

CHAPTER 12

Individuals in groups

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Key terms

self-concept

social identity

social categorization

self-categorization

self-esteem

social representations

shared frame of reference

social influence

social facilitation

social inhibition

synergy

social compensation

social loafing

free rider

group norm

pivotal norm

peripheral norm

group sanction

ostracism

conformity

obedience

group cohesion

group socialization

organizational socialization

deindividuation

compliance

conversion

team building

Learning outcomes

When you have read this chapter, you should be able to define those key terms in your own words, and you should also be able to:

1. Explain the basic principles of social identity theory and social representation theory.
2. Distinguish between social facilitation and social loafing.
3. Understand how groups use norms to regulate the behaviour of their members.
4. Understand the process of group socialization of individuals.
5. Explain why individuals conform to the dictates of their group.
6. Distinguish between conformity and obedience, and between compliance and conversion.

Why study individuals in groups?

The enthusiasm of management for groups and teams in the workplace is tempered by researchers who believe that they possess a darker side, one which becomes evident when manifested in the behaviour of some mobs and crowds on the street. They are seen as taking over individuals' minds, depressing their intelligence, eliminating their moral responsibility and forcing their conformity. A group can cause their members a great deal of suffering and despair and can perpetuate acts of great cruelty. There is now extensive research evidence which demonstrates the ability of groups to affect the behaviour of their members.

Managements have harnessed this power by creating groups and teams which police and discipline their own members, keeping their behaviour in line with company objectives. In addition, they have taken active steps to build cohesive teams in which individuals work well together to achieve organizational goals. While the power of the group to affect the perceptions, performance and behaviour of its individual members is well established, there is also a growing body of research that shows how a lone individual can influence a majority.

The individual and the group

Henri Tajfel and John Turner (1986) argued that as long as individuals see themselves as more important than their group, then the latter cannot function effectively. Participants have to identify themselves as group members, treating the group's values as their own. Such an attitudinal 'switch' and commitment facilitates the long-term existence and success of their group. This question of how much an individual should be part of the group (for their own wellbeing, for that of their group, and for the organization) and how much separate from it (to remain creative, critical and for their own mental health) is a continuing debate in the literature.

Self-concept the set of perceptions that we have about ourselves.

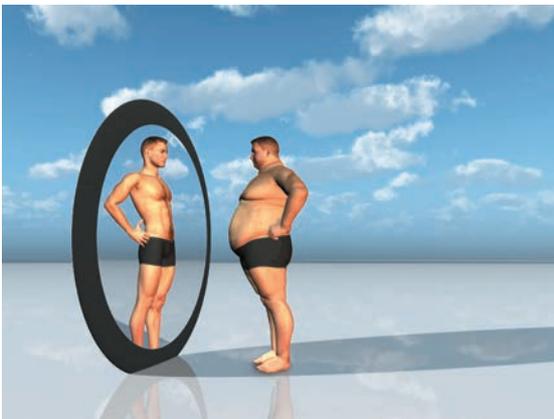
Let us first consider concepts and theories that explain the relationship between an individual and their group. **Self-concept** refers to the set of perceptions that we have about ourselves. It is the way in which we see ourselves. It affects both how we feel about ourselves and how we act within a group. This is because joining a group lowers our self-awareness and raises our group awareness. The roles that we play within different groups, especially those that are important to us, influence and shape our attitudes and behaviours.

Social identity that part of the self-concept which comes from our membership of groups and which contributes to our self-esteem.

Tajfel and Turner (1986) developed social identity theory. **Social identity** is that part of an individual's self-concept which derives from their membership of groups. It holds that a person's self-concept is based not only on their individual characteristics or personal identity (*I am reserved, I am interested in music, I have blond hair*), but also on their group membership (*I am French, I work for ABC corporation, I am a member of the accounting profession*). People have a strong tendency to mentally organize things and people, including themselves, into categories. To the extent that we categorize ourselves as being members of groups, we have social identities.

Our social identities, developed through our group membership, are an important part of how we define ourselves. The groups or social categories to which we belong (e.g. student course member, management team member, parent or sports club secretary) are an integral part of our self-concept. Social identity fulfils two functions. First, it defines and evaluates a person (e.g. 'she's a member of the design team'). Such definition and evaluation is done both by others and by the person themselves. Second, it prescribes appropriate behaviour for them. They think and behave in characteristically 'design team' ways.

According to Tajfel, in order to evaluate your own opinions and abilities, you compare yourself with other individuals with whom you interact. This comparison



Social categorization classifying the people we meet, on the basis of how similar or different they are, from the way that we see ourselves.

process is called **social categorization**. It involves assessing the people that we meet on the basis of how similar or different they are from the way that we see ourselves. If I see myself as motivated, I will categorize other people as being more, equally or less motivated than me. This **self-categorization** process means that we perceive ourselves as having the same social identity as other category members. It leads us to behave in ways that are consistent with the stereotypes of the categories to which we believe that we belong. Self-categorization transforms a number of separate individuals into a group (Figure 12.1). You then compare the group that you are in (the in-group) with similar but distinct groups of which you are not a member (the out-group). This inter-group comparison leads us to a ‘we–they’ view of the world.

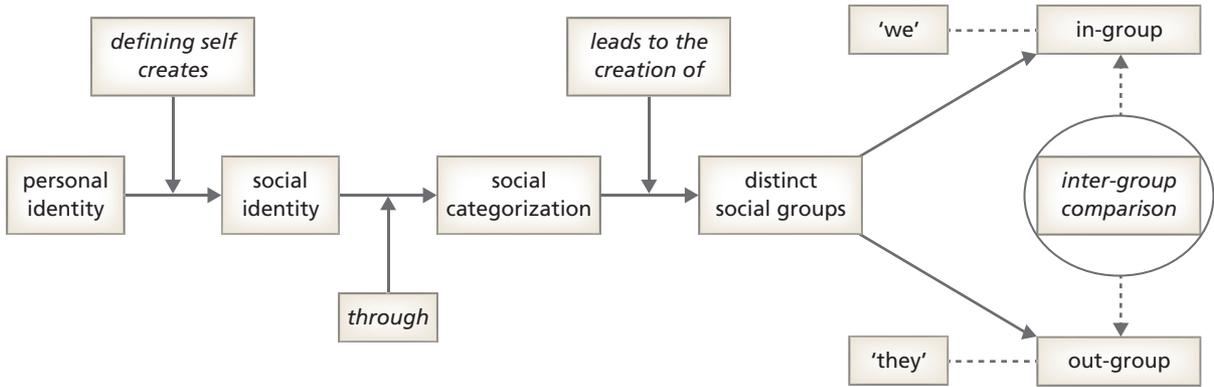


Figure 12.1: Social identity theory
 Source: based on Tajfel and Turner (1986)

Self-categorization perceiving ourselves as sharing the same social identity as other category members, and behaving in ways consistent with that category stereotype.

Together, social categorization and self-categorization lead to assumed similarity among those who are categorized together. They minimize the perceived differences between members of the in-group and maximize the differences between the in-group and other out-groups. When this happens, the individuals who are part of the in-group will have assumed a social identity and will view other people from this standpoint (See Figure 12.2).

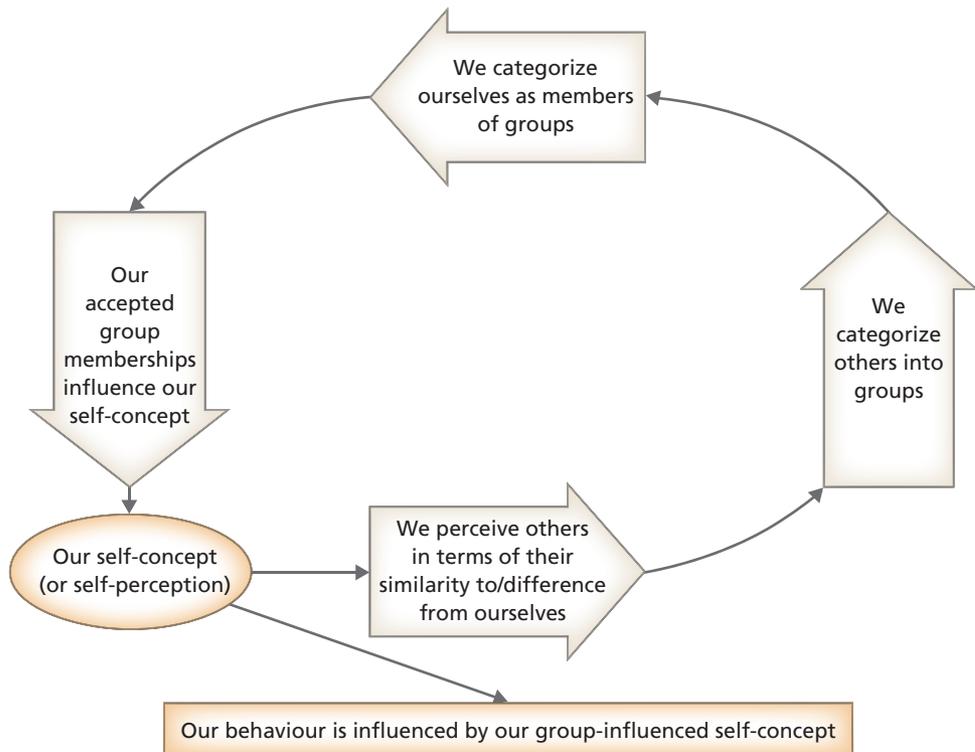


Figure 12.2: Processes of social categorization and self-categorization
 Source: Guirdham, M. (2002) *Interactive Behaviour at Work*, Pearson Education Limited.

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CUTTING EDGE Trust and job satisfaction in virtual teams



Philipp Romeike and his colleagues (2016) examined the relationship between a virtual team member's degree of trust in their co-workers and their level of job satisfaction by investigating the role of social comparison processes. Comparing one's own abilities with those of others is a common response to the fundamental human need to know one's relative position in any group context. Social comparisons reduce uncertainty. Virtual teams are characterized by a high degree of uncertainty and the need for trust between members. Their members engage in ongoing social comparisons with one another. However, as these virtual team members have less information available to them on which to base

their comparisons (in contrast to those in face-to-face groups), they frequently come to biased conclusions that can lead to a reduction in their trust in other group members. The authors found that almost every member considered that their own individual performance exceeded that of the group target.

A team member who considers their own performance to be superior to that of their team may either infer that the remaining team members do not adequately reciprocate her or his contributions to the team, or that they are putting in less effort than she or he is. In either case, the team member perceives the exchange relationship with the team to be unbalanced and unfair, and this erodes their attitude towards the team and decreases their level of trust in it. Team members were found to distance themselves from their team, express less trust in their co-workers, and were less satisfied with their jobs. This represents a serious threat to virtual team effectiveness. Trust is a key interpersonal process that is linked to a wide range of desirable outcomes such as knowledge sharing.

What can be done? First, the authors recommend that team leaders should clearly explain how each performance indicator is derived and what it refers to. They need to explain not only about how the team as a whole is performing, but also how each individual within it is doing. This avoids biased perceptions of individuals' own performances. If team leaders only discuss the overall team performance, and if it is below target, individuals will conclude that it is not their fault, but that it is their fellow team members who are to blame. In virtual work contexts the potential for such scapegoating is particularly high as team members almost never observe each other at work. If they do not understand the information being provided, and if they make biased social comparisons, then the consequential adverse effects on group trust and member job satisfaction are likely to occur.

Self-esteem that part of the self which is concerned with how we evaluate ourselves.

We all see ourselves as members of various social groupings which are distinguishable and hence different from other social groupings. The consequence is that by identifying with certain groupings but not others, we come to see the world in terms of 'us-and-them'. There are two benefits for us from this. First, our understanding of the world is enhanced by classifying everybody this way. Second, our **self-esteem** can be maintained or even enhanced. Membership of a high-status group gives us prestige, which in turn raises our self-esteem. We are highly motivated to feel proud to belong to the group of which we are members. If we cannot achieve this feeling of pride, we will either try to change the group's perceived status or will detach ourselves from it.



Categorizing people into groups and identifying with some of these groups appears to be a fundamental human characteristic which derives from the fact that human beings are social animals. However, by differentiating themselves from others and because of their need for belonging, individuals expose themselves to the control of others. Within the organizational context, we offer control to fellow group members who wish to direct our attitudes, thoughts and behaviours in line with what the group considers appropriate. We also hand control to managers who seek both to motivate and control us by instituting various forms of team working arrangements.

Group influences on individuals' perceptions

How does a group affect the perceptions of its individual members? One explanation was offered at the start of the book with the *constructivist* perspective (see Chapter 1). This argued that our social and organizational surroundings possess no ultimate truth or reality, but are determined instead by the way in which we experience and understand those worlds which we construct and reconstruct for ourselves, through our interactions with others. In short, we don't see things as *they are* – we see things as *we are*. Among these important 'others' with whom we interact and with whom we experience and understand the world, are the members of the groups to which we belong.

Social representations the beliefs, ideas and values, objects, people and events that are constructed by current group members, and which are transmitted to its new members.

Social representations theory was formulated by Serge Moscovici (1984). **Social representations** are the beliefs, ideas and values, objects, people and events that are constructed by current group members and which are transmitted to its new members. When individuals join a new group, its members will construct and transmit complex and unfamiliar ideas to newcomers in straightforward ways. This process creates social representations which come to be accepted, in a modified form, by the new members of a group who may come from different backgrounds and cultures. It helps these new recruits to make sense of what is going on around them within their group. The explanation of some occurrence is simplified, distorted and ritualized by the group. It becomes a 'common sense explanation' which is accepted as orthodoxy among its members and is then communicated to new ones. Social representations are a group's theories about how the world works and are used by them to justify their actions. The prefix 'social' in both phrases, reminds us about the collective way in which reality is jointly manufactured, accepted and shared.

As a new company recruit, you discuss your role in the group with existing members. During these interactions, representations are presented, developed, adapted and negotiated before being incorporated into your own, existing, belief framework. This happens during the period of socialization, shortly after you have joined the group. It is not a matter of you, as a new recruit, being given and accepting a bundle of existing group assumptions, ideas, beliefs and opinions to absorb. Rather, Moscovici's theory emphasizes the interactive nature of the process between you as an individual, and the other group members. Once incorporated, the group representations are revealed in all group members' talk and actions (e.g. that the boss is an idiot).

Shared frame of reference assumptions held in common by group members which shape their thinking, decisions, actions and interactions, while being constantly defined and reinforced through those interactions.

Through these social representations, group members gain a **shared frame of reference**. Over time, new group members learn about the different assumptions, ideas, beliefs and opinions held by established group members about their common work situation. Some agreement on perception and meaning is essential if group members are to interact, communicate, agree goals and generally act in concert on a common task. Such a shared view is essential for a group to continue and to develop. Moreover, as we work in a group, we find that our views begin to coalesce with those of other members. A shared frame of reference and social representations suggest the existence of a group-level process equivalent

of organizational culture forming – a 'group culture' (see Chapter 4). Together, the shared frame of reference and social representations processes determine the meanings that group members come to attach to events and to other people's behaviour around them.



CRITICAL THINKING

What challenges have you found when working in a tutorial or project group at university with fellow students coming from different parts of the world? In your view, does their ethnic or national background affect their behaviour within your group? In what ways?

Group influences on individuals' performance

Social influence the process whereby attitudes and behaviours are altered by the real or implied presence of others.

Social influence refers to the process whereby our attitudes and behaviour are influenced by the presence of others. This presence can either improve or reduce our performance. Figure 12.3 indicates that having other people around us increases our arousal. The complexity of the task that we perform (easy or difficult) also determines how well we do. The explanation is that the presence of others increases arousal which acts to enhance whatever a person's 'dominant response' is. If the task is easy to complete successfully, has been frequently performed in the past, or is already well learned, then there will be an increase in the person's performance in the presence of others. In contrast, if a task is difficult to complete successfully, has rarely been performed in the past, or has been poorly learned, then the increased arousal caused by the presence of others will reduce performance.

Social facilitation the effect of the presence of other people enhancing an individual's performance.

Social facilitation refers to the effect of the presence of other people enhancing an individual's performance. Early research investigated individuals performing various physical tasks. Norman Triplett (1898) studied children winding fishing reels and cyclists racing. The children were found to turn the reels faster when other children were present, and the cyclists performed 20 per cent faster when accompanied by a pacemaker than when alone, even in a non-racing situation. Later studies focused on non-physical tasks. Floyd Allport (1920) discovered that students completed mathematical calculations faster in the company of other students than

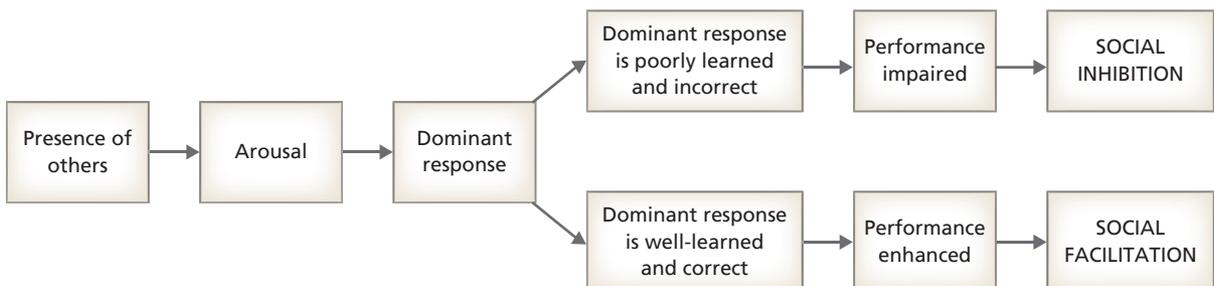


Figure 12.3: Social facilitation and social inhibition

Social inhibition the effect of the presence of other people reducing an individual's performance.

Synergy the positive or negative result of the interaction of two or more components, producing an outcome that is different from the sum of the individual components.

when alone. However, research also revealed the existence of **social inhibition** which is the effect of the presence of others reducing an individual's task performance.

Also relevant here is the concept of **synergy** which refers to the outcome of interactions of two or more individuals which can either be positive or negative, and which is different from the sum of outcomes of individuals operating separately. Positive synergy is a concept which underpins all kinds of groups working in organizations. In particular, it supports the use of cross-functional and cross-industry teams. Positive synergy is the belief that the final output produced by a group of individuals working together rather than separately, will equal more than the sum of the individual members' abilities and efforts. A popular short hand term for this is $2 + 2 = 5$. It has been argued that the designated purpose of group tasks should necessarily *require* more than its members are able to offer working as individuals, so as to benefit from the positive aspects of synergy.



The paradox of the team

Paul Gaffney (2015) recounted what a sports teacher had once told him at school: 'You never look better individually than when you play as a member of a team.' But how can you promote your own self-interest by subordinating it to the group interest? Mumford (2015) explained that taking part in a social interaction can positively affect an individual's contributions. New ideas can occur; new ways of

achieving objectives might be suggested; members share experiences and encourage each other. Indeed, unspoken understandings can develop which can allow members to anticipate each other's moves, thereby enabling them to act as a single entity. A strong team is greater than the sum of its parts because it brings out the very best in individual members, through their working together.

Social compensation

when group cohesion and evaluation are absent, a person who cares about the quality of the group's output will expend greater effort to compensate for others in the group who are performing inadequately.

Sometimes, when people work together as a group, they perform better than if they worked alone. The term **social compensation** refers to persons increasing their effort and working harder when in a group than when alone (Williams and Karau, 1991; Zaccaro, 1984). This happens when individuals place greater value upon the group rather than on the individual, or when group members are expected to achieve goals that are important to both the individuals and to the group (Guzzo and Dickson, 1996). Much of management's enthusiasm for teamworking is based on its belief (or hope) that social compensation will be triggered among employees once they are organized to work in groups (Figure 12.4).

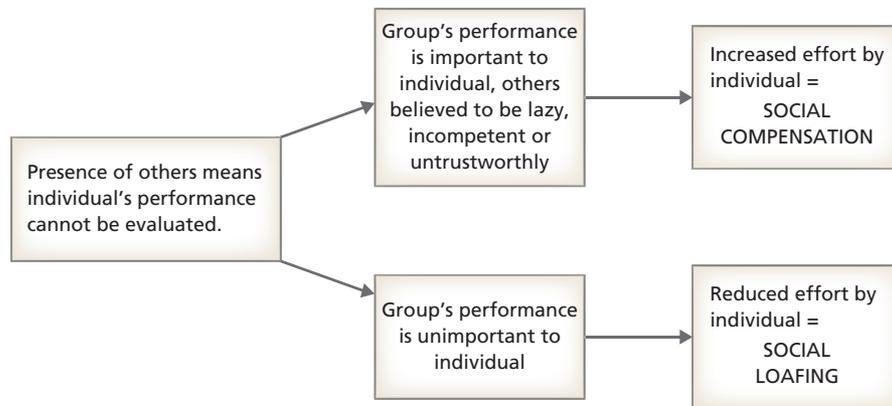


Figure 12.4: Social compensation and social loafing

✓✓✓ EMPLOYABILITY CHECK (appetite for learning)

Think of a time when you put a lot of effort into a group of which you were a part – a work group, sports team or social group – when you contributed far more than you would normally have been expected to. What did you learn from this experience that could help you as a team leader?

Social loafing the tendency for individuals to exert less effort when working as part of a group than when working alone.

At other times, when working in a group, individuals will expend less effort because their input, within the group, is more hidden. **Social loafing** is defined as the tendency of people to exert less effort when working as part of a group than when working alone. Jos Benders (2005) traced management's concern with employees working less hard than they theoretically could to the start of the twentieth century. In Europe, the famous German sociologist, Max Weber wrote about what he called 'braking' (Weber, 1924). At the same time in America, Frederick Taylor, a management consultant, was concerned with 'systematic soldiering' among the workers (see Chapter 14). This shirking or withholding of individual effort can explain why group working can reduce productivity.

Max Ringelmann, a French professor of agricultural engineering, conducted the original social loafing research in the late 1920s on subjects who were arranged in a row, pulling a rope, as in a 'tug-of-war' contest (Kravitz and Martin, 1986). People in the first position on the rope pulled less hard when they thought that people behind them were also pulling. Research suggests that individual effort tends to decrease as the size of the group increases.

Ringelmann found that three people pulling together only achieved two and a half times the average individual rate, while eight pullers achieved less than a quarter of the average individual rate. Later, Ingham et al. (1974) repeated these experiments and reported that subjects expended 18 per cent more effort when pulling alone, than when pulling as part of a group (Figure 12.5). The 'Ringelmann effect' was renamed social loafing in the 1970s by Bibb Latane following investigations at Ohio University to confirm Ringelmann's original work (Latane et al., 1979).

Social loafing is an example of negative synergy. Teamwork of all kinds is fraught with tensions, conflicts, obstacles and problems. If these are not managed effectively, rather than surpassing the best member's capabilities, the total group output may actually equal *less* than its weakest members' efforts. This is caused by various 'process losses' which can hinder effective group functioning (Steiner, 1972). If group process losses exceed group process gains, then one will have a situation of negative synergy. The mathematical analogy would be $2 + 2 = 3$. Suggestions have been offered at both the individual and the social level to account for social loafing (George, 1992; Karau and Williams, 1993; Latane and Nida, 1980). These are listed in Table 12.1.



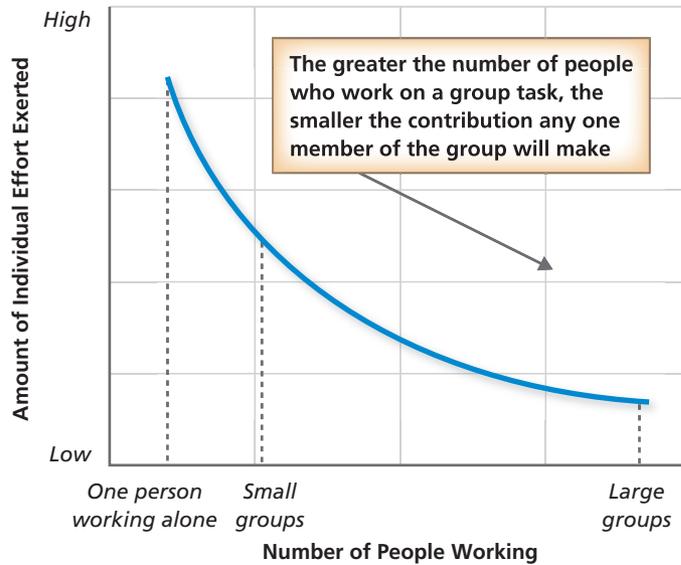


Figure 12.5: The social loafing effect

Source: from *Managing Behaviour in Organizations*, (second edition) by Jerald Greenberg, © 1999. reproduced by permission of Pearson Education Inc., Upper Saddle River, NJ, p.158



STOP AND SEARCH

YouTube for *social loafing* and for the *Ringelmann effect*.

Table 12.1: Causes of social loafing with illustrative statements

Cause	Definition	What the loafer says
Lack of individual evaluation	One's effort is neither noticeable nor measurable.	'They can't identify how much I'm contributing or not contributing to getting the job done'
Dispensability of effort	As the team size increases, individual's own input is seen as being less necessary to the group's task achievement.	'With all these people, they don't need me to get the job done'
Lack of influence	Belief that group will not achieve its goals, irrespective of how great the individual's own contribution is.	'However much I do, they'll still never be able to get the job done, so why bother'
Lack of effort by others	The perception that other members are loafing.	'They others aren't making much effort, why should I?'
Individualism v collectivism	Members coming from individualist national cultures place personal interests ahead of group goals. For those coming from collectivist cultures, it is the reverse (see Chapter 4).	'I come from an individualistic culture, I look after myself first!'
Unmotivating task	Loafing declines if group members are performing motivating work.	'I'm not going to put any effort into doing this boring job.'
Lack of task ability	An individual who perceives that they are less competent at a task than other group members will see themselves as unnecessary.	'I'm not as good as Jane at this, so I'll just let her get on with it.'
Superior task ability	An individual who is more competent than the others, but lacks influence over the overall group outcome.	'I'm better than all the others at doing this, but they are useless, they'll slow me down, and we won't get the job done anyway, so why should I bother.'

Source: based on Comer (1995)

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Undergraduates increasingly have group assignments to develop their employability skill of team working. Typically the group breaks down the task into its component parts and each member is responsible either for researching or presenting their own part or doing both. Success is premised on the expectation that each person will do their fair share of work. Regularly however, a group will include a social loafer who does not do their part well. In consequence, either the team members will have to do extra work to compensate or else the group will perform poorly and receive a low grade. It is not surprising that this problem has received much research attention (Hall and Buzwell, 2013; Jassawalla et al, 2009; Seltzer, 2016).

This phenomenon is now so common that many students now prefer individually assessed course work (Joo and Dennen, 2017; Fiechtner and Davis, 2016). This is because at university there are strong social norms preventing fellow course members from reporting their group's social loafer to the course instructor. Social loafing is also a feature of the workplace. However formal company practices such as team leader supervision and staff appraisal play a role in dealing with it. Nevertheless, being able to cope with social loafing at the work team level is an important employability skill (Ettington and Camp, 2002).



EMPLOYABILITY CHECK (problem-solving and teamworking skills)

How would you deal with a social loafer on your university course project group?

Schippers (2014) found that if there was a high degree of consciousness and agreeableness within a group, its members compensated for social loafing tendencies and overall group performance increased. In the absence of this, the solutions offered to managers to overcome social loafing assume that it is a natural group state and that something has to be added to a situation to avoid it occurring (Greenberg and Baron, 1997). Suggestions include:

Make work more involving	Raise commitment to successful task performance and encourage members to perform at a higher level
Upgrade task	Increase the perceived importance of the task in the group members' eyes
Increase group significance	Increase the significance that the group has for its individual members
Strengthen group cohesion	Make the group size small, membership attractive and stable, establish common goals, facilitate member interaction
Identify workers	Point out each member's individual contribution in order to prevent their getting away with a 'free ride'
Reward contributions to group	Reward members for helping others achieve the common goal, and not just for their individual contributions
Threaten punishment	Fear of punishment prevents loafing and gets members to 'pull their weight' in the group

Minimizing social loafing at university



Chris Lam

Chris Lam (2015) investigated social loafing in student group projects at university. He found that communication quality and task cohesion significantly reduced social loafing.

Group members' perceptions of communication quality consisted of:

- *Group discussion value*: how effective and satisfactory discussions were
- *Appropriateness*: how applicable the group discussions were to the topic
- *Richness*: how detailed communication messages were
- *Openness*: how receptive team members were to each other's communication

- *Accuracy*: whether the group's communication was accurate and properly understood

Task cohesion referred to:

- *Commitment*: the degree to which the group was united and committed to achieving the work task

Lam found that communication quality and task cohesion accounted for more than 53 per cent of the variance in social loafing. To reduce social loafing, he recommended careful attention to setting up student project groups (e.g. choice of group size and evaluation method); providing students with communication training; agreeing a 'communication charter' that details shared expectations; assessing and developing their communication styles; and ensuring that each student member's contribution is documented.

CRITICAL THINKING

At university, social loafing and free riding are most likely to be found in the classroom among individuals doing a group project rather than out on the sports field when they are playing a match. What are the similarities and differences between these two group events and what do they tell us about the how best to reduce these two problems?

Free rider a member who obtains benefits from team membership without bearing a proportional share of the costs for generating that benefit.

Free riding is related to social loafing (Frohlich and Oppenheimer, 1970; Kerr, 1983). A **free rider** obtains benefits from team membership without bearing a proportional share of the costs for generating the benefit. Hogg and Vaughan (2008) give the example of a tax evader who uses the healthcare service, the education system and the roads. The main difference between social loafing and free riding is that although loafers reduce their individual effort on team tasks, they still contribute something to the group's goal. In contrast, free riders exploit the group product, as in the case of a team project where a student gets the same grade as all the others, without having contributed anything whatsoever to the team's final report.



Free riding dooms a team to ineffectiveness and is abhorrent to team members because it violates a(n):

- *Equity standard*: members who have contributed balk at others who receive the same benefits, despite having contributed nothing.
- *Social responsibility standard*: everyone should contribute their fair share.
- *Reciprocity standard*: members should exchange their contributions with each other.

The basic strategy for management to counteract free-riding is to broaden the individual's concept of self-interest and arrange matters so that an individual's personal goals are attained by the achievement of the group's collective goal (Albanese and Van Fleet, 1985).

What did he find? Choosing project team members



Wayne Neu (2015, 2012) studied how university business school undergraduates chose their project group members. In the film *The Internship* (2013) the large aggregate of Google summer interns rapidly form themselves into small groups to compete with one another. The members of the winning group will be offered permanent jobs. Neu found that students wanted to find individuals who would be willing to do their share of the group's work (no free riders); who would help the group achieve a high project grade; and who would not cause them anxiety, uncertainty, anger or stress. Essentially, they wanted a person whom they could trust, and that trustworthiness was primary signalled to them by a person's reliability, communicativeness, cooperativeness and flexibility. Their personality was also held to be important, and four of the 'Big Five' traits – conscientiousness, agreeableness, extroversion and openness (see Chapter 6) – were sought.



Wayne Neu

However, a person's attributes such as their personality or trustworthiness can only be deduced indirectly. So how did students decide whom to invite to join their project group? The answer is that in the group member selection process, students use external, directly observable, physical and behavioural cues. What did Neu find to be the most important physical and behavioural characteristics that students looked for when choosing their fellow project members? (Answers in chapter Recap.)

Group influences on individuals' behaviour

Group norm an expected mode of behaviour or belief that is established either formally or informally by a group.

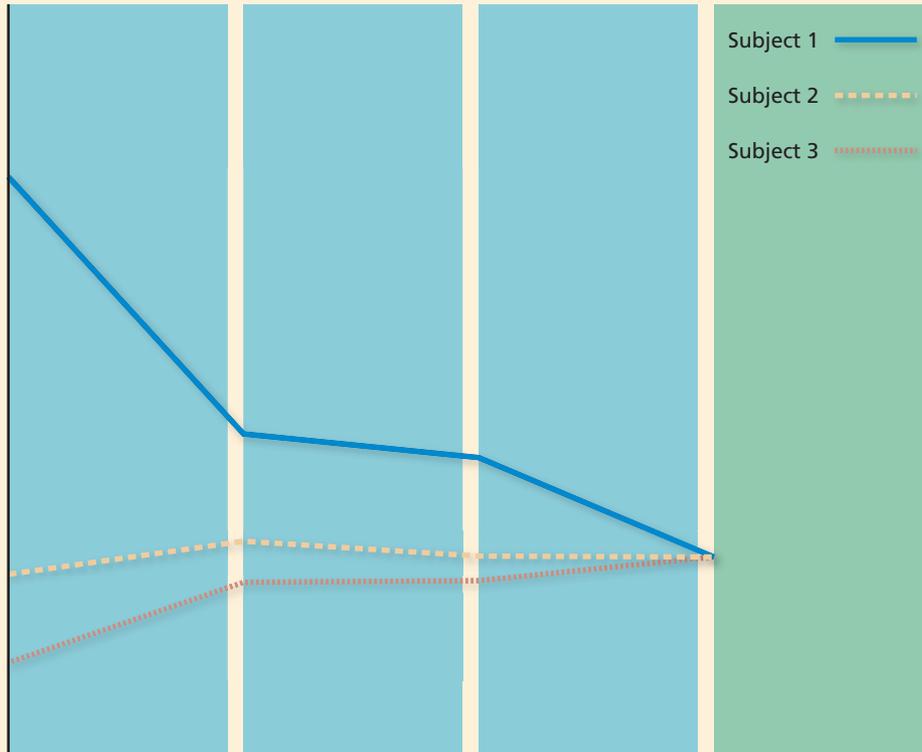
A **group norm** is an expected mode of behaviour or belief that is established either formally or informally by a group. Elton Mayo was among the first to discover the existence of group norms and their enforcement through sanctions, during the Bank Wiring Observation Room studies at the Hawthorne works. The men there restricted their output to conform to a group-agreed norm or standard. In what has now become a classic in experimental social psychology, Muzafer Sherif (1936) showed how group norms emerged.

Sherif's work showed that in a situation where doubt and uncertainty exist and where first-hand information is lacking, a person's viewpoint will shift to come into line with those of other group members. In essence this situation leads to the creation of a group norm. This occurs quickly amongst group members who have had little previous experience of the group's work. It also occurs amongst those who have had experience, although more slowly. Few of the subjects who took part in Sherif's experiments felt conscious that others had influenced their judgements. Sherif's work suggested that in order to organize and manage itself every group developed a system of norms. Norms are behavioural expectations and they serve to define the nature of the group. They express the values of the members of the group and provide guidelines to help the group achieve its goals. A group may develop its norms both consciously and unconsciously.

Sherif's study of the emergence of group norms

Muzafer Sherif (1936) placed a group of three subjects in a darkened room and presented them with a small spot of light on a wall for them to view. He then asked them to track the apparent movement of the spot, and to say, aloud, each in turn, the direction in which they thought that the light was moving. The apparent movement is an optical illusion known as the 'autokinetic effect'. The light does not move. Sherif's subjects made three series of 100 estimates on successive days. Initially, there

were quite wide individual differences in the response to this situation. Some subjects saw little movement while others saw a lot. However, Sherif discovered that they started to agree on the amount of apparent movement quite quickly. Having exchanged information on their judgements their behaviour changed. They began seeing the light moving in the same direction as those who had spoken earlier.



Gradually, all the members came to see the light as moving in the same direction at the same time. There was of course no 'real' movement of the light. Each individual began to see the light in the same way as the group saw it. The results Sherif obtained with two-person and three-person groups are shown in the dia-

gram. When a group norm emerged it was found that it became the basis for subsequent judgement when subjects were re-tested independently. The group norm therefore became a relatively permanent frame of reference for individual behaviour.



YouTube for *Sherif conformity experiment*.

Pivotal norms socially defined standards relating to behaviour and beliefs that are central to a group's objective and survival.

Peripheral norms socially defined standards relating to behaviour and beliefs that are important but not crucial to a group's objective and survival.

Norms guide behaviour and facilitate interaction by specifying the kinds of reactions expected or acceptable in a particular situation. Not all group norms have equal importance. **Pivotal norms** guide behaviour which is central to the group, for example, the level of output or the amount of work preparation done. In contrast, **peripheral norms** guide behaviour that is important but not essential, for example, choice of clothing or break-time activities. Group members who violate pivotal norms can impede group objectives or endanger its survival. Therefore, the consequences for transgressing pivotal norms are severe. In contrast, violation of peripheral norms, although frowned upon, has fewer negative consequences for the offender.

Norms and sanctions in gourmet cuisines



Giada Di Stefano

Giada Di Stefano and her colleagues explained (2015) that norm violators had to be punished if norm-governed social exchanges between individuals were to succeed. The problem is deciding when to sanction norm transgressors. To maintain their creativity within the gourmet cuisine industry, chefs exchange their knowledge in

the form of recipes of signature dishes and cooking techniques. However, if their inventive ideas are misappropriated, misused or distributed further by others, then chefs have no incentive to share them. There is no legal system of intellectual property rights covering culinary knowledge.

Norms: Gourmet cuisine industry norms regulate when and how chefs use transferred knowledge. They provide the 'mental copyrights' that encourage innovation and exchange:

- Norm 1: Colleagues will not copy exactly the recipe or the cooking technique but instead will use it as source of inspiration to develop something new.
- Norm 2: Colleagues will cite the source of the inspiration for the adapted recipe by including the original chef's name in its menu entry.
- Norm 3: Colleagues will not pass on information to a third party without previously asking for permission from the original chef.

Sanctions: When norm violations occur, three types of sanctions are commonly used:

- Sanction 1: Refusing further knowledge transfers.
- Sanction 2: Cutting off material exchanges with the transgressor such as withholding help with missing ingredients or personnel.
- Sanction 3: Sharing negative gossip about the transgressor with colleagues in the industry.

When to sanction?: The researchers' main finding was that while on the one hand chefs felt inclined to sanction significant norm violations, before acting, they considered how other community members would interpret their actions. They needed to be sure that their community members would see the transgression the way that they did; would consider their chosen sanction to be legitimate; and would see the action as a reasonable way of maintaining a valuable norm and restoring social order. What they wanted to avoid at all costs was having their sanction misinterpreted by their community and being considered to be norm violators themselves.



**STOP AND SEARCH**

YouTube for *Giada di Stefano @HECParis: Why do we sanction norm violations? (4:54).*

Home viewing



The film *Mean Girls* (2004, director Mark Waters) is a teen comedy which examines American high school social cliques and the damaging effects that they can have on girls. Cady Heron (played by Lindsay Lohan) is a 16-year-old, home-schooled student whose zoologist parents return to the USA after a 12-year research trip to Africa. Cady attends public school for the first time and is warned to avoid the school's most exclusive clique – the Plastics – led by Regina George (Rachel McAdams). Which types of power does Regina exert over her group's members? What does Cady learn about the group norms? How does group pressure ensure that members do not transgress these norms?

Why do group norms develop? David Feldman (1984) argued that their purpose was to:

- *Facilitate group task achievement or group survival:* Groups develop norms to increase their chances of being successful and to protect themselves from outsiders.
- *Increase the predictability of group members' behaviours:* Predictability means that internally, members can anticipate and prepare for the actions of colleagues, thereby smoothing social interaction. Externally, it allows them to relate appropriately to outsiders.
- *Reduce embarrassing interpersonal problems for group members:* Knowing what to do and say in a group (and what not to) increases an individual member's comfort.
- *Express the group's core values and define their distinctiveness:* Norms allow members to gain a sense of the essence of the group.

How do group norms develop? Feldman (1984) reported that they did so in four ways:

- *Initial pattern of behaviour:* The first behaviour pattern that emerges in a group can establish group expectations. For example, if the first speaker shares his feelings and anxieties with the other group members, the discussion of emotions in a group can become a norm.
- *Explicit statement by a supervisor or co-worker:* This person may explicitly state certain expectations. The project leader may tell the newcomer that the group meetings start promptly on the hour when all members are expected to be present.
- *Critical events in the group's history:* A shop floor employee makes a suggestion for an improvement to his supervisor who criticises and ridicules him. Group members ensure that in the future none of them offer any more suggestions.
- *Transfer behaviours from past situations:* When individuals carry over behaviours from past situations they can increase the predictability of group members' behaviours in new settings. For example, instructors and students transfer constant expectations from class to class.

Research has shown that the things that happen the first time that a new group meets strongly affect how that group will operate throughout its entire future life (Coutu, 2009). The first few minutes at the start of the first group meeting are crucial as they establish not only where the group is going, but also what the relationship will be between the group's leader and its members, and what basic norms will be established and enforced. A distinguished orchestra conductor reported that he pays the greatest attention to the first few minutes of his first rehearsal with any new orchestra as, in his view its members will very quickly make an assessment about whether or not he and they are going to make great music together.

Group sanction a punishment or a reward given by members to others in the group in the process of enforcing group norms.

Figure 12.6 shows the process of the formation and operation of group norms. It appears that once established, group norms are difficult to change. Since the group members originally created the norms, it is they who consequently change them. Members will tend to resist any attempts by managers or any other outsiders to modify their group's norms. Some examples of norms and the reasons for their enforcement are shown in Table 12.2. To enforce its norms, a group develops a set of sanctions with which to police them. The term **group sanction** refers to both the punishments and rewards that are given by a group to its members in the process of enforcing group norms. Punishment is a negative sanction and a reward is a positive sanction. Some of these norms relate to how members should behave towards one another in the group to avoid incivility.

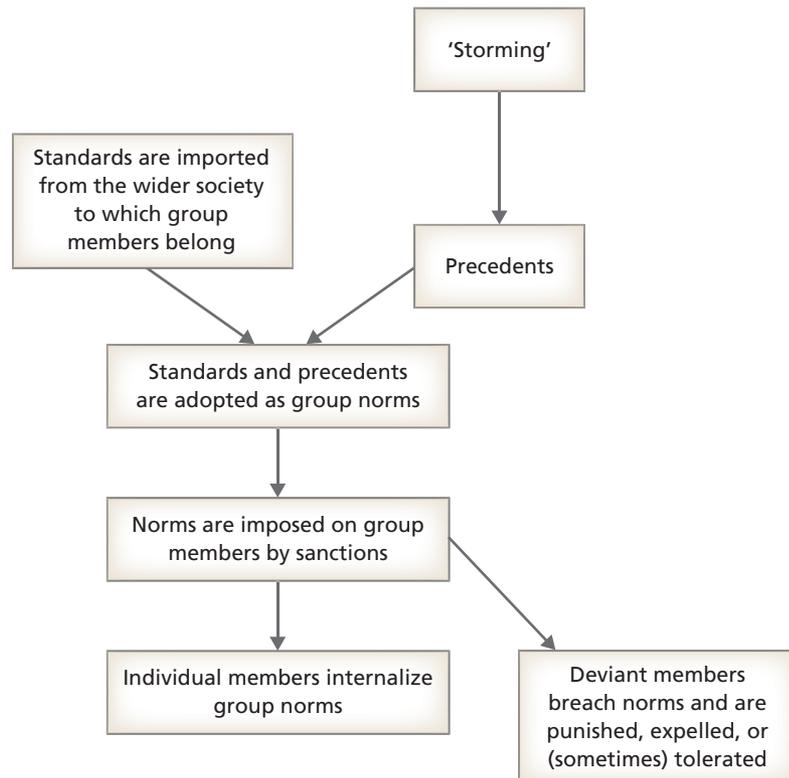


Figure 12.6: The formation and operation of group norms.

Source: Guirdham (2002, p. 465).

Table 12.2: Norms and sanctions

Norm	Enforcement reason	Examples of sanctions to enforce the norm
Members attend all group meetings regularly and arrive on time.	Group survival	Absentees or latecomers are first teased or ridiculed, and then criticized.
All members are required to prepare written work before the group meetings to avoid delay at meeting.	Group task achievement	Group members compliment individuals whose preparation has been particularly thorough.
Members listen to each other's ideas without interrupting, allowing them to fully present their thoughts and opinions	Clarification of behavioural expectations	A member who interrupts is taken aside after the meeting and asked, in future, to let the person finish speaking.
Members do not discuss their private lives with colleagues at work	Avoidance of embarrassment	Members who insist on discussing such matters are ostracized until they stop doing so.

CUTTING EDGE How uncivil is your team?



Deanna Paulin

Deanna Paulin and Barbara Griffin (2017) studied incivility in the workplace which they defined as rude or disrespectful behaviour that violates workplace norms for mutual respect. In addition to the business costs, workplace incivility has been shown to have detrimental effects on a range of individual outcomes including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and work behaviours. They focused on incivility at the group level arguing that work groups and organizations differ in the extent to which their environments promote or inhibit incivility between colleagues.

Their research examined the concept of an 'incivility climate' and they developed a questionnaire – the *Team Incivility Climate Scale (TICS)* – which could be used to investigate how incivility permeated work teams. They argue that team members are influenced by ambient stimuli that saturate the work setting and potentially affect everyone present through team composition, shared norms and workplace climate. Acts of incivility between team members would be an example of ambient stimuli. Assess your own group or team in terms of its level of incivility by completing the questionnaire below and comparing it with that of a colleague.



Barbara Griffin

The Team Incivility Climate Scale (TICS)

Think about your experience of working in a team. Rate it on a five- point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* and 5 = *strongly agree*) on the dimensions below. Rate 1–5

1. My team treats one another with respect
2. People within my team shame and humiliate each other
3. General bad manners (e.g. interrupting, being late to meetings) is tolerated within my team
4. It is common for members of my team to put each other down
5. People within my team get away with being rude and disrespectful to others
6. My team members never verbally abuse one another
7. My team rarely shows anger or hostility to one another
8. There are clear policies and procedures that prohibit uncivil behaviour in this team
9. Respecting people's privacy is a strong part of my team's culture
10. There is a climate of professionalism within my team
11. The atmosphere within my team is one of consideration and courtesy
12. There is a spirit of inclusion within my team
13. On the whole, team members listen respectfully to each other's ideas
14. Invading people's personal space is the norm within my team
15. Gossiping behind people's backs is rife within my team

TOTAL

Source: Paulin and Griffin (2017, p.325).

In their study of 1,100 respondents and 50 work teams, individuals were asked to decide the extent to which incivility was encouraged in team practices, procedures, and norms (not the frequency with which uncivil incidents occurred in the group). The results showed that a team incivility climate was negatively related to job satisfaction and positively related to intention to leave. These findings indicate that employees are affected not only by their direct personal experiences of incivility, but also by the team environment and climate to which they are exposed. The research confirms that workplace incivility is a team or organizational problem, and not just the result of individual experiences. The TICS gives both team members and managers the ability to diagnose and monitor uncivil team climates.

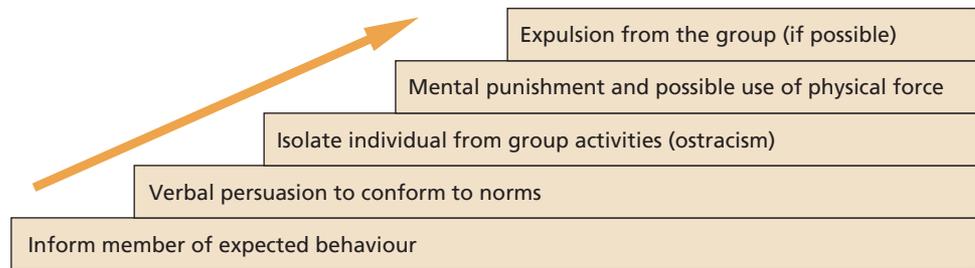


Figure 12.7: Escalating group pressure to secure individual conformity to group norms



The earliest research examples of negative sanctions exercised in groups were revealed by the Bank Wiring Observation Room phase of the Hawthorne studies. The researchers discovered that persons who broke the group norm, for example, producing either over or under the group norm were 'binged'. This involved a group member flicking the ear of the norm transgressor or tapping him painfully on the upper part of their arm. Both actions were intended to indicate physically to the man, that his behaviour was unacceptable to the other group members. Other negative sanctions can be used by the group, and can be placed in ascending order of severity as shown in Figure 12.7. If negative sanctions represent the

'stick' to enforce group norm compliance, then the positive sanctions represent the 'carrot'. Such carrots for the conforming individual include accolades from other members, emotional support, increased social status and the acceptance of their ideas by others (Doms and van Avermaet, 1981).

Isolating an individual from the group is labelled **ostracism**. It is defined as an individual or a group failing to take actions that engages another organization member when it would be customary or appropriate to do so (Robinson et al., 2013). Ostracism in the workplace can take many forms including having one's greetings ignored, being excluded from invitations, or others 'going silent' when the person tries to join their conversation. It involves the absence of wanted behaviour or directing non-behaviour towards the person ostracized.

Jane O'Reilly and her colleagues (2015) studied employees' perceptions of and reactions to workplace ostracism. They confirmed previous studies that it was an extremely painful and unpleasant experience. Those targeted experienced hurt feelings, sadness, anxiety, loneliness and shame. The research found that ostracism was strongly related to negative outcomes such as greater health problems, lower job satisfaction, and higher psychological withdrawal. Those who were ostracized at work were more likely to leave their organization. Because it possesses such a strong threat to an individual's need to belong at work, ostracism is a powerful tool that a group can use to secure members' conformity to its norms (De Jong et al., 2014).

Conformity is defined as a change in an individual's belief or behaviour in response to real or imagined group pressure. Conformity to norms tends to increase under certain conditions. An increase in conformity is associated with a decrease in the size of the group and also with an increase in its homogeneity, visibility and experienced stability. Members who perceive themselves to be of low status in the group will tend to conform more, and feel that they have to 'earn' the right to be deviant. High conformers are also those who feel that they are not fully accepted by the others. Diagnosing a team's norms and its members' conformity to them can help to explain group behaviour. Conformity can be contrasted with **obedience**, a situation in which individuals change their behaviour in response to a direction from others.

If you want to deviate from a group norm you have several options. You can attempt to persuade others to your viewpoint and thus alter the group norm. Of course, the other members may respond by persuading you to conform to the existing norm. The higher your status, the more power you will have in the group and the more you will be able to change the behaviours and beliefs of the other members (and the less likely they will be to change your own). What other options are there? If the group is of little importance to you, and if you are free to leave the group, you will do so. Conversely, if you are of little importance to the

Ostracism an individual or a group failing to take actions that engage another organization member when it would be customary or appropriate to do so.

Conformity a change in an individual's belief or behaviour in response to real or imagined group pressure.

Obedience a situation in which an individual changes their behaviour in response to a direct command from another.

group, you may be forced either to conform to its norms or else be rejected by its members. If, however, your presence is important to your group (e.g. because you possess high status, power, popularity or special skills), then the group may tolerate your deviant behaviour and beliefs in order to avoid the threat of losing you as a valued member.

Group pressure and hand washing

Susanna Gallani (2017) studied the effect of peer pressure in a Californian hospital that was seeking to encourage improved hand hygiene among staff. The hospital offered a one-off cash bonus to staff if they improved their hand-washing. However, to obtain the bonus, everyone including doctors, who were not eligible for the bonus, had to improve. To encourage the doctors, the other staff members offered public applause to those doctors with good hand-

hygiene habits. They openly posted their names on hand-shaped stickers and occasionally sent them congratulatory emails that the chief nursing officer called 'love notes'. Those doctors who were lax in their hand-washing received gentle private reprimands with messages such as 'We will be watching'. While providing positive feedback is cheaper and often more effective than a financial bonus, managers should also harness peer pressure as well as the desire for monetary gain.

In the film comedy *Galaxy Quest* (1999), five unemployed actors whose sci-fi TV series has been discontinued earn a living through public appearances at fan conventions, shopping mall dedications and supermarket openings. One member of the group, Jason Nesmith (played by Tim Allen) is regularly late at these events. He was the fictional captain of the Starship Protector in the TV show, and is the character most loved by the fans. Because of his popularity and fan appeal, the other group members are forced to tolerate his continued late coming. Hence, the power that a group has to influence its members towards conformity to its norms depends on four main factors:

- How important a member's presence is to the group
- The positive and negative sanctions (rewards and punishments) that the group has at its disposal
- That member's desire to avoid negative sanctions such as social and physical punishments or expulsion from the group
- The degree of attraction that the group has for an individual member and the attraction that group members have for each other. This is called group cohesion.

Group cohesion the number and strength of mutual positive attitudes between individual group members.

Group cohesion refers to the number and strength of mutual positive attitudes towards group members. Table 12.3 shows the contributors to and consequences of group cohesion (Pearce et al., 2002). The widely cited research conclusion is that cohesion has a moderating, positive relationship on group performance (Greer, 2012; Gully et al., 1995).

Table 12.3: Group cohesion – contributors and consequences

Contributors to group cohesion	Consequences of group cohesion
Small size	Group success
Past success	Member satisfaction
External threat	Higher group productivity
Common goals	Increased member satisfaction
Difficulty of entry	Greater conformity by members
Stable membership	Increased interaction between members
Opportunity to interact with others	Member's evaluations become distorted
Attractiveness of group to individuals	Increased group influence over members
Fairness of rewards between members	More cooperative behaviour between individuals
Members' agreement about their statuses	

CRITICAL THINKING

Consider a group of which you are a member and its norms and sanctions. Reflect on a situation in which a member (perhaps yourself) broke a norm and received a negative sanction. Assess the positive and negative outcomes of this occurrence for the individual group member concerned and for the group as a whole.

Group socialization

the process whereby members learn the values, symbols and expected behaviours of the group to which they belong.

Having established a set of norms and the sanctions to enforce them, a group has to communicate these to new members. The new group member 'learns the ropes' and is shown how to get things done, how to interact with others, and how to achieve high social status within the group. An important aspect of achieving such status is to adhere to the group's norms or rules. Initial transgressions will be pointed out to the new member gently. However, the continued violation of norms by a group member puts at risk the cohesion of the group. When there is disagreement on a matter of importance to the group, the preservation of group effectiveness, harmony and cohesion requires a resolution of the conflict. Hence pressure is exerted on the deviating individual through persuasive communication to conform. The name given to this 'educational' process which the new member undergoes is **group socialization**. It is the process whereby members learn the values, symbols and expected behaviours of the group to which they belong. It occurs within most groups in all types of organizations (Figure 12.8).

If new recruits are thoroughly socialized, they are less likely to transgress group norms and require sanctions to be administered. However, while such pressure to go along with the majority of other members may be beneficial for the group, it also carries costs. If conformity is allowed to dominate and individuals are given little opportunity to present different views, there is the danger of the group collectively making errors of judgement, leading them to take unwise decisions. **Chapter 20** will consider the concept of groupthink which, through internal conformity and external group pressure, leads individual members to collectively make poor group decisions.

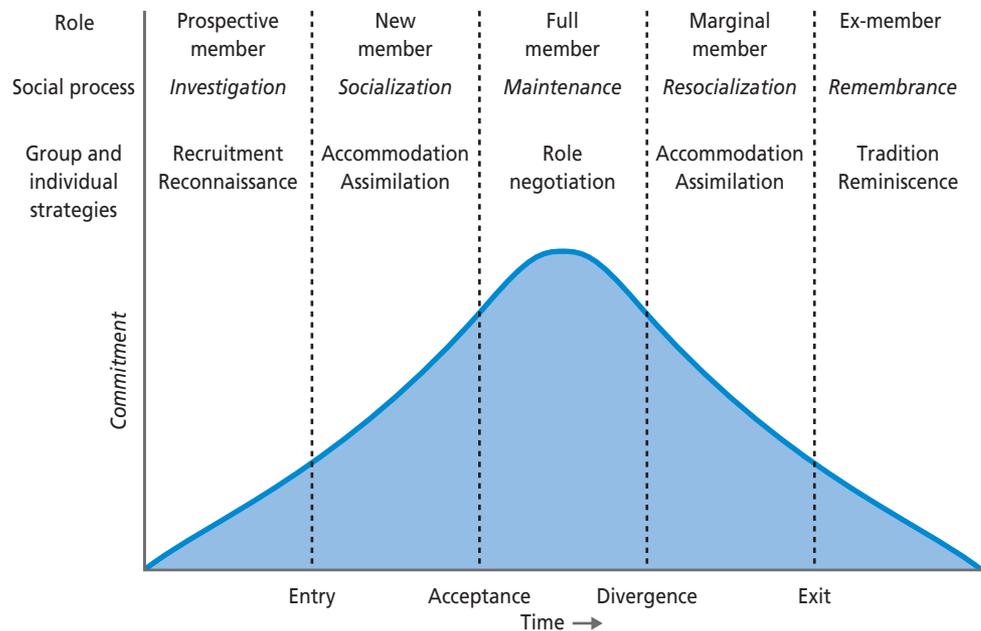


Figure 12.8: A model of the process of group socialization

Source: adapted from *Advances in Experimental and Social Psychology*, Volume 15, L. Berkowicz, (ed.), Socialization in small groups: temporal changes in individual-group relations by Moreland, R.L. and Levine, J.M., pp.137–92. © 1982, Academic Press, with permission from Elsevier.

Home viewing



Ratatouille (2007, director Brad Bird) is an animated film about Remy, a young rat, who wants to become a chef. It includes a short sequence which opens with a young man, Alfredo Linguini, cutting vegetables and Colette Tatou the restaurant's only female chef, immediately corrects his technique. She tells him 'keep your station clear'. It ends with the characters thanking each other for giving and receiving advice. This sequence illustrates a range of concepts in the accommodation stage of socialization. Can you identify what these concepts are? (Champoux, 2012)

Organizational socialization is the process through which an employee's pattern of behaviour, values, attitudes and motives is influenced to conform to that of the organization.

It is important to remember that while a work group will be attempting to get its new member to adopt its own values, symbols and expected behaviours, the organization which recruited the person will be endeavouring to do the same (see Table 12.4).

Some companies such as Disney, are famous for investing much time, money and effort into getting their new employees to adopt the 'company way' of doing things. This equivalent process is called **organizational socialization** (see Chapter 4). If the picture of company life that the newcomer is presented with by their organization is congruent with the picture held by the person's workgroup, then they will accept it. If it is not, the newcomer is more likely to adopt the picture held by their own work group as these are the people with whom he or she will spend most of their working time.



STOP AND SEARCH

YouTube for *group socialization*.

Table 12.4: Comparison of group development and organizational socialization stages

	Group development	Organizational socialization
Stage 1: Orientation	1. Forming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish interpersonal relationships • Conform to organizational traditions and standards • Boundary testing in relationships and task behaviours 	1. Getting in (anticipatory socialization) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Setting of realistic expectations • Determining match with the newcomer
Stage 2: Redefinition	2. Storming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict arising because of interpersonal behaviours • Resistance to group influence and task requirements 	2. Breaking in <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Initiation to the job • Establishing interpersonal relationships • Congruence between self and organizational performance appraisal
Stage 3: Coordination	3. Norming <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single leader emerges • Group cohesion established • New group standards and roles formed for members 	3. Settling in (role management) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The degree of fit between one's life interests outside work and the demands of the organization • Resolution of conflicts at the workplace itself
Stage 4: Formalization	4. Performing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Members perform tasks together • Establishing role clarity • Teamwork is the norm 	

Source: Gordon (1993, p.184).

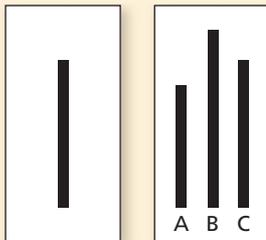
Why do members conform to group pressure? Group norms increase the predictability of the behaviour of others and reduce the chances of individuals embarrassing each other when interacting, for example, during group discussions. Complying with group norms may be of such personal benefit to us that we are willing to abide by them. In so doing, we suppress our own personal desires and reduce our individual freedoms. Moreover, we also punish those who violate the group's norms and reward those who do not. Additionally, individuals have a desire for order and meaning in their lives. They view uncertainty as disturbing and as something that should be reduced to the absolute minimum. Norms, and the adherence to norms, help us 'make sense' of seemingly unconnected facts and events; provide us with explanations of 'what's going on'; and allow us to feel in control of the situations in which we find ourselves. The earliest experimental studies into conformity to group norms were carried out by Solomon Asch (1951, 1952, 1956).

Asch's study of conformity

In the early 1950s Solomon Asch (1951) devised a laboratory experiment into individual conformity within groups. Seven men sat around a table supposedly to participate in a study on visual perception. Only one of the group was a real subject. The other six were Asch's paid accomplices. The task was an easy one. They had to decide which of the three lines shown below on the right, A, B or C, was equal to the one on the left.

In the experimental conditions, the accomplices had been instructed to lie about which line was correct. Under pressure, the real subjects showed signs of conflict when deciding whether to conform to the group's judgement or give the response that he or she considered to be correct. The results below show how much individuals in groups can be pressured to conform to a majority view.

The problem



The results

Members making at least one error	76%
Times average member conformed	37%
Members who never conformed	24%
Members who conformed over 10 times	11%
Members making at least one error when tested alone	5%



STOP AND SEARCH

YouTube for the *Asch conformity experiment*.

Asch found that those subjects who yielded to group pressure did so for different reasons. He distinguished three types of yielding:

Distortion of perception

These subjects seem to have convinced themselves that they actually did see the lines the way the other group members stated their judgements. Yielding at the perceptual level was rare and occurred primarily among those who displayed a lack of trust in themselves. They were unaware that their estimates had been displaced or distorted by the majority.

Distortion of judgement

These subjects yielded either because they were unsure that they understood the task set for them or because they did not want to 'spoil the experiment'. They suffered from primary doubt and lack of confidence. The most important factor was their judgement that their own perceptions had been inaccurate and that those of the majority were correct. Distortion of judgement occurred frequently.

Distortion of action

The subjects did not suffer a modification of perception, nor did they conclude that they were wrong. They yielded because they feared being excluded, ostracized or considered eccentric. These subjects suppressed their observations and voiced the majority position with a full awareness of what they were doing.



Asch's experiment was replicated more than 30 years later, this time with five individuals using PCs who were told that they had been linked together (Doms and Avermaet, 1981). Whereas Asch had found that the number who refused to conform to the group in any trial was just 24 per cent, in the repeat study 69 per cent of the subjects made no errors. Maybe a computer-mediated communication environment reduces our tendency to conform to a unanimous group position.

CRITICAL THINKING

How difficult is it to resist the majority views in a group situation? Think of an occasion when you have supported a decision contrary to your own judgement but consistent with that of the majority of those around you. What factors played a part in your choosing between disagreeing and voicing your minority view or in acquiescing, remaining silent, and accepting the majority view?

Deindividuation

Deindividuation

an increased state of anonymity that loosens normal constraints on individuals' behaviour, reducing their sense of responsibility and leading to an increase in impulsive and antisocial acts.

Social facilitation explains how groups can arouse individuals and stimulate their performance, while social loafing shows that groups can diffuse and hence diminish individual responsibility. Together, arousal and diffused responsibility combine to decrease normal social inhibitions and create deindividuation. **Deindividuation** refers to a person's loss of self-awareness and self-monitoring. It involves some loss of personal identity and greater identification with the group.

The writings of Gustave Le Bon led to the theory of deindividuation which was proposed by Leon Festinger, Albert Pepitone and Theodore Newcombe (1952). However, it is Marion Hampton (1999, p. 112) who neatly captures the experience of deindividuation when she writes:

'There are moments when we can observe ourselves behaving irrationally as members of crowds or audiences, yet we are swept by the emotion, unable to check it. In smaller groups too, like committees or teams, we may experience powerful feelings of loyalty, anxiety or anger. The moods and emotions of those around us seem to have an exaggerated effect on our own moods and emotions.'

The influence of the crowd

Gustave LeBon stated that the crowd is, 'always intellectually inferior to the isolated individual . . . mob man is fickle, credulous, and intolerant showing the violence and ferocity of primitive beings'. He added, 'by the mere fact that he forms part of an organized crowd, a man descends several rungs in the ladder of civilization. Isolated he may be a cultivated individual, in a crowd he is a barbarian – that is a creature acting by instinct' (LeBon, 1908, p.12).



In his book, *The Crowd*, LeBon hypothesized that humans had a two-part personality. The upper half was conscious, unique to each individual and contained dignity and virtue. The lower half, in contrast was unconscious, shared with everyone else, and contained bad desires and instincts. Observers have noted that as long as individuals are physically together as part of a collectivity they feel strong and invulnerable. Separate seating in football stadia and postal strike voting by union members have reduced football crowd hooliganism and unofficial strikes. LeBon attributed this primitive human behaviour to three things:

- | | |
|-----------------------|--|
| Anonymity | Individuals cannot be easily identified in a crowd. |
| Contagion | Ideas and emotions spread rapidly and unpredictably. |
| Suggestability | The savagery that is just below the surface is released by suggestion. |

Edward Diener (1980) considered self-awareness (i.e. awareness of oneself as an object of attention) to be the crucial element in the deindividuation process. The environmental conditions which reduce self-awareness and thereby trigger deindividuation, as well as the consequences of deindividuation, are summarized in Figure 12.9.

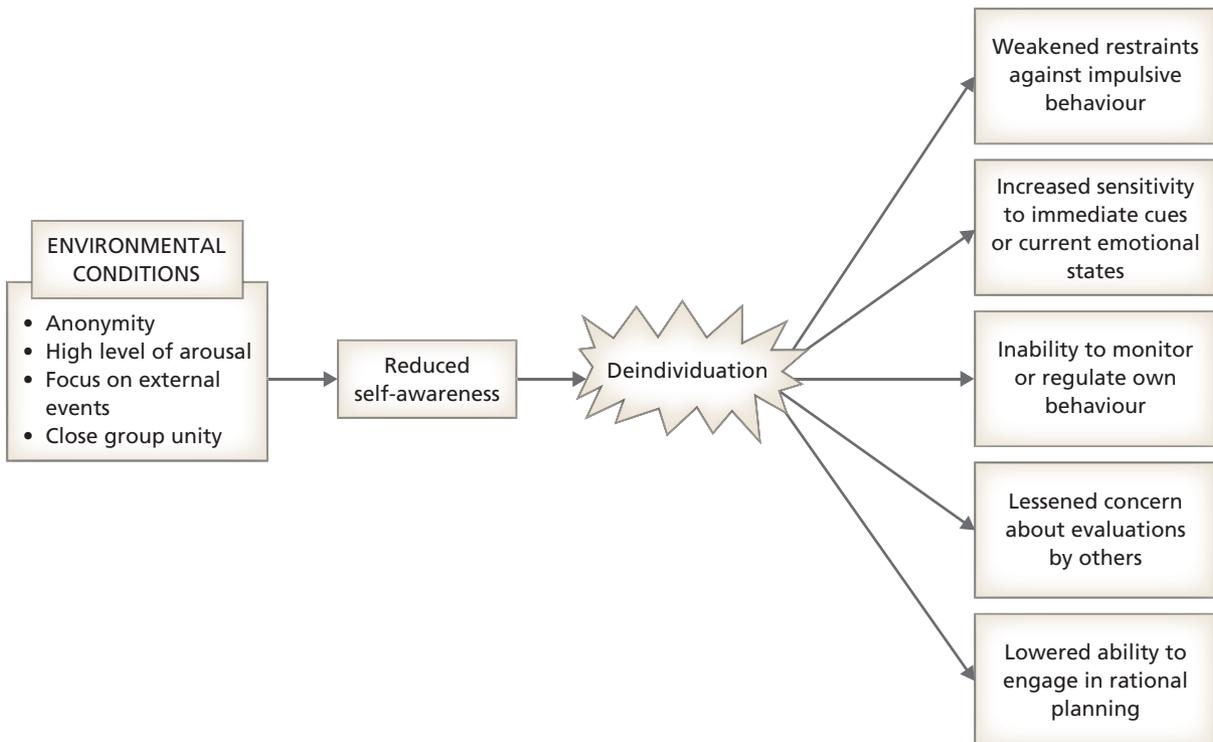


Figure 12.9: Self-awareness and deindividuation

Source: reproduced with permission from Hogg & Vaughan, *Social Psychology* © 2011 Pearson Australia, p.424.

Anonymity within a crowd or large group lessens inhibitions. Warriors in a tribe paint their faces and wear masks. When attention is drawn away from the individual in a crowd or group situation, their anonymity is increased and they are more likely to abandon their normal restraints and to lose their sense of individual responsibility (e.g. internet trolling). This can lead to antisocial behaviour such as attacking a policeman during protest demonstrations. In military organizations, members have always worn uniforms and companies now provide their staff with corporate clothing. While this may get them to identify more closely with their organizations, it can also increase their anonymity.

A great number of different factors influence conformity to norms (see Figure 12.10). The personality characteristics of individuals play a part in predisposing them to conform to group norms. The kind of stimuli eliciting conformity behaviour is also important. That people conform to norms when they are uncertain about a situation was demonstrated by the Sherif experiments. He also discovered that a person with a high degree of self-confidence could affect the opinions and estimates of other group members. Asch found that if even only one confederate in his experiment broke the unanimity with his dissenting voice, then the dramatic effects of conformity were erased, and the experimental subject felt free to give the correct answer that seemed obvious all along. Upbringing (including formal education) also plays an important part. Bond and Smith's (1996) analysis showed a steady decline in conformity since the original Asch studies. Collectivist culture countries show higher levels of conformity than individualist culture countries (see Chapter 4).

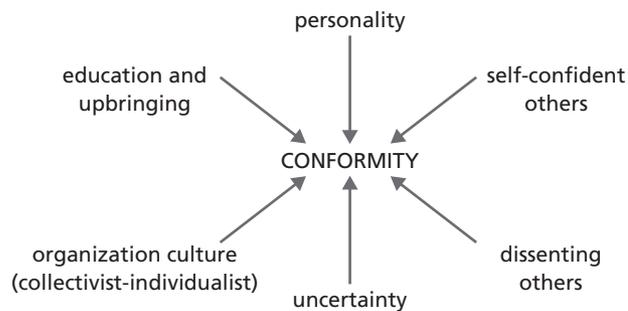


Figure 12.10: Factors influencing conformity to group norms

CRITICAL THINKING

Is conformity by the individual to their group within an organization a bad thing that should be stopped or is it a good thing that should be encouraged? Give your reasons for both positions.

Individual influences on group attitudes and behaviour

So far, the focus has been on the group influencing its members' perceptions, performance and behaviour. Does this mean that an individual can never influence their group? Clearly not, since history recounts numerous instances of individuals – revolutionaries, rebels, radical thinkers, religious zealots – who created minority groupings and who, as minorities, successfully persuaded majorities. Indeed, leadership can be considered an example of minority influence. The underpinning to the process of a minority's influence on a majority

Compliance a majority's influence over a minority.

Conversion a minority's influence over a majority.

is provided by Serge Moscovici's (1980) social influence theory. He used the term **compliance** to describe what happens when a majority influences a minority. It does this through its possession of various kinds of power and its ability to implement positive and negative sanctions. He applied the term **conversion** to describe a minority's persuasion of a majority. The concept of conversion is illustrated every time an employee persuades their company to adopt a new product or create a new division.

In their review of 143 studies of minority influence, Wood et al. (1994) found that minorities had the ability to change the opinions of those who listened to them, especially if the listeners were not required to publicly acknowledge such a change. Moscovici (1980) stressed the importance of consistency in the conversion process. The individual persuading the group had to stick unwaveringly to his or her point of view. Moscovici's research provides us with an understanding of how a minority can influence a majority (Nemeth, 1986). These different writings have been summarized by Huczynski (2004) who listed what the minority influencer of a majority has to do:

Become viable	Take a position that others are aware of, make yourself heard, get yourself noticed, and generally overcome the illusion of unanimity.
Create tension	Motivate those in the majority to try to deal with your ideas.
Be consistent	Stick unwaveringly to the same position. Do not take a variety of positions that disagree with the majority.
Be persistent	Restate your consistent position in the face of others' opposition to you.
Be unyielding	Being firm and unyielding involves digging your heels in and not compromising.
Be self-confident	This is conveyed by one's consistency and persistence. It raises self-doubts among the majority leading them to reconsider their position.
Seek defectors	Defections from the majority increase the self-doubt of the remaining majority and free its doubters who may have self-censored themselves to speak out, perhaps encouraging more converts.

In the classic film, *Twelve Angry Men* (1957), a jury retires to decide on the guilt or innocence of a youth from a slum background. At the outset, eleven of the twelve jurors are keen to find him guilty without further discussion. In the film, Juror 8 (played by Henry Fonda) says:

'There were eleven votes for guilty. It's not so easy for me to raise my hand and send a boy off to die without talking about it first.'

The Henry Fonda character has reservations. He successfully persuades the other eleven jurors to acquit the young defendant. As the sole juror, he has the integrity, sense of justice, persistence and courage to go against the crowd and fight for a fair deliberation. He also uses all the above techniques to achieve his objective. This is an example of conversion. Emich and Wright (2016) discuss the film and provide other examples of where a single individual influences a group. They note that the attitudes and views of one (or more) team members can spill over onto the others. The practical implication of this they say is that before adding anyone to a team, managers should consider how a new person might influence the team processes that have already been established, and whether their strength of character and strong convictions are likely to affect other group members.



STOP AND SEARCH

YouTube for *12 Angry Men*.

Team building

Team building a set of techniques used to help team members to understand their own roles more clearly and improve their interaction and collaboration with other members.

Companies may experience a situation in which an inappropriate teamworking atmosphere has developed and in which there is a need to align individual members around organizational goals, build effective working relationships, reduce members' role ambiguity and find solutions to team problems.

In such circumstances, companies utilize **team building**. This refers to a set of techniques used to help team members to understand their own roles more clearly and improve their interaction and collaboration with other members.

Team building is popular with companies. Team activities are designed to integrate individuals better into their groups to achieve improved person–group fit. They seek to create bonds between their members to increase collaboration between them in order to make the team more cohesive. There are many different approaches to team building. The main ones include:

Goal setting

This approach involves team members identifying individual and team goals and defining measures of success and failure. It can bring into the open individual members' personal priorities and negotiate these so that in achieving their own goals they also achieve team objectives. The purpose of this activity is to foster a sense of team goal ownership and individual motivation.

Effectiveness rating

Building on the previous activity, members rate their team on criteria such as of goal clarity, willingness to share ideas, time management, focus on achieving results, willingness to listen to others, and ability to allow all team members to contribute. Individual ratings are scored and the combined ratings are used to identify and address differences in perceptions so as to highlight problems affecting the team. This triggers discussion of how these can be overcome so as to improve team functioning.

Role clarification

Using a team role assessment questionnaire, members can identify their personal team role preferences. (e.g. Plant, Co-ordinator, Shaper). Having done so, they determine which roles are present and which are absent and how to compensate for any imbalance. Members may be invited to 'hold back' on a preferred role if it is over-represented in the group or 'cover' for roles that are not among their strong preferences but which are missing from the group's overall profile.

Interpersonal relations

These techniques seek to develop members' teamworking skills such as giving and receiving feedback providing mutual support and information sharing. They may involve outdoor training where participants engage in a series of challenges involving rock climbing, sailing, orienteering or mountain walking (preferably in appalling weather) to heighten the sense of challenge. All the activities are designed to require teamwork and to encourage the development of interpersonal trust, group decision making, communication skills and an awareness of leadership roles. In the film, *The Promotion* (2008), there is a sequence which illustrates such an activity.



STOP AND SEARCH

YouTube for *team building*.

Team building through eating together

(photo credit: @jessewinter)



Kevin Kniffin

Kevin Kniffin and his colleagues (2015) investigated a cheap and simple method of team building – having members prepare and eat their food together. They labelled it *commensality*. Historically, many companies have arranged seating in their staff cafeterias to encourage serendipitous encounters (or ‘collisions’) between employees from different parts of the building so as to spark creativity. In contrast, commensality concerns intact working team members not only eating food together but also preparing and sharing it. This unconventional team-building approach is based on the observation that eating is a primal and meaningful human behaviour. Eating a meal involves a special intimacy between those participating in it. The authors stud-

ied 13 fire stations in a medium-sized American city and interviewed 395 fire-fighters who prepared and ate their meals during shifts. The fire stations had their own cooking and dining facilities but employees brought in their own food. They pooled their funds, worked out cooking schedules and menus, and prepared the food themselves.

The interviewees reported that eating together was an important element in keeping their fire teams working effectively. It made them feel like a family and created a common bond between them when they were not out on a job. In addition to eating, meal practices involved collecting money, planning, talking and cleaning, all of which were found to encourage cooperation and enhance team performance. The authors noted that such behaviours which, superficially appeared to be superfluous or wasteful, were in practice important for team performance.

While this research may suggest replacing the trust fall at the team awayday with a team meal, Kniffin warns about the dangers of this specific technique and about building cohesive teams in general. These include insularity – team members only socializing with each other and thus risking becoming disconnected from other groups and from the rest of the organization. Tightly bonded teams can be scary things to join and new members may feel pressured to conform to their norms. Teams may use cliquish meal practices and can ostracize or ‘manage out’ non-performers. Devoting resources to encourage communal eating in a company can be an effective team building investment but needs to be carefully managed.



STOP AND SEARCH

for *Mass appeal cooking with the West Springfield firefighters!* (4:19).

RECAP

- 1. Explain the basic tenets of social identity theory and social representation theory.**
 - Social identity theory holds that aspects of our identity derive from the membership of a group.
 - Groups construct social representations consisting of beliefs, ideas and values which they transmit to their new members
 - Such representations, together with group socialization, lead to all members sharing a common frame of reference.
- 2. Distinguish between social facilitation and social loafing.**
 - Individual behaviour is variously modified by the presence of others or by being a part of a group.
 - The concepts of social influence, social facilitation, synergy and social loafing distinguish the direction and nature of such modifications.
- 3. Understand how groups use norms to regulate the behaviour of their members.**
 - Social norms guide the behaviour of individuals in a group. They can be pivotal or peripheral.



- Social norms are established in four ways – explicit statements, critical events, initial behaviour and transfer behaviour.
 - Sanctions are administered by members to those individuals who transgress or uphold the group's norms. Sanctions can therefore be negative (verbal abuse) or positive (praise). Groups possess an escalating hierarchy of ever-stronger negative sanctions.
4. **Understand the process of group socialization of individuals.**
- Groups teach new members about their norms and incorporate them into their shared frame of reference through the process of group socialization.
5. **Explain why individuals conform to the dictates of their group.**
- As individuals, we tend to conform to group norms because of the benefits to us individually if others abide by the agreed rules; our desire for order and meaning in our lives; and a need to receive a satisfying response from others.
 - The cost to the person who is a member of a group is the deindividulization that membership entails. Group membership brings with it anonymity and becoming 'lost in the crowd'. This can reduce our sense of individual responsibility, lower our social constraints, and lead us to engage in impulsive, anti-social acts.
6. **Distinguish between compliance and conversion.**
- A majority's influence over an individual is called compliance.
 - A minority's influence over a majority is called conversion.

RECAP: What did he find?

Neu (2015) found that the most important cues to look for when recruiting high-performing student project group members were:

Physical cues

- *Clothing attributes*: include those wearing business school casual clothing
- *Hair attributes*: include those who are well-groomed, clean cut, and clean-shaven men
- *Tool attributes*: include those who already possess tools and supplies relevant to the team's task (writing instruments, paper, planner, textbook, laptop)
- *Body art attributes*: avoid students with piercings or tattoos
- *Physique*: avoid men who are too physically fit

Behavioural cues

- *Smiling*: avoid non-smilers
- *Class behaviours*: include those who attend lectures regularly, listen to the lecturer, take notes, use a highlighter pen, write in a planner
- *Socializers*: include those who socialize with fellow students before a class
- *Participation*: include those who ask or respond to questions and comment thoughtfully

Making inferences about fellow classmates based on which social category you place them in rather than on their individual merits is stereotyping. How many of these physical and behaviour cues would you use to help you decide whom to approach or to avoid during the selection period for a student group project?

Revision



1. Is social loafing an individual issue, varying according to an individual's personality and values, or is it an organizational issue affected by management action or non-action?
2. Select any three key terms from the list at the beginning of the chapter and illustrate them with examples taken from your home or work.
3. Critically evaluate the research on individual conformity to group pressure.
4. Suggest how an individual might go about persuading a majority.

Research assignment



Choose an organization with which you are familiar, and interview some employees who work there. Ask each interviewee how their co-workers would react if they themselves:

1. Were seen being rude or indifferent to a customer.
2. Criticized a co-worker who was not performing satisfactorily.
3. Performed their work at a level noticeably higher than that their co-workers.
4. Approached management offering a solution to a problem they had identified.
5. Expressed concern to management about the wellbeing of their fellow workers.
6. Expressed concern about the poor quality of the organization's product or service.
7. Actively developed their skill and knowledge about the organization's operations and products.

Finally, ask if there are things that any employee should do or not do, if they want to get on well with their co-workers in the organization. Use the information obtained from your interviewees to determine: (a) on which topics there appear to be group norms; (b) which norms are pivotal and which are peripheral; (c) what effects these norms have on the behaviour of the individuals, the operation of the group and the performance of the department.

Springboard

Wayne Neu (2018) 'Quantitative evidence of students' use of social networks and social categorizations when self-selecting teams', *Journal of Marketing Education*, 40(3): 161–75.

The author reports the findings of experiments in giving students complete freedom in choosing classmates for a group project assignment.

Nigel Nicholson (2003) 'How to motivate your problem people', *Harvard Business Review*, 81(1): 56–65. Provides useful advice on ways of dealing with social loafers and free riders.

Andreas Richter, Jeremy Dawson and Michael West (2011) 'The effectiveness of teams in organizations: A meta-analysis', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 22(13): 2749–69. Reviews and summarizes past research studies into whether teamworking in organizations is related to organizational effectiveness.

Cass Sunstein and Reid Hastire (2014) 'Making dumb groups smarter', *Harvard Business Review*, 92(12): 90–98. The authors consider how groups are subject to decision making errors and suggest how these might be overcome.

OB cinema



The Secret of My Success (1987, director Herbert Ross) DVD track 4: 0:17:00–0:20:00 (3 minutes).

In this film, Brantley Foster (played by Michael J. Fox) leaves his home in Kansas to make his career as an executive in New York City. However, the only job he can get is in the mailroom of the Penrose Corporation. The clip begins with the mailroom manager saying 'You can't come in here bozo, take your crap to the mail slot', and ends with Melrose saying, 'you put these things away'. On his first day, Brantley learns a great deal about the organization.

- What are the sources of his information?
- What does he learn from each source about the organization and how to behave in it?
- In your current or last job, what did you learn? How?

Chapter exercises



1: Capitals exercise

- Objectives**
1. Compare individual with group decision making.
 2. Contrast the advantages and disadvantages of group decision making.
 3. Consider the effects of conformity pressure in group activity.

- Briefing**
1. Everybody turns off and puts away all their internet-accessible electronic devices.
 2. Individually, each student writes in the name of the country's capital city in the grid, next to its name, inserting it in the 'Your answer' column.
 3. Groups of 4–5 are formed. Each group agrees on their answers, inserting them in the 'Group answer' column.
 4. The instructor reveals the names of the capitals. Students insert them in the 'Correct answer' column, and total up the number of correct individual and group answers.

Class discussion The instructor leads a discussion on the results and the dynamics of the exercise

50 Capitals

Country	Capital			Country	Capital		
	<i>Your answer</i>	<i>Group answer</i>	<i>Correct answer</i>		<i>Your answer</i>	<i>Group answer</i>	<i>Correct answer</i>
Albania				Lichtenstein			
Andorra				Lithuania			
Armenia				Luxembourg			
Austria				Macedonia			
Azerbaijan				Malta			
Belarus				Moldova			
Belgium				Monaco			
Bosnia and Herzegovina				Montenegro			
Bulgaria				Netherlands			
Croatia				Norway			
Cyprus				Poland			
Czech Republic				Portugal			
Denmark				Romania			
Eire				Russia			
Estonia				San Marino			
Finland				Serbia			
France				Slovakia			
Georgia				Slovenia			
Germany				Spain			
Greece				Sweden			
Hungary				Switzerland			

Country	Capital			Country	Capital		
	Your answer	Group answer	Correct answer		Your answer	Group answer	Correct answer
Iceland				Turkey			
Italy				Ukraine			
Kazakhstan				United Kingdom			
Latvia				Vatican City			
Total							

Source: adapted from Fender and Stickney (2017)

2: Accounting team exercise

- Objectives**
1. Understand and address social loafing in student classroom teams.
 2. Generate solutions to deal with social loafers.

- Briefing**
1. Read the case (3–5 minutes).
 2. In groups discuss the case and make a decision as to what to do about Erica and Frank.
 3. Decisions are made public, followed by a brief discussion.
 4. Class groups are asked to list five things to do to help the accounting team avoid the problem in the future.
 5. Instructor discusses options to avoid social loafing.
 6. Class groups are asked to list five things that they can do to prevent social loafing in university group projects.

Case Alan, Beth, Cathy, Dave, Erica and Frank all work as junior accountants for Price Waterhouse in Philadelphia. Each was hired about 18 months ago to the audit department and all report to Gloria, a manager. They were assigned to work as a team to audit the manufacturing plant of ABC Industries, a medium-sized company in a small town about two hours west of Philadelphia. The plan as described by Gloria was that the team would stay in the area of the plant for five days, starting on a Monday. Each person was assigned a particular part of the overall audit (e.g. Alan would review accounts payable, Beth would examine the physical inventory of raw material and finished goods, etc.) and on Thursday, the team would meet in the afternoon to finalize their report and then deliver it to Gloria when she arrived on Friday morning. Gloria would review the report and, in the afternoon, meet with the plant manager.

Alan, Beth, Cathy, Dave, and Erica drove together from Philadelphia on Sunday and checked into the hotel. Frank who was from a nearby town, wanted to stay with his parents, so he drove himself on Friday evening. On Monday morning the five people at the hotel drove together to the plant, arrived at 8:00 am, and each met a staff member from ABC Industries and began to collect information. Frank arrived at about 10 am, saying he had had trouble with his car. At 5.00 pm, Frank left, saying that his mother had dinner waiting for him. The rest of the team stayed until about 6.30 pm before returning to their hotel. On Tuesday and Wednesday, there was a similar pattern with Frank arriving somewhat later than the rest of the team and leaving at 5.00 pm.

On Monday, Erica immediately ran into problems with the accounts receivable manager who said that their computer system had been upgraded over the previous weekend and he (the manager) was having trouble accessing the accounts receivable records. Erica was supposed to compare the computer-based records to the physical bills that had been sent with the bank deposits. She worked much of the morning trying to organize the bills, but



eventually ran out of things to do. At that point, she went around to other team members to see if she could help them. When the computer problem still hadn't been resolved by the end of the day, Erica called Gloria to ask for directions. Gloria said the team should continue the audit and to report back again the next day. On Tuesday, about 1.00 pm, the accounts receivable manager told Erica that he could finally access the records. She spent the rest of the day working through her tasks, reluctantly leaving at 6.30 pm when the rest of the team wanted to get back to the hotel. Wednesday, Erica was still behind schedule and stayed as late as she could.

On Thursday afternoon, when the team met as planned, both Erica and Frank had not completed their parts. The team decided to spend the afternoon finishing everything and then to meet in the evening to finalize the report. At 5.00 pm, Frank said that no one was paying attention to his ideas and announced that he was leaving. The rest of the team was angry and several said so, but Frank left anyway. The team went back to the hotel and worked until 11.00 pm finishing the project. The following week Gloria assigned the same people to do another audit for a New Jersey company. Alan, Beth, Cathy and Dave got together after work to talk about what to do for the next audit. Decide what your team should do about Erica and Frank.

Action on Erica	Action on Frank
Vote:	Vote:
A – Do nothing	A – Do nothing
B – Talk to Erica	B – Talk to Frank
C – Tell the boss about Erica's behaviour	C – Tell the boss about Frank's behaviour
D – Refuse to do the audit with Erica	D – Refuse to do the audit with Frank

Source: Seltzer (2016)

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