Team Processes

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Lecture 4
Managing Team Processes

• Goals
  • Understand critical, generic team processes
  • Practice analyzing a “team” using these concepts
  • Encourage use of these concepts in your teams

• Approach
  • Analyze team processes of a jury
Generic Processes

- Communication
- Influence
- Task Functions
- Maintenance Functions
- Decision-Making
- Conflict Management
- Emotional Environment
- Atmosphere
Communication

• Who are the most frequent communicators?
  • What is the effect of their participation?

• Who are the least frequent communicators?
  • What is the effect of their lack of participation?

• Are there shifts in participation/communication?
  • What causes this?

• Who talks to whom? Who responds to whom? Who triggers whom?

• How are “silent” and “noisy” members handled?
Influence

• How does the formal leader exert influence?
  • How strongly does he/she influence the group?
• Who has the most impact on the group’s actions and decisions?
• Whose ideas are ignored?
  • What is the result?
• What influence tactics are group members using?
  - Rational persuasion
  - Consultation
  - Personal appeals
  - Coalition tactics
  - Legitimating tactics
  - Inspirational appeals
  - Ingratiating
  - Exchange / reciprocity
  - Pressure / intimidation
• Is there rivalry in the group?
  • What effect does it have?
Task Functions

Organizing to get the task accomplished

• Initiating
• Seeking information / opinions
• Providing information or opinions
• Clarifying
• Elaborating
• Summarizing
• Consensus Testing
Task Functions: Questions

- Do group members make suggestions as to the best way to proceed?
  - Who does so? How frequently?
- Do members give or ask for information, feelings, feedback?
- How is the team kept on target?
  - Do some members emerge as “task leaders”?
- Are all ideas given adequate discussion before evaluation begins?
- Does the group summarize what has been covered?
Maintenance Functions

Holding the group together so that its members can continue to get along

• Harmonizing
• Compromising
• Gatekeeping
• Encouraging
Maintenance Functions: Questions

• Are all members encouraged to enter into the discussion and made to feel part of the group?

• Are team members careful to reject ideas and not people? In what way?

• Are conflicts among members ignored or addressed in some way?
Decision-Making

- Does the group follow the four key steps in decision-making?
  - Identifying the problem, Analyzing the problem, Proposing and evaluating solutions, Implementing decisions
- Does one person make the decision for everyone?
  - How many people actively participate in decision-making?
- Does the team vote and let majority rule?
  - Does the team strive for consensus?
- Does the team encourage minority opinions?
Conflict

• How often do members disagree about the work to be done?
• To what extent are there arguments about how to do the task?
• To what extent do people in the group take arguments personally?
• How often do members get angry with one another?
  • How is that handled by the group?
• Are conflicts resolved or simply “buried”?
Atmosphere & Emotional Environment

- Would you characterize the environment as supportive?
  - Empathy, Equality, Spontaneity, Problem orientation

- Defensive?
  - Evaluation / judging, Control, Stratagems / “games”, Superiority, Dogmatism?

- Are people friendly and open or very formal with each other?

- Are people involved and interested?
  - Is there an atmosphere of work? Play? Competition?
Atmosphere & Emotional Environment (cont.)

- Is there an attempt to avoid unpleasantness of ignoring tough issues?
- Are members grappling with emotional issues?
  - Is there evidence of disruptive behaviors, including:
    - fighting and controlling
    - withdrawing
    - dependency (waiting passively for a leader to emerge) OR
    - counterdependency (opposing or resisting anyone in the group who represents authority)?
Exhibit I

Architect
(Henry Fonda)

Baseball Fan

Bank Teller
with glasses

The Old Man

Stock Broker
with glasses

Garage Owner
with a cold

Owner of the
Messenger Svc.
(Lee J. Cobb)

Hooper Painter
in white shirt, no tie

Assistant Coach

Watchmaker
with mustache

Ad Man
with glasses

The Foreman

Salesman

Man from slums

Manager with glasses
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