

## GROUP AND TEAM DYNAMICS

---

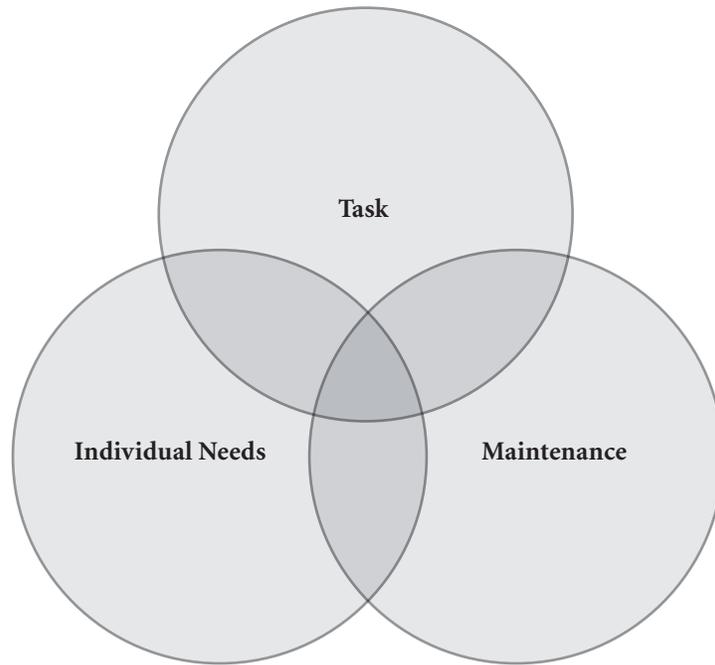


FIGURE 33: GROUP AND TEAM DYNAMICS

**Every group has two jobs: accomplishing a task and maintaining relationships among group members.**

1. **Task Level:** A group is often called together to accomplish a task. Accomplishing a task can be exciting and satisfying. Some groups are so conscious of the need to complete their task that they are unaware of other needs that are operating simultaneously.
2. **Maintenance Level:** Effective groups maintain the relationships among group members so each feels safe enough to contribute freely and creatively to the task at hand. Interactions and relationships within a group are constantly changing. When group members are aware of and work on maintaining relationships within the group, tasks can be accomplished effectively.
3. **Individual Needs Level (actually a subset of maintenance level):** Each individual member brings personal needs to the group. When personal needs are not met, group members may behave in ways that attempt to get their needs met. These behaviors can impede the group's ability to complete its task. Withdrawal, non-participation, or constant interruption are some behaviors that can be exhibited.

## Leadership and Dynamics

One of the primary tasks of group leadership is to monitor and facilitate balance between the group dynamics of task, maintenance, and individual needs. Here are some things to know about this leadership task and group dynamics.

- When the task, maintenance, and individual needs levels are in balance, the group becomes more effective and productive.
- When one or more level is neglected, the efficiency and productivity of the group is impaired.
- Group leadership is a set of functions or behaviors rather than a role. Thus, the officially designated leader is not the only one with responsibility for group productivity. Any group member can and should perform any of these group leadership functions when he or she deems it appropriate and necessary.
- To the extent that group leadership is seen as the responsibility of all group members, and not solely the responsibility of the officially designated leader, the group will function more effectively as a team.
- There are dysfunctional roles that may hinder the team; these often occur when behavior is directed toward unproductive personal needs.

## Task and Maintenance Roles in Teams

### *Functions supportive of getting the task completed*

<b>Role</b>	<b>Function</b>
<b>Initiating</b>	Suggesting a task or a goal, proposing a procedure, offering an idea for solving a problem
<b>Information seeking</b>	Requesting facts, asking for suggestions
<b>Information giving</b>	Offering facts or suggestions
<b>Clarifying (elaborating)</b>	Interpreting ideas, clearing up confusion, indicating alternatives
<b>Consensus seeking</b>	Checking with each member to see if the group is in agreement, remembering that silence is not necessarily consensus or agreement
<b>Summarizing</b>	Summarizing information and restating it to the team
<b>Closing</b>	Moving the group toward decision making or action, testing readiness for decisions

FIGURE 34: TASK ROLES

*Functions supportive of a group and individual members*

Role	Function
Encouraging	Being responsive to others, being warm and friendly, urging participation
Expressing group feelings	Sensing the mood or feelings of the group, speaking to that which one senses
Harmonizing	Attempting to reconcile differences, reducing tension, getting people to explore their differences in an accepting way, working out disagreements, admitting error, changing proposals to help the group, looking for the middle ground
Gatekeeping	Attempting to keep communication channels open, helping others enter the conversation, encouraging non-contributors, holding back dominant speakers
Compromising	Being able to change positions to try on a new idea, considering something in a new way

FIGURE 35: MAINTENANCE ROLES

*Functions which may or may not aid the group*

**Aggressiveness:** Attacking the group or the way it is operating, ignoring the group’s process or procedures; may help the group to move, or may be a put down

**Dependency:** Identifying with a stronger member; may affirm new behavior, or may be a cop-out for not expressing your own feelings

**Blocking:** Resisting, being stubborn, being chronically tardy, engaging in frequent side conversations, withholding information, refusing to participate, attempting to maintain or bring back an issue after the group has rejected it or gone beyond it; may bring about an awareness of the need for a group to deal with an issue it has been avoiding, or may prevent a group from moving ahead

**Dominating:** Forcefully directing the group or members of the group; may be a catalyst, or may smother

**Court Jesting:** Joking, kidding, horseplay; may be just what is needed, or may stop the progress of the group