998, pp. 55–58. See also R. Saavedra, P. C. Earley, and L. Van Dyne, “Complex Interdependence in Task-Performing Groups,” *Journal of Applied Psychology* (February 1993), pp. 61–72; and K. A. Jehn, G. B. Northcraft, and M. A. Neale, “Why Differences Make a Difference: A Field Study of Diversity, Conflict, and Performance in Work Groups,” *Administrative Science Quarterly*, December 1999, pp. 741–763.