



Lecture 11: Team Dynamics

Learning Objectives

1. Contrast groups and teams.
2. Contrast the five types of teams.
3. Identify the characteristics of effective teams.
4. Explain how organizations can create team players.

Groups versus Teams

- **Work groups** interact primarily to share information and make decisions to help members perform within their area.
- **Work teams** generate positive synergy through coordinated effort.
 - Perform better than the sum of the individual inputs
 - Are made up of members who have complementary skills and are committed to a common purpose
 - Establish specific team goals
 - Manage conflicts swiftly
 - Promote accountability of group results

Groups versus Teams

Work Groups



Share information

Neutral (sometimes negative)

Individual

Random and varied

Goal

Synergy

Accountability

Skills

Work Teams



Collective performance

Positive

Individual and mutual

Complementary

Individuals versus Teams

- Teams are popular in modern organizations.
 - Can achieve feats an individual cannot accomplish
 - Are flexible and responsive to changing events
 - Can quickly assemble, deploy, refocus, and disband
 - Are an effective means to democratize organizations and increase employee involvement
 - Introduce a collaborative mindset

Individuals versus Teams

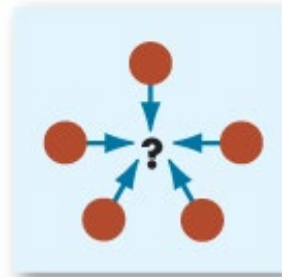
- Teams are not always better than individuals.
 - Take more time and more resources
 - Have increased communication demands
 - Have more conflicts to manage
 - Have more meetings to facilitate and manage

Individuals versus Teams

- Ask the following to determine whether individuals or teams should be used:
 - Is the work complex? Is there a need for different perspectives?
 - Does the work create a common set of goals that are larger than the aggregate of individuals' goals?
 - Are the members of the group involved in interdependent tasks?
 - Do the benefits of using teams exceed the costs?

Types of Teams

- **Problem-solving teams:** Groups of 5-12 employees from the same department who meet for a few hours each week to discuss a problem
 - Focused on improving quality, efficiency, and the work environment
 - Can make recommendations but do not have the authority to implement them



Problem-solving

Types of Teams

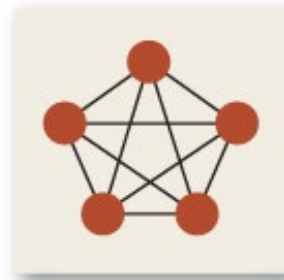
- **Virtual teams:** Teams that use computer technology to tie together physically dispersed members
 - Less social rapport and direct interaction
 - Have lower levels of job satisfaction
 - Must establish trust, monitor progress, and publicize efforts and results



Virtual

Types of Teams

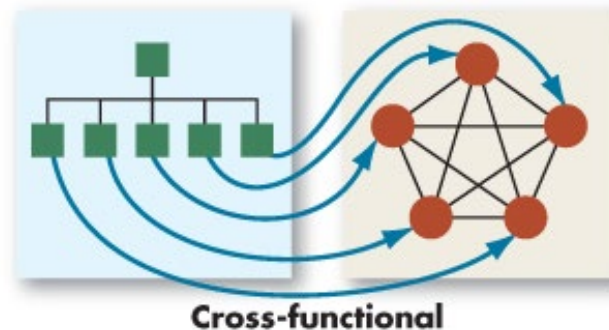
- **Self-managed work teams:** Groups of 10 to 15 people who perform highly interdependent jobs and take on the responsibilities of their supervisors
 - Reduced importance of supervisory positions
 - Have higher levels of job satisfaction
 - Typically do not manage conflicts well



Self-managed

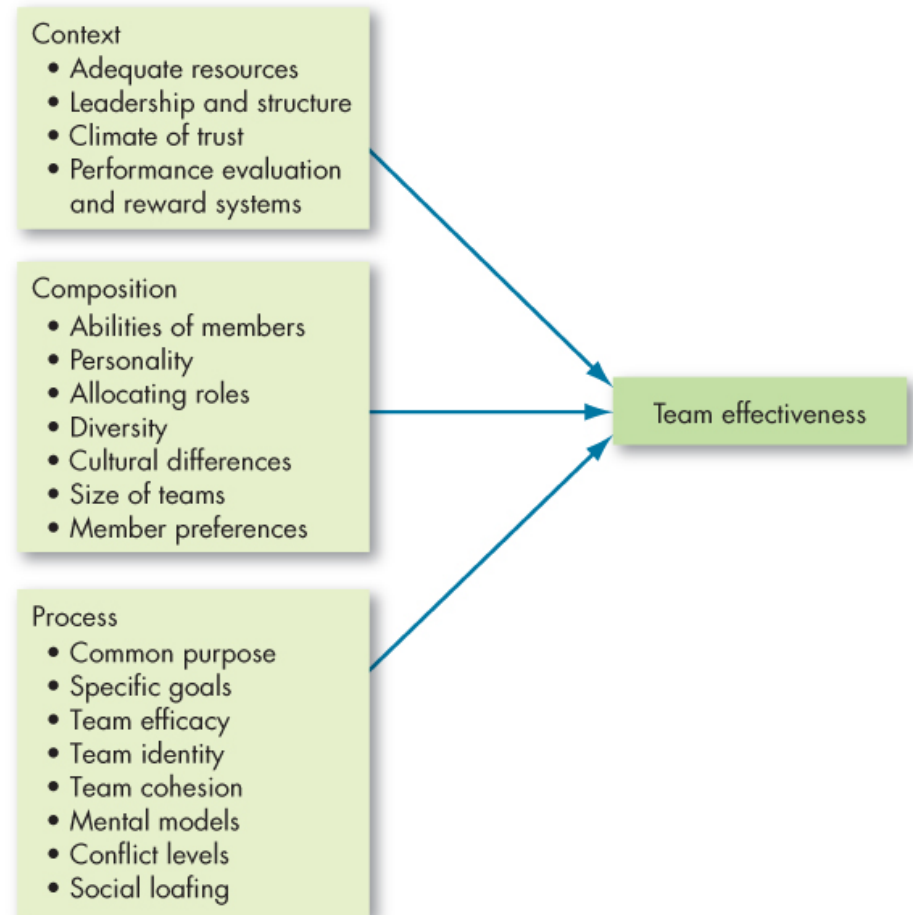
Types of Teams

- **Cross-functional teams:** Employees from the same hierarchical level but different work areas who come together to accomplish a task
 - Develop new ideas and coordinate complex projects
 - Require additional time to develop



Characteristics of Effective Teams

- The key components of an effective team are in 4 categories:
 - Context
 - Composition
 - Work design
 - Process



Characteristics of Effective Teams

- **Team Context** – What factors determine whether teams are successful?
 - Adequate resources
 - Leadership and structure
 - Climate of trust
 - Performance evaluations and rewards that reflect team goals and team performance

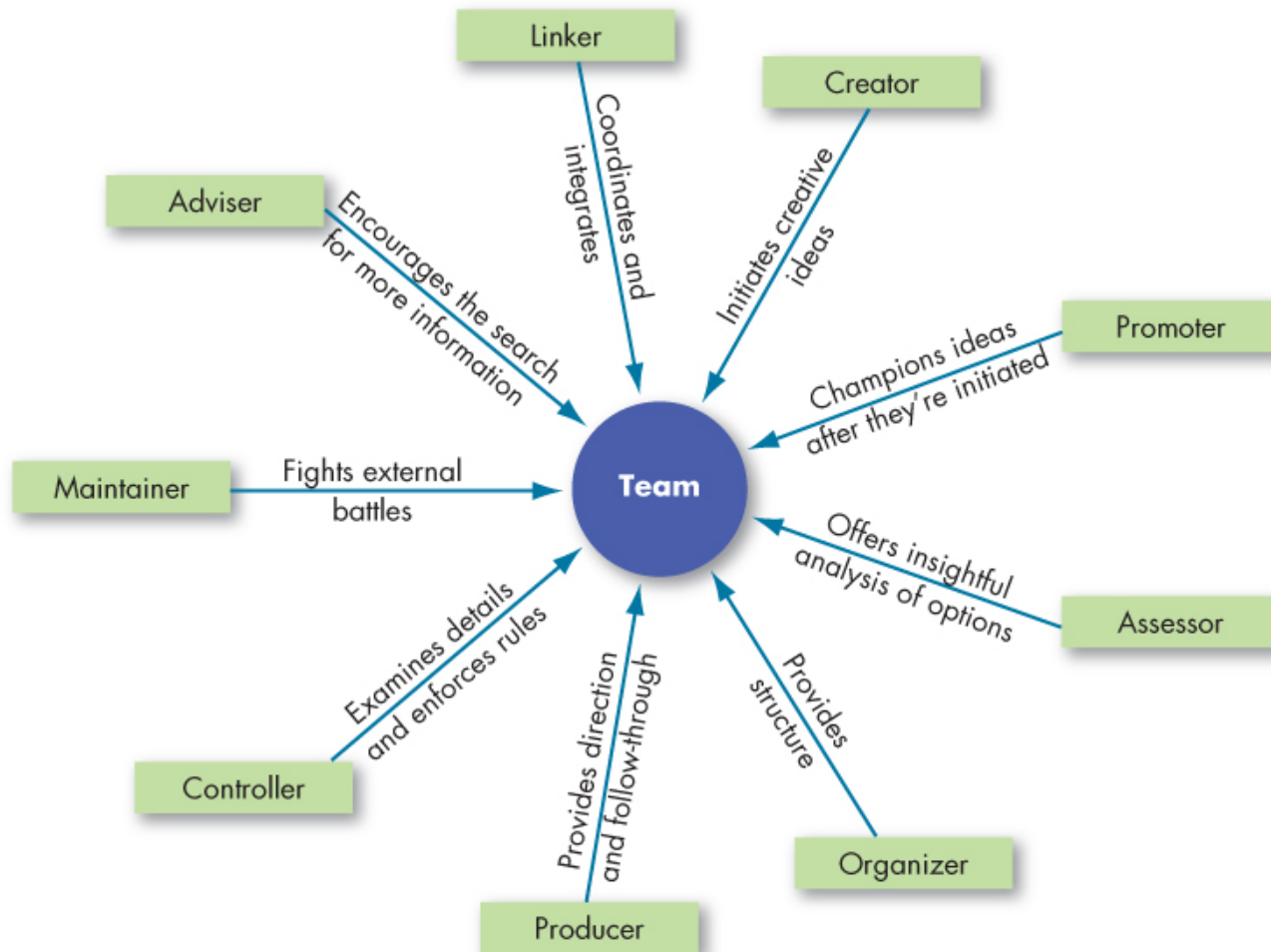
Characteristics of Effective Teams

- **Team Composition** – How should teams be staffed?
 - Members' knowledge, skills, and abilities
 - KSAs should match the task requirements
 - Know each members' strengths
 - Members' personality
 - Conscientiousness and openness to experience contribute to high team effectiveness.
 - Conscientious people are good at backing up other members and sensing when support is truly needed.

Characteristics of Effective Teams

- **Team Composition** – How should teams be staffed?
 - Members' preferences
 - Consider individuals' preferences for working alone or working as a team
 - Allocating roles
 - Ensure all the various roles are filled based on members' skills and preferences
 - Assign more able, experienced, and conscientious workers to the most central roles

Characteristics of Effective Teams



Characteristics of Effective Teams

- **Team Composition** – How should teams be staffed?
 - Diversity of members
 - Useful for tasks that require a variety of viewpoints
 - More difficulty learning to work with each other and solving problems
 - **Organizational demography:** The degree to which members share a common demographic attribute and the impact of this attribute on turnover

Characteristics of Effective Teams

- **Team Composition** – How should teams be staffed?
 - Size of teams
 - The most effective teams have 5-9 members.
 - Larger teams suffer from a decline in cohesiveness, communication, and mutual accountability as well as an increase in social loafing.

Create Team Players

- Organizations can create team players through:
 - **Selection**
 - Require interpersonal and technical skills
 - **Rewards**
 - Reward cooperation (rather than competition)
 - Continue recognizing individual contributions

Create Team Players

- Organizations can create team players through:
 - **Training**
 - Emphasize the importance of teamwork
 - Teach individualistic people to work with others
 - Teach problem-solving, communication, negotiation, conflict-management, and coaching skills

Implications for Managers

- Do not assume that teams are always needed.
- The context, team composition, and team processes impact team performance.
- Select individuals who have the interpersonal skills to be effective team players, provide training to develop teamwork skills, and reward individuals for cooperative efforts.