

## WEEK 6

### ORGANIZATIONAL INTERACTIONS

- Relationship building
- Decision-making
- Conflict and antagonism

## Relationship-building

### a/Groups

A group may be seen as two or more interdependent individuals who interact and influence each other in a collective pursuit of a common goal (Bartol & Martin).



## *Relationship-building*

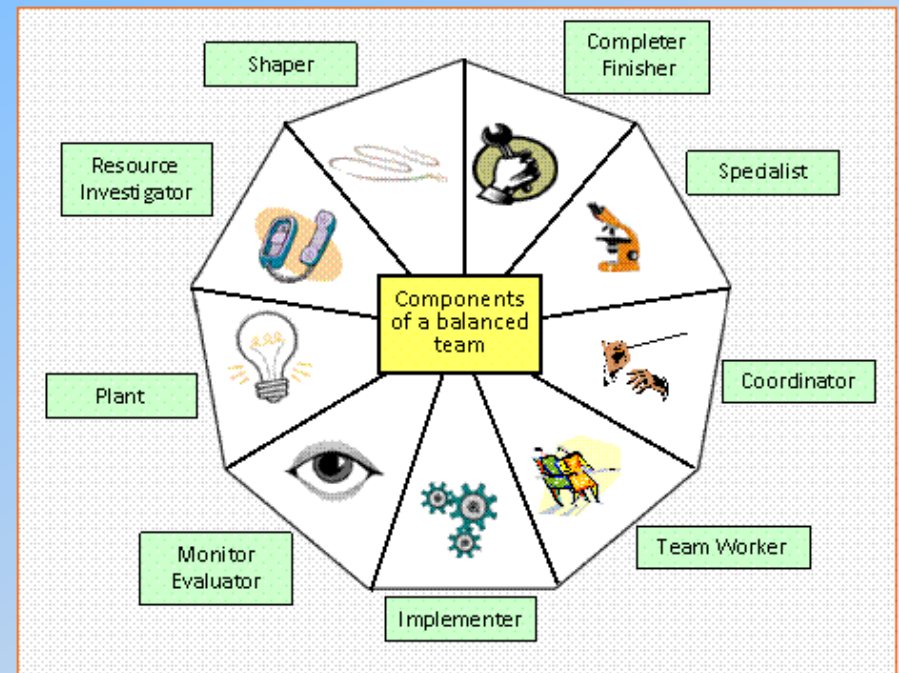
Common group member roles include (Benne & Sheats):

- Group task roles that help a group accomplish its goals
- Group maintenance roles which help foster group unity
- Self-oriented roles that are related to the personal needs

## Relationship-building

### b/Teams

Coherent groups that share a commonly acknowledged goal wherein the members play a contributing role as a tendency to behave, contribute and interrelate with others in a particular way (Belbin)



## Relationship-building

### Groups

- little communication
- no support
- lack of vision
- exclusive cliques

### Teams

- plenty of opportunity for discussion
- plenty of support
- discovery supported by openness
- work groups combine easily into teams



## Decision-making

### a/Decisions:

They can be seen as moments of choosing or passing judgment.

Consequence: Passing judgement brings about effects; thus a decision is a cause.

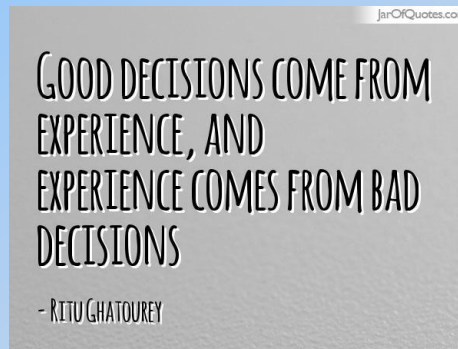
If the effect is judged to be short of expectations, can the decision be labelled as “bad/wrong”?

## Decision-making

### b/Ethics of decision-making:

Qualifying a decision as “good/correct” or “bad/wrong” brings about an ethical dilemma: what decisions are “good” and what “bad”?

Typical answer: those which have “good/correct” or “bad/wrong” effects or consequences.



## Decision-making

However, how can one know that a decision will have “good/correct” or “bad/wrong” effects or consequences? Experience may give some clue about it but no one really knows!

Thus there is no certainty about establishing the truth or falsehood of a decision the moment of passing judgement; only retrospectively but it is already too late!



## Decision-making

### c/Typology

Relatively to the degree of structure:

- Programmed decisions: These describe relatively structured solutions to specific problems
- Non-programmed decisions: These refer to relatively unstructured solutions to more complex problems

## Decision-making

### d/Approach

In an organizational structure decisions are made following a top-down directive approach to decision making that may result in timely and high-quality decisions.

Critique: In the top-down directive approach personnel may not readily accept such decisions, which denotes the antagonistic nature of decision-making in general.

## Decision-making

e/Influences: Decision-making may be influenced by:

- Skills
- Styles
- Biases

Consequence: If decision-making is an antagonistic process, the play of influences and biases renders it contingent.

## *Decision-making*

f/Issue:

If decision-making is contingent, is there any room for rational and procedural thinking premises for quality assurance?

Typically there are efforts into rendering decision-making rational and procedural because of the numerous factors that affect it.

## Conflict

### a/Conflict

“Good/correct” or “bad/wrong” effects or consequences of decision-making may bring about the expression of power as conflict which is variously managed.



## Conflict

### b/Assumptions

Conflict is managed according to one's assumption about it:

- Traditional view: Conflict is seen to be dysfunctional, destructive and irrational, resulting from poor information exchange, lack of openness and trust.
- Human relations view: Conflict is seen to be inevitable, and thus must be accepted.
- Interactionist view: Conflict is seen to be necessary to avoid that effective working habits become stale.

## Conflict

### Critique:

- With the traditional view conflict is seen to be a deviation from equilibrium, where there is none;
- Passive acceptance of conflict on grounds that is inevitable undermines initiative and the role that agency and autonomy may have;
- Claiming that conflict is much desired to bring out the best from personnel may overstretch productive capabilities unduly.

## Conflict

### c/Elements of another view:

#### 1. Antagonism:

In the dominance of the purposes and interests by the self and the other (any other), there is a double process of acceptability:

- Self of other
- Other of self



## Conflict

### 2. Distancional antagonism:

Two cases:

- If the antagonism is ongoing, then power can come from everywhere, take any form.
- If the antagonism is settled, there is power concentration in specific loci. This is a situation that brings about resistances which (eventually) render antagonisms ongoing and interactional.

## Conflict

### 3. Visibility:

Power can be made visible in that it produces vocabularies and organizes ideas in discourses which produce knowledge and which in turn, produces, transmits and reinforces power relations.

### 4. Permeability:

The visibility of one's power renders one self permeable while constituting a line of defense; thus society is neither inside the self nor outside of it.

## Conflict

### 5. Dynamics

Permeability of the self makes that social exchange is dynamic: if there is a tendency towards change, there is also a tendency to stabilize 'transformation processes' so as to reach one's designs.

Yet this fixity is deferred since differences from the other are made unstable. Difference is therefore the theatre of antagonizing forces which, on the one hand block the full constitution of the identity, while on the other, are also part of the conditions of existence.

## Conflict

### Consequence

Unlike Yorke for whom “the antagonist is the thing of a person the protagonist must vanquish to achieve their goal”, one needs to understand the mutual fact of antagonism not as a threat to one another, but as process of exchange where antagonisms are to be lived with.

