

# Group Dynamics

Since humans live and work in groups, it is important to understand the basic elements of the psychology of group dynamics.

- Group is defined as Collection of two or more inter- dependent individuals who usually fee, think and act together.
- Characteristics:
  - Existence of two or more than two members.
  - Interdependence in relationship.
  - Common Goal.
  - Group Loyalty.
  - Definite set of values or norms.
  - Demonstration of group behavior.

# General Reasons For Group Formation

The reasons why people form or join groups are

- sociobiological (evolutionarily built in),
- cognitive (understanding our world) and
- utilitarian (gaining benefits).

# Specific reasons why people join groups

- Security: Joining groups reduces insecurity of “standing alone.”
- Status: Inclusion in a group viewed important by others provides recognition and status to its members.
- Self-esteem: Groups can provide people with feelings of self worth.
- Affiliation: Groups fulfill social needs through regular interaction.
- Power: Group actions enable in achieving what one can't individually.
- Goal Achievement: Pooling talent, knowledge and power is needed to accomplish particular tasks.

- Different types of groups, such as task groups, intimacy groups, social categories and loose associations, differ on a number of important dimensions such as group entitativity, importance and shared objectives.
- Group members move through the different stages of group membership (prospective member, new member, full member, marginal member and ex-member) separated from each other by role transitions, and these different stages are characterized by different levels of commitment.

- The role transition of entry can be marked by a harsh transition ritual.
- A classic explanation for these rituals is given by dissonance theory, which argues that such rituals increase commitment to the group.

- Groups develop over time, because the challenges they face and the goals they have change.
- Tuckman's classic theory distinguishes five stages: forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning.





- Groups develop shared cognitions, such as transactive memory systems (i.e., knowing who knows what) and shared emotions.
- Cohesion can be based on attractiveness of the group (interpersonal cohesion) or on attractiveness of the group task (task cohesion). In general, cohesion motivates group members to exert effort for causes that are important to the group.

- The presence of other groups can make group membership salient.
- As a consequence, group members will be more strongly influenced by their group membership