

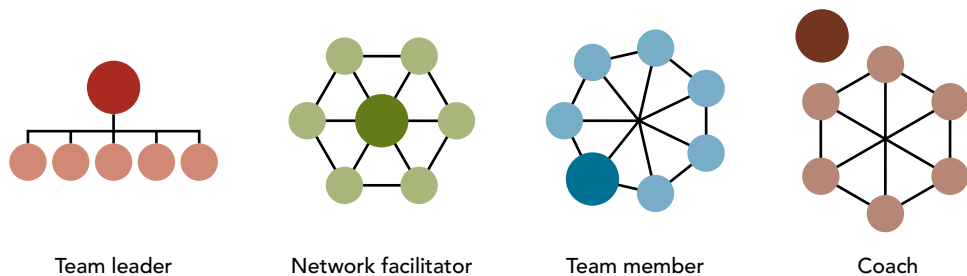
ORGANIZATIONS ARE NETWORKS OF FORMAL TEAMS AND INFORMAL GROUPS.

A **formal team** is officially recognized and supported by the organization.

A **formal team** is officially designated for a specific organizational purpose. You'll find such teams described by different labels on organization charts—examples are *departments* (e.g., market research department), *work units* (e.g., audit unit), *teams* (e.g., customer service team), or *divisions* (e.g., office products division).

Formal teams are headed by supervisors, managers, department heads, team leaders, and the like. It is common, in fact, to describe organizations as interlocking networks of teams in which managers and leaders play “linking pin” roles.⁹ This means that they serve both as head of one work team and as a regular member in the next-higher-level one. It's also important to recognize, as shown here, that managers play more than one role in groups and teams. In addition to serving as the supervisor or team leader, they also act as network facilitators, team members, and coaches.

Roles Managers Play in Teams



An **informal group** is unofficial and emerges from relationships and shared interests among members.

The informal structure of an organization also consists of **informal groups**. They emerge from natural or spontaneous relationships and offer members opportunities for social satisfactions as well as contacts for getting work done. Some are *interest groups*, whose members pursue a common cause, such as a women's career network. Some are *friendship groups* that develop for a wide variety of personal reasons, including shared hobbies and other nonwork interests. Others are *support groups* in which members basically help one another out in work and personal affairs.

WORKERS AROUND THE WORLD SAY MOST MEETINGS ARE “INEFFECTIVE.”

FACTS TO CONSIDER

Unproductive Meetings Are Major Time Wasters



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A survey of some 38,000 workers around the world links low productivity with bad meetings, poor communication, and unclear goals.

- 69% of meetings attended are considered ineffective.

- 32% of workers complain about team communication.
- 31% complain about unclear objectives and priorities.

WHAT'S YOUR TAKE?

Do these data match your experiences with team meetings? Given the common complaints about meetings, what can a team leader do to improve them? Think about the recent meetings you have attended. In what ways were the best meetings different from the worst ones? Did your behavior play a significant role in both these cases?