

9.6: Summary of Learning Outcomes

9.1 Work Groups: Basic Considerations

1. How do you manage group and intergroup processes effectively?

A group is a collection of individuals who share a common set of norms, who generally have differentiated roles among themselves, and who interact with one another in the joint pursuit of common goals. Groups may be divided into permanent and temporary groups and formal and informal groups. Formal groups include command and task groups, whereas informal groups include friendship and interest groups.

9.2 Work Group Structure

2. How do group norms, roles, and status systems affect employee behavior and performance?

People join groups because they offer security, meet social needs, enhance self-esteem, fulfill economic interests, introduce them to people with mutual interests, and, sometimes, because they are in close physical proximity. Groups typically develop through several distinct stages, including forming, storming, norming, and performing. A role may be defined as an expected behavior pattern assigned or attributed to a particular position in the organization. Roles may be oriented toward the task, social relations, or the self.

9.3 Managing Effective Work Groups

3. How do managers develop group cohesiveness, which facilitates organizational goal attainment?

Social loafing is a tendency for individual members of a group to reduce their task effort in the belief that other members will cover for them. A norm is a standard that is shared by group members and that regulates member behavior within an organization. Norms facilitate group survival, simplify expected behaviors, help members avoid embarrassing situations, and help identify group members. Asch's experiment in group pressure and individual judgment demonstrated that individuals will discount their own perceptions of a situation and follow the will of a group. Status systems serve to differentiate individuals on the basis of some criterion or set of criteria. Status incongruence occurs when one individual holds a position in the status hierarchy that is inconsistent with the conventional criteria for that position. Group cohesiveness is the extent to which individual members of a group are motivated to remain in the group. Work group effectiveness is defined by three criteria: group productivity, personal need satisfaction of the members, and the group's capacity for future cooperation.

9.4 Intergroup Behavior and Performance

4. What are barriers to intergroup cooperation, and how do you take action to minimize such impediments and understand how to get the most out of the collective actions of groups in organizations in order to enhance industrial competitiveness?

Intergroup performance is influenced by three interaction requirements. These include the requirements for interdependence, information, and integration. A linking role is a position or unit within the organization that is charged with overseeing and coordinating the activities of two or more groups. A task force consists of members from several departments or units who are brought together on a temporary basis to solve a specific and immediate problem. Decoupling refers to the practice of physically or administratively separating groups that are not able to work together effectively.

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