

9.5: Glossary

Command group A group that is permanent.

Decoupling Involves separating two groups—physically or administratively—in such a way that the required tasks of the organization are fulfilled while the interaction between the two groups is minimized.

Formal group Work units that are prescribed by the organization.

Friendship group Friendship groups tend to be long lasting.

Group An organized system of two or more individuals who are interrelated so that the system performs some function, has a standard set of role relationships among its members, and has a set of norms that regulate the function of the group and each of its members.

Group cohesiveness The extent to which individual members of a group are motivated to remain in the group.

Informal group Groups that evolve naturally out of individual and collective self-interest among the members of an organization and are not the result of deliberate organizational design.

Information flow To be successful, groups need the appropriate amount of information.

Interaction process analysis A technique that records who says what to whom, and through using it illustrates that smaller groups typically exhibit greater tension, agreement, and opinion seeking, whereas larger groups show more tension release and giving of suggestions and information.

Interest group A network that forms due to mutual interests such as working women or minority managers.

Linking role A position or unit within the organization that is charged with overseeing and coordinating the activities of two or more groups.

Norms These regulate the function of the group and each of its members.

Pooled interdependence Occurs when various groups are largely independent of each other, even though each contributes to and is supported by the larger organization.

Reciprocal interdependence Occurs when two or more groups depend on one another for inputs.

Role ambiguity A condition that arises when messages sent to an individual may be unclear.

Role conflict A condition that can arise when individuals receive multiple and sometimes conflicting messages from various groups, all attempting to assign them a particular role.

Role episode An attempt to explain how a particular role is learned and acted upon.

Role overload A condition where individuals may simply receive too many role-related messages.

Role set The sum total of all the roles assigned to one individual.

Sequential interdependence Exists when the outputs of one unit or group become the inputs for another.

Social loafing A tendency for individual group members to reduce their effort on a group task

Status incongruence A situation that exists when a person is high on certain valued dimensions but low on others, or when a person's characteristics seem inappropriate for a particular job.

Status system Serves to differentiate individuals on the basis of some criterion or set of criteria.

Task force Serves the same purpose as a linking role except that the role is temporary instead of permanent.

Task group Serves the same purpose as a command role except that the role is temporary instead of permanent.

Task uncertainty When groups are working on highly uncertain tasks, the need for communication increases. When task uncertainty is low, less information is typically needed.

Work role An expected behavior pattern assigned or attributed to a particular position in the organization.

Work technology Includes the equipment and materials used in manufacture, the prescribed work procedures, and the physical layout of the work site.

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