

Programme Name: **BCS**

Course Code: **MPU 3283**

Course Name: **Small Group Communication**

**Individual Project Work**

Date of Submission: **6/13/2020**

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Semester: **Second**

Intake**: 2019 September**

**Read the following passage and answer the question given below:**

**In a large office an employee named Rosy may feel like a mere payroll number, but her informal group gives her personal attachment and status. With the members of her group she is somebody, even though in the formal structure she is only one of a thousand employees. She may not look forward to monitoring 750 accounts daily, but the informal group gives more meaning to her day. When she thinks of meeting her friends, sharing their interests, and eating with them, her day takes on a new dimension that makes easier any difficulty or tedious routine in her work. Suddenly, Rosy developed some interpersonal and intergroup conflicts with some powerful members of the group. The group did not accept her. Her work became more disagreeable and compelled her to a transfer, to absenteeism and to a resignation.**

1. **Although informal groups have several benefits, explain how can these groups become harmful and toxic?**

***ANSWER***

=An **informal group** can be defined as one in which three or more people decide, perhaps on an ad hoc basis, to meet on a regular or semi-regular schedule for the purpose of discussing subjects of common interest, or for the purpose of engaging in a particular activity of common interest. This group can be harmful and toxic because of following reason:

* **Works counter to the organizational objectives:**

Informal organization forces the members to restrict their output; exhibit a disunites in organizational policies and procedures, cause insubordination, and in general, promote unauthorized actions that work counter to the formal organization.

* **Conformity:**

Informal organization exerts strong pressures for Conformity.

Conformity can make group members reluctant to act independently, creatively or imaginatively, for fear of losing group approval and membership. Informal group leaders sometimes manipulate the group toward undesirable needs. They may pose road blocks for the competent people.

The informal leaders may force members to restrict the level of output, to exceed the time limit for coffee to tea break, to indulge in intolerable activities taxing the patience of the management. In this way, informal group can become an instrument of neurotic owners of conflict or non-responsible rattle- rousers using the group for their own selfish ends.

* **Rumours:**

Informal communication system, known as grapevine, is susceptible for use in spreading destructive, distorted, inaccurate and incomplete information cutting across organizational lines with tremendous speed. Where the formal communication system is poor such rumors prosper. When the employees are not kept informed on matters that directly affect them, they may transmit incorrect information that undermines morale or leads people to make poor and mediocre decisions.

* **Social costs:**

Informal organization is safety value for the frustration and other emotional problems of work group. Research has revealed that social interaction by alleviating monotony on the job my actually contribute to production. But this is true only up to a certain point. Informal organization may result in higher operating costs because it may encourage gossiping joke telling, general horse play, or idle conversion that satisfy some of the members social needs.

* **Resistance to change:**

Every informal group considers certain cultural values which, it feels, desirable to be maintained by the members of the group. Members in the process of following these values and norms unwillingly maintain status quo and resist chance which may be essential in promoting the development of their personality and the organizational benefits.

Perpetuation of status quo ultimately results in resistance to change which the management finds it very difficult to overcome such resistance. Some members may perceive immediate threat to their position by introducing some changes like introduction of computer in the accounts department) in the organization. Perceptions of threats are just as real m the formation and solidification of an informal organization as an actual threat.

* **Role conflict**

Since informal organizations try to meet the social needs of their members there is a natural tendency to produce role conflict. An individual perceives role conflict when he has to fulfil conflicting requirements of both his group as well as of organization as a whole. Such a conflict may be dysfunctional from organization’s point of view. Much of the role conflict can be avoided by carefully cultivating mutual interests with informal groups. The more the interests, goals, methods, and evaluation system of formal and informal organizations can be integrated, the more productivity and satisfaction can be expected.

* **Negative Attitude of Informal Leaders:**

The informal leader may turn out to be a troubleshooter for the organization. In order to increase his influence, he may work against the policies of management and manipulate the behavior of his followers. Thus, he can be source of conflict between the management and the workers.

1. **Suggest some measures for Rosy to check and balance the dysfunctions of informal groups?**

***ANSWER***

Informal groups (or informal organizations) are an important outgrowth of formal organization structure that managers cannot avoid. Rather than viewing informal groups as hindrance to attainment of formal organizational goal, managers should gibe formal acceptance to these group. They must view informal groups as pillars of support to formal organization structures. Many organizational problems that cannot be solved officially can be smoothly solved by informal group’s id they are formally accepted by managers. They speed up transmission of useful information throughout the origination. They provide feedback to managers on how people respond to policies and procedures. They provide useful tips to managers on matters which they cannot officially deal with, they also promote team spirit and cooperation amongst group members so that managers need not maintain close control and supervision over employees. Informal groups are, in fact, a strong support and supplement of formal employees. Informal groups are, in fact, a strong support and supplement of formal organization structures. Managers must, therefore, manage these groups to merge group goals with organizational goals

Some measures for Rosy to check and balance the dysfunctions of informal groups are given below:

* The informal groups operating in the organization should be identified and their existence recognized.
* The patterns of informal communication should be analyzed carefully. To know the sources of misinformation, rumor, etc. an enlightened manager can use informal channels to plug the loopholes of the formal communication system.
* The management should try to achieve equilibrium between formal and informal organizations. Conflicts between the two should be avoided through two-way communication with he group and their leaders.
* The management should attempt to integrate the interests of informal groups with the objectives of the formal organization. If this could be achieved, much of the role conflict would be avoided.
* The desirable patterns of informal relationships may be incorporated into the formal structure. This will make the organization strong.
* Informal group must be taken into confidence whenever a change in work methods is to be introduced in the organization. It is easier to introduce a change when group norms are changed. For overcoming resistance to change on the part of the groups, the management must share complete information about the change with the groups and try to persuade them to accept change by convincing them of the benefits of the said change.
* Informal employees that they are not against informal groups. Rather, they view them as important supplement to formal groups.
* Involve group members in making official decision.
* Integrate group goals with organizational goals and avoid inter-group conflicts.
* Obtain feedback from group members on what they think about organizational plans and policies before officially announcing them.

1. **Explain why Rosy was excluded from the group.**

***ANSWER***

**Exclude** comes to us from the Latin word excludere, which means "to shut." So essentially, when you **exclude** someone you slam the door in their face one way or another: You won't let them into the party, you leave them off the invite list, or refuse to include them in the conversation once they arrive

By the question **,** Rosy developed some interpersonal and intergroup conflicts with some powerful members of the group. There creates a huge problem due to that action taken by rosy. There can be such huge numbers of purposes behind Rosy being rejected from the gathering.

Negative Attitude of Informal Leaders**:** The informal leader may turn out to be a troubleshooter for the organization. In order to increase his influence, he may work against the policies of management and manipulate the behavior of his followers. Thus, he can be source of conflict between the management and the workers.

Since the gathering she engaged in, was a casual gathering, we have to comprehend that these gathering doesn't have set of convention to follow. It implies they are open and shaped freely. At the point when Rosy had struggle with a portion of the gathering individuals having incredible picture, she was out of the gathering out of nowhere.

Here we can perceive how casual gathering capacity, the casual gatherings make a strain to have a typical standard and qualities in any conclusions. Thus, when a part would not tail it, he/she would be optioned out from the gathering. Aside from that what we can see here is, there is no guideline and convention to avoid somebody from the gathering. Indeed, even if there should arise an occurrence of Rosy, she was constrained to leave the gathering and was made to leave the activity. Also, this is the manner by which all other casual gathering capacities.

Each casual gathering makes certain social qualities which, it feels, are alluring for the gathering individuals to keep up. Individuals reluctantly need to keep up their business as usual during the time spent adhering to these qualities and measures and oppose chance that might be fundamental in advancing the advancement of their character and the hierarchical advantages. Furthermore, individuals who question those qualities and gives a shot of the crate is as far as anyone knows considered as not suitable for the gathering. The principle issue is the protection from change and cliché thinking, and to some degree a deceptive method of gathering process. In this way, again if there should arise an occurrence of Rosy in the wake of having a few questions, instead of explaining it, talking about it, she was disposed of from the gathering. This shows the juvenile execution of the gathering.

Since informal organizations try to meet the social needs of their members there is a natural tendency to produce role conflict. An individual perceives role conflict when he has to fulfil conflicting requirements of both his group as well as of organization as a whole. Such a conflict may be dysfunctional from organization’s point of view. Much of the role conflict can be avoided by carefully cultivating mutual interests with informal groups. The more the interests, goals, methods, and evaluation system of formal and informal organizations can be integrated, the more productivity and satisfaction can be expected.

**Therefore, This above statement explain why Rosy was excluded from the group.**

1. **Discuss Primary and Secondary Tensions that emerges in small group communication with reference to the case.**

***ANSWER***

**PRIMARY TENSIONS**

When the group first comes together, members experience **primary tension**, which is tension based on uncertainty that is a natural part of initial interactions. It is only after group members begin to “break the ice” and get to know each other that the tension can be addressed and group members can proceed with the forming stage of group development. Small talk and politeness help group members manage primary tensions, and there is a relatively high threshold for these conflicts because we have all had experiences with such uncertainty when meeting people for the first time and many of us are optimistic that a little time and effort will allow us to get through the tensions. Since some people are more comfortable initiating conversation than others, it’s important for more extroverted group members to include less talkative members. Intentionally or unintentionally excluding people during the negotiation of primary tensions can lead to unexpected secondary tensions later on. During this stage people are also less direct in their communication, using more hedges and vague language than they will later in the group process. The indirect communication and small talk that characterize this part of group development aren’t a waste of time, as they help manage primary tensions and lay the foundation for future interactions that may involve more substantive conflict.

**Signs of primary tension are:**

* Feeling embarrassed
* Shyness
* Uneasiness when meeting strangers

**SECONDARY TENSION**

**Secondary tension** emerges after groups have passed the forming stage of group development and begin to have conflict over member roles, differing ideas, and personality conflicts. These tensions are typically evidenced by less reserved and less polite behavior than primary tensions. People also have a lower tolerance threshold for secondary tensions, because rather than being an expected part of initial interaction, these conflicts can be more negative and interfere with the group’s task performance. Secondary tensions are inevitable and shouldn’t be feared or eliminated. It’s not the presence or absence of secondary tension that makes a group successful or not; it’s how it handles the tensions when they emerge. A certain level of secondary tension is tolerable, not distracting, and can actually enhance group performance and avoid groupthink. When secondary tensions rise above the tolerance threshold and become distracting, they should be released through direct means such as diplomatic confrontation or indirect means such as appropriate humor or taking a break. While primary tensions eventually disappear (at least until a new member arrives), secondary tensions will come and go and may persist for longer periods of time. For that reason, we will now turn to a discussion of how to manage conflict in group interaction.

**Examples of Secondary tension:**

* Conversation is louder
* People speak more rapidly
* They interrupt each other
* Impatient to get the “floor” and have their say
* People are more animated and active.

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