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[Chapter 13: Small Group Dynamics, Section 13.3](https://open.lib.umn.edu/communication/chapter/13-3-small-group-dynamics/)

**This assignment is worth 20 points.**

* 10 points for completion/submission of the assignment
* 10 points for Discussion post and response to at least ONE (1) classmate **who addressed the same event. (Note: if you are the only person to respond to a specific incident, then respond to a student who addressed an event that you're aware of.)**

*Groupthink is a negative group dynamic that relates to cohesion and conformity pressures. Several historic events with far-reaching and devastating implications have been analyzed through the lens of groupthink.*

**Directions**

1. Choose ONE of the incidents below and conduct research about it – via CVTC databases, the Internet, or traditional texts. Examine at least two articles/texts from sources **OTHER THAN** **encyclopedias or Wikipedia**.
2. In a short paragraph, explain how groupthink played a role in the event. In particular, address the two primary causes of groupthink: high levels of cohesion and excessive conformity pressures. If you notice additional factors related to group dynamics, feel free to include those as well. Be sure to identify your sources as well. (Formal citations are not required; however, basic information should be provided: author, article and publication titles, dates, and/or website URLs.

* The Watergate scandal (1972-74)
* The space shuttle Challenger explosion (1986)
* 9/11 terrorist attacks on the United States (2001)
* U. S. invasion of Iraq and allegations about weapons of mass destruction (2001-2003)
* Domestic attack on the U.S. Capitol (2021)

1. After responding and submitting this document, share your thoughts in the **Discussion area**.
2. Engage with at least ONE (1) other student who addressed the same event as you did (i.e., reply to their initial post). NOTE: if no one else explored the same event as you, reply to a student who wrote about one of the incidents you’re familiar with.

**Your paragraph response:**

Groupthink is defined as a process of flawed decision making that occurs due to strong pressures among group members to reach an agreement. The air temperature on launch day was 15 degrees lower than on previous launches. The “O-ring seal” wouldn’t function well under those temperatures. These concerns were brought up by engineers but were ignored and the decision was made to go forward. The seal failed resulting in gas leaking, causing the shuttle to explode. The top decision-making team was isolated from the engineers and were all very familiar with each other, having worked together for many years prior. Leaders pushed for launch and other decision makers present went along with them from conformity pressures.

**Sources:**

<https://www.powernoodle.com/blog-article/decisive-history-volume-1-challenger-explosion-and-groupthink>

https://sites.psu.edu/aspsy/2020/10/07/how-groupthink-played-a-role-in-the-challenger-disaster/