

# Questions for Review

1. Define group. What are the different types of groups?

**Answer:**

- A group is defined as two or more individuals, interacting and interdependent, who have come together to achieve particular objectives. Groups can be either formal or informal. It is possible to sub-classify groups as command, task, interest, or friendship groups.
- A command group is determined by the organization chart. It is composed of direct reports to a given manager.
- Task groups—organizationally determined, represent those working together to complete a job task.
- A task group's boundaries are not limited to its immediate hierarchical superior. It can cross command relationships. For instance, if a college student is accused of a campus crime, it may require communication and coordination among the dean of academic affairs, the dean of students, the registrar, the director of security, and the student's advisor. All command groups are also task groups, but the reverse need not be true.
- An interest group is people who affiliate to attain a specific objective with which each is concerned – employees who band together to have their vacation schedules altered.
- Friendship groups often develop because the individual members have one or more common characteristics. Social alliances, which frequently extend outside the work situation, can be based on similar age or ethnic heritage.

2. What are the five stages of group development?

**Answer:**

- Exhibit 9–2 shows the five-stage group-development model:
- The first stage is forming.
  - Characterized by a great deal of uncertainty about the group's purpose, structure, and leadership.
  - Members are trying to determine what types of behavior are acceptable.
  - Stage is complete when members have begun to think of themselves as part of a group.
- The second stage is storming.
  - One of intragroup conflict
  - Members accept the existence of the group, but there is resistance to constraints on individuality.
  - There is conflict over who will control the group.
  - When complete, there will be a relatively clear hierarchy of leadership within the group.
- The third stage is norming.
  - One in which close relationships develop and the group demonstrates cohesiveness.
  - There is now a strong sense of group identity and camaraderie.
  - The stage is complete when the group structure solidifies and the group has assimilated a common set of expectations of what defines correct member behavior.
- The fourth stage is performing.

- The structure at this point is fully functional and accepted.
  - Group energy has moved from getting to know and understand each other to performing.
  - The fifth stage is adjourning.
    - Group gets ready to disband.
    - Attention is focused on wrapping up activities.
3. Do role requirements change in different situations? If so, how?
- Answer:**
- A role is a set of expected behavior patterns attributed to someone occupying a given position in a social unit. Different groups impose different role requirements of individuals.
  - Role Identity - Certain attitudes and behaviors consistent with a role
  - Role Perception - An individual's view of how he or she is supposed to act in a given situation – received by external stimuli
  - Role Expectations - How others believe a person should act in a given situation
  - Psychological Contract - an unwritten agreement that sets out mutual expectations of management and employees
  - Role Conflict - A situation in which an individual is confronted by divergent role expectations
4. How do group norms and status influence an individual's behavior?
- Answer:**
- All groups have norms—acceptable standards of behavior that are shared by the group's members. Norms tell members what they ought and ought not to do under certain circumstances. Norms are important because they:
    - Facilitate the group's survival.
    - Increase the predictability of group members' behaviors.
    - Reduce embarrassing interpersonal problems for group members.
    - Allow members to express the central values of the group and clarify what is distinctive about the group's identity.
  - There is considerable evidence that groups can place strong pressures on individual members to change their attitudes and behaviors to conform to the group's standard.
  - Status is a socially defined position or rank given to groups or group members by others. We live in a class-structured society despite all attempts to make it more egalitarian. High-status members of groups often are given more freedom to deviate from norms than other group members. High-status people also are better able to resist conformity pressures. The previous findings explain why many star athletes, famous actors, top-performing salespeople, and outstanding academics seem oblivious to appearance or social norms.
5. How does group size affect performance?
- Answer:**
- Group size does affect performance. More than 12 people are considered a large group and seven or fewer are considered a small group. Groupthink is the tendency for individuals to expend less effort when working collectively than when working individually. The Ringelmann's Rope Pull: greater levels of productivity but with diminishing returns as group size increases, caused by either equity concerns or a diffusion of responsibility (free riders)

- As a manager, you need to build in individual accountability. To prevent social loafing, a manager can:
  - Set group goals.
  - Increase intergroup competition.
  - Use peer evaluation.
  - Distribute group rewards based on individual effort.

6. What are the advantages and limitations of cohesive groups?

**Answer:**

- Cohesiveness is the degree to which group members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the group. Cohesiveness has been linked to productivity. When performance-related norms established by the group are high, a cohesive group will be more productive than one that is less cohesive. If cohesiveness is high and performance norms are low, productivity will also be low.
- There are ways for managers to increase cohesiveness:
  - Make the group smaller.
  - Encourage agreement with group goals.
  - Increase time members spend together.
  - Increase group status and admission difficulty.
  - Stimulate competition with other groups.
  - Give rewards to the group, not individuals.
  - Physically isolate the group.

7. What are the strengths and weaknesses of group (versus individual) decision making?

**Answer:**

- Group Strengths:
  - Generate more complete information and knowledge
  - Offer increased diversity of views and greater creativity
  - Increased acceptance of decisions
  - Generally more accurate (but not as accurate as the most accurate group member)
- Group Weaknesses:
  - Time-consuming activity
  - Conformity pressures in the group
  - Discussions can be dominated by a few members
  - A situation of ambiguous responsibility

8. How effective are interacting, brainstorming, nominal, and electronic meeting groups?

**Answer:**

- Brainstorming – is an idea-generating process designed to overcome pressure for conformity. Brainstorming usually generates ideas but may not be in the most efficient manner. Nominal Group Technique (NGT) works by restricting discussion during the decision-making process. Members are physically present but operate independently. Nominal groups usually outperform brainstorming. Electronic Meeting uses computers to hold large meetings of up to 50 people. The early evidence indicates that electronic meetings don't achieve most of their proposed benefits. Numerous studies have found that electronic meetings actually lead to decreased group effectiveness, required more time to complete tasks, and resulted in reduced member satisfaction when compared to face-to-face groups.

9. What is the evidence for the effect of culture on group status and social loafing? How does diversity affect groups and their effectiveness over time?

**Answer:**

- Cultural differences affect status and it varies between cultures. Managers must understand who and what holds status when interacting with people from another culture.
- Social Loafing is most often in Western (individualistic) cultures. Diversity affects groups such that increased diversity leads to increased conflict. It may cause early withdrawal and lowered morale. If the initial difficulties are overcome, diverse groups may perform better. Also surface diversity may increase openness.