



FPT UNIVERSITY



# Communication and In-group Working Skills (cont.)



## 2. Cooperation

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# The Prisoner's Dilemma

# The Prisoner's Dilemma

Imagine that you are a participant in a social experiment. As you sit down, you are told that you will be playing a game with another person in a separate room.



The other participant is also part of the experiment but the two of you will never meet. In the experiment, there is the possibility that you will be awarded some money.

# The Prisoner's Dilemma

Both you and your unknown partner are required to make a choice: either choose to *“cooperate,”* maximizing your combined reward, or *“defect,”* (not cooperate) and thereby maximize your individual reward.



The choice you make, along with that of the other participant, will result in one of three unique outcomes to this task, illustrated below in the next Figure.

Other Participant's Strategies

Cooperate

Defect

Your Strategies

Cooperate

Defect

1	<div>You: \$5 Other: \$5</div>	3	<div>You: \$8 Other: \$0</div>
3	<div>You: \$0 Other: \$8</div>	2	<div>You: \$2 Other: \$2</div>

Figure 1. The various possible outcomes of a prisoner's dilemma scenario

Which strategy would you choose?

# Individual Differences in Cooperation

## ★ Social Value Orientation (SVO)

01

**Cooperative  
Orientation**

To want to bring about  
positive outcomes for all

02

**Individualistic  
Orientation**

To be less concerned about  
the outcomes of others

03

**Competitive  
Orientation**

To seek to undermine others  
in order to get ahead

	Competitive orientation	Cooperative orientation	Individualistic orientation
<i>SVO decomposed game</i>	A	B	C
You get	500	500	550
Other gets	100	500	300

Distributions of resources between oneself and an “OTHER”




# Individual Differences in Cooperation

## ★ Empathic Ability

Empathy is the ability to feel and understand another's emotional experience. When we empathize with someone else, we take on that person's perspective, imagining the world from his or her point of view and vicariously experiencing his or her emotions (Davis, 1994; Goetz, Keltner, & Simon-Thomas, 2010).



Feelings of empathy lead to greater levels of cooperation. Research shows that even young children cooperate more when experiencing feelings of empathy. [Image: US Army, <https://goo.gl/psWXOe>, CC BY 2.0, <https://goo.gl/BRvSA7>]

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- The background of the slide features a large puzzle made of interlocking pieces. Most pieces are light gray with a faint, dark blue silhouette of a person in a suit. One piece, in the center-right, is a solid blue color with a white silhouette of a person in a suit. A hand is shown in the bottom right corner, placing this blue piece into the puzzle.
- ★ Communication
  - ★ Commitment
  - ★ Trust
  - ★ Group Identification
  - ★ Culture

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Situational  
Influences of  
Cooperation



# Discussion Questions

1. Which groups do you identify with? Consider sports teams, hometowns, and universities. How does your identification with these groups make you feel about other members of these groups? What about members of competing groups?
2. Thinking of all the accomplishments of humanity throughout history which do you believe required the greatest amounts of cooperation? Why?
3. In your experience working on group projects - such as group projects for a class - what have you noticed regarding the themes presented in this module (eg. competition, culture, cooperation, trust)? How could you use the material you have just learned to make group projects more effective?

