

Group Processes



Discussion Questions

1. What is a group? Why do we join groups?
2. How are group members socialized?
3. How does the presence of others impact us? What is social facilitation, social loafing, and deindividuation?
4. Do groups outperform individuals? What is brainstorming, group polarization, groupthink, and biased sampling?
5. What is a social dilemma? How can we address social dilemmas?



**What is a group? Why do we
join groups?**

What is a group?

- **Group:**

- Two or more people who interact over time and who have shared fate, goals, or identity
- Two or more people who have joint membership in a social group



Why do we join groups?

- To accomplish more
- To fulfill a need to belong to groups
- To gain a sense of personal and social identity
- To have fun!





How do groups develop?

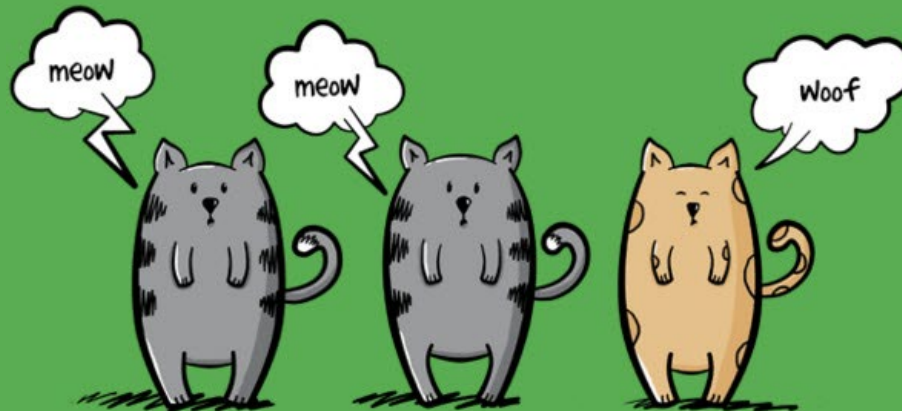
How are group members socialized?

- **Group role:** A set of formally or informally expected behaviors associated with group membership
 - **Instrumental roles:** Help the group achieve tasks
 - **Expressive roles:** Provide emotional support and maintain morale



How are group members socialized?

- **Group norms:** A set of formal or informal rules of conduct for group members
- Norm violations often met with strong pressure to conform or even punishment



How are group members socialized?

- **Group cohesiveness:** The forces that push group members closer together
 - Commitment, likeability, pride, and engagement
- Group cohesiveness and group performance are positively correlated, but other factors (e.g., size and task) predict when and to what extent.

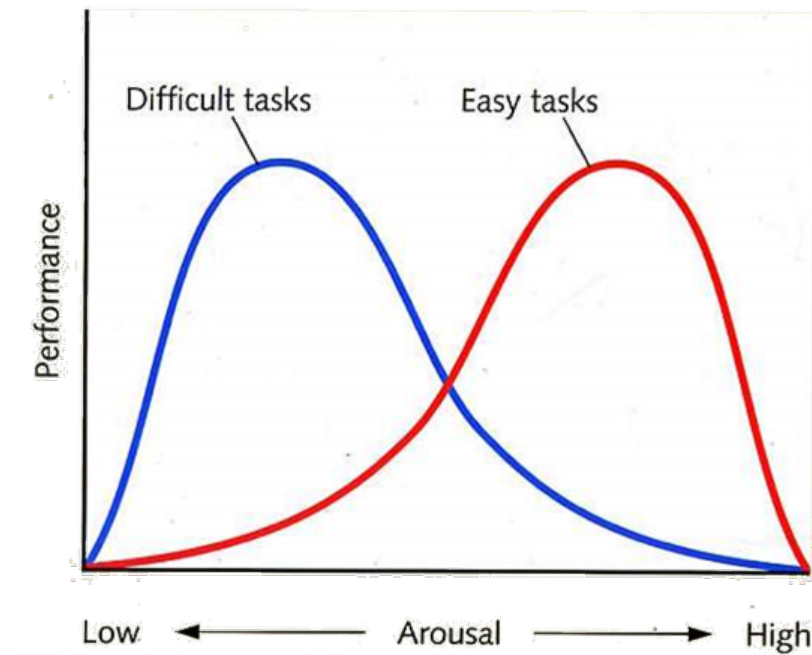
How does the presence of others impact us? What is social facilitation, social loafing, and deindividuation?

How does the presence of others impact us?

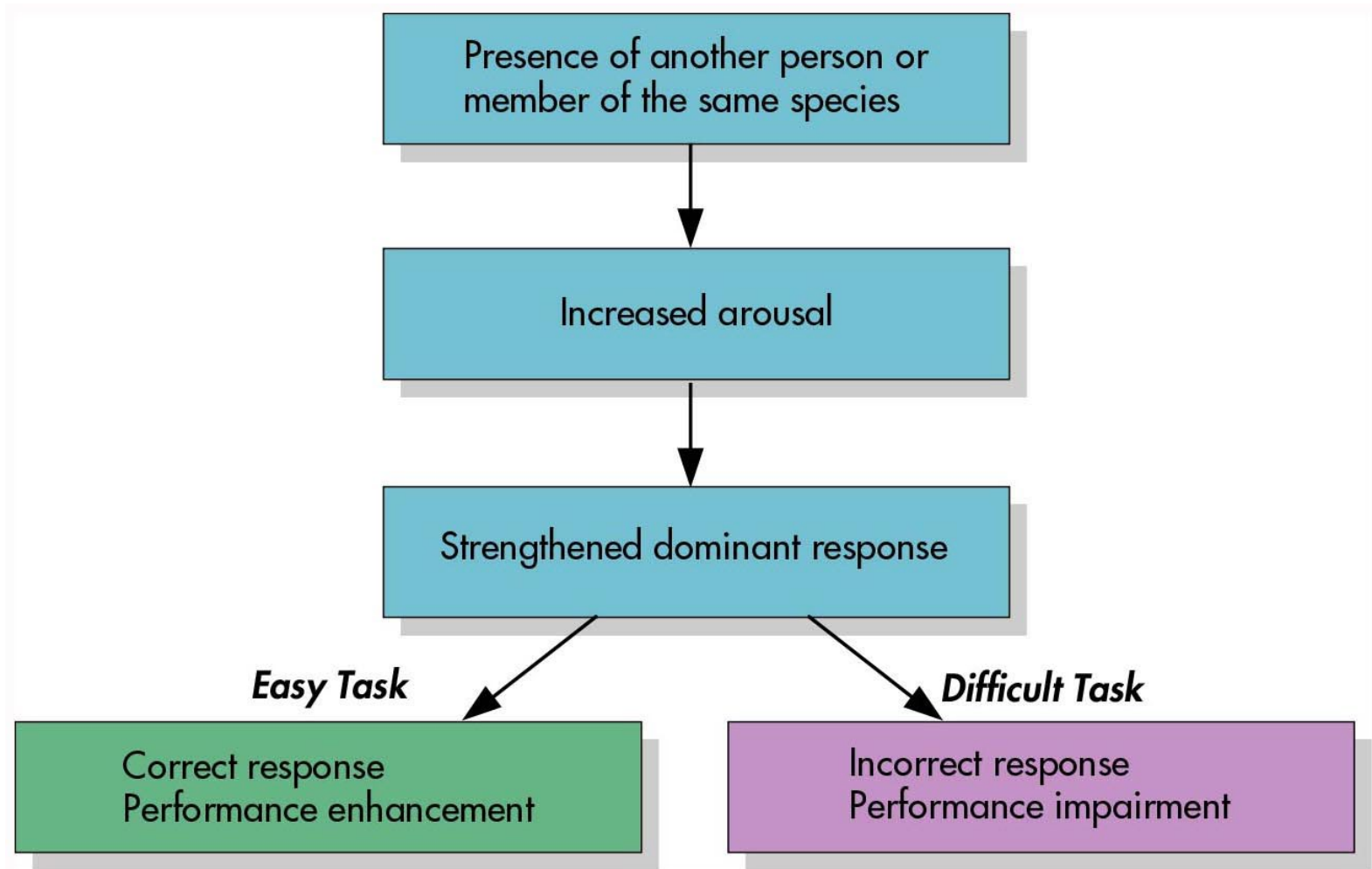
- Social facilitation elicits dominant response
- Social loafing reduces individual contribution
- Deindividuation
 - Enhances arousal and anonymity
 - Reduces self-awareness, sense of personal responsibility, and perceived cost of behavior

What is social facilitation?

- **Social facilitation:** The process whereby the presence of others enhances performance on easy tasks, but impairs performance on difficult tasks

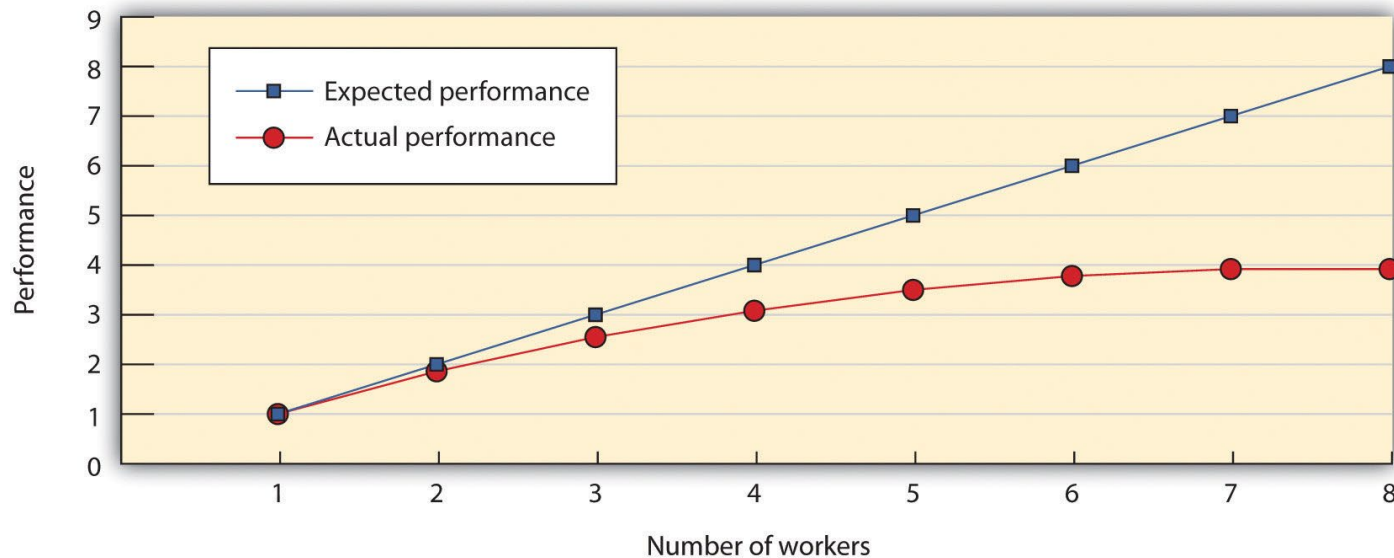


What is social facilitation?



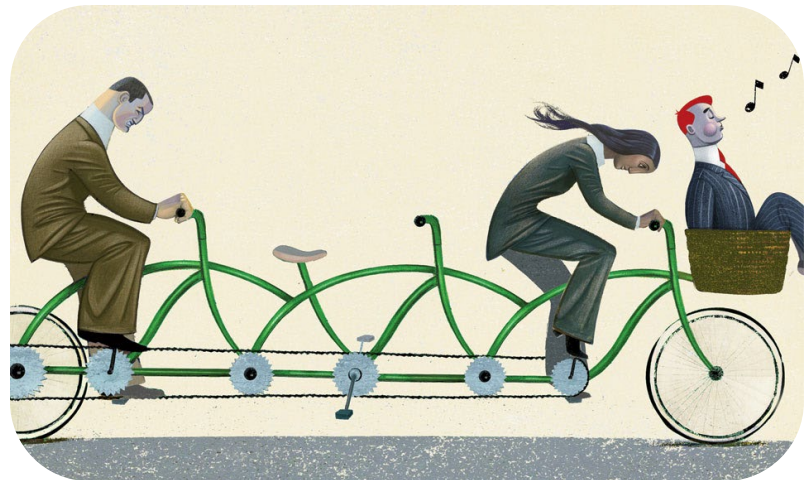
What is social loafing?

- **Social loafing:** A group-produced reduction in individual output on tasks in which contributions are pooled



What is social loafing?

- Prevention strategies
 - Identify and evaluate individual contributions
 - Match people with meaningful tasks
 - Show people their contributions are important
 - Clarify consequences of poor performance
 - Keep groups small
 - Build cohesion



What is deindividuation?

- **Deindividuation:** Occurs when a loss of personal individuality results in less behavioral restraint



What is deindividuation?

- Arousal, anonymity, and low personal responsibility
- Accountability cues reduce the cost of deviance
- Attentional cues focus attention away from the self



Do groups outperform individuals? What is brainstorming, group polarization, groupthink, and biased sampling?

Do groups outperform individuals?

- **Process gain:** An increase in group performance so that the group outperforms individual members



Do groups outperform individuals?

- **Process loss:** The reduction in group performance due to obstacles created by group processes

Brainstorming

**Group
polarization**

Groupthink

**Biased
sampling**

What is brainstorming?

- **Brainstorming:** A technique that attempts to increase the number of ideas generated by encouraging participants to think and speak freely without criticism
- Individuals come up with more ideas than groups!
 - Social loafing
 - Production blocking
 - Evaluation apprehension



What is brainstorming?

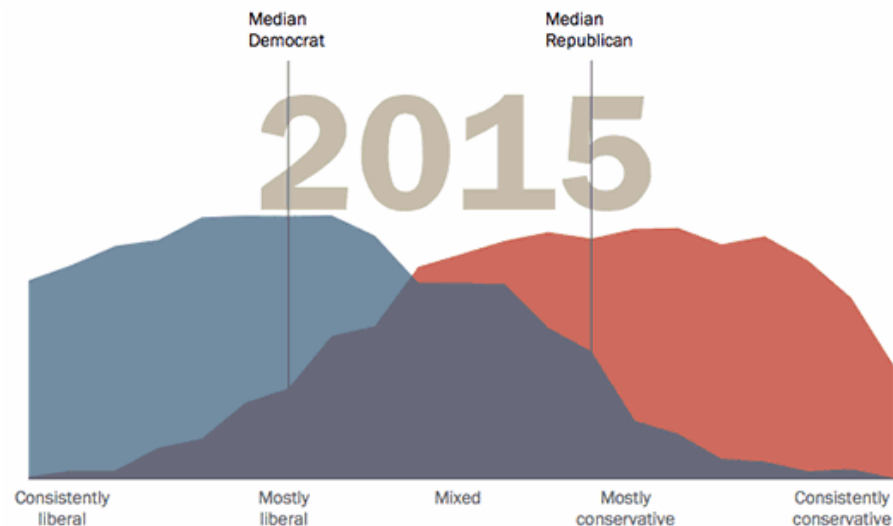
- Best practice:
 - Start by asking individuals to brainstorm and then conduct a group brainstorming session
 - Use technology to maintain anonymity, identify individual contributions, and eliminate waiting for turns



What is group polarization?

- **Group polarization:** The exaggeration of members' initial tendencies through group discussion

Political polarization in the American public, 1994 - 2015

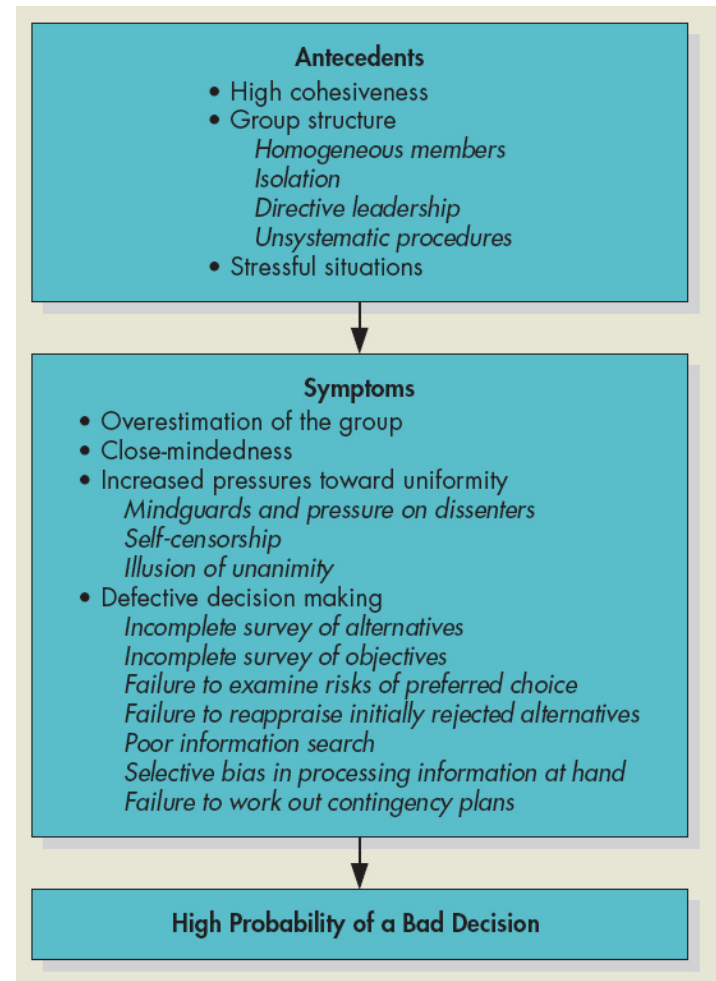


Surveys conducted 1994, 1999, 2004, 2011, 2014, and 2015

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What is groupthink?

- **Groupthink:** A group decision-making style characterized by an excessive tendency to seek agreement (not accuracy) among group members



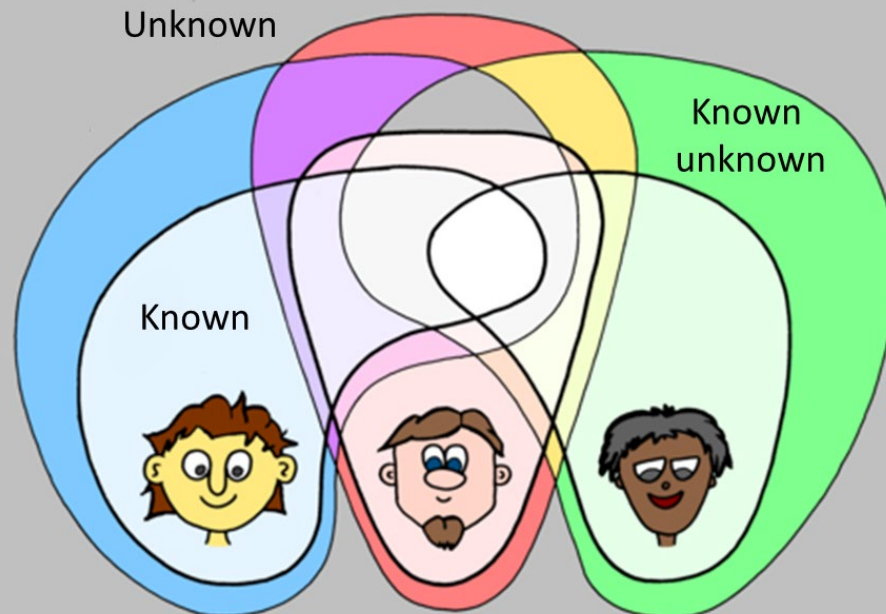
What is groupthink?

- Prevention strategies:
 - Avoid taking a stand early in the discussion
 - Encourage criticism explicitly
 - Assign a devil's advocate
 - Form subgroups to discuss the same issues separately
 - Consult other groups and external information



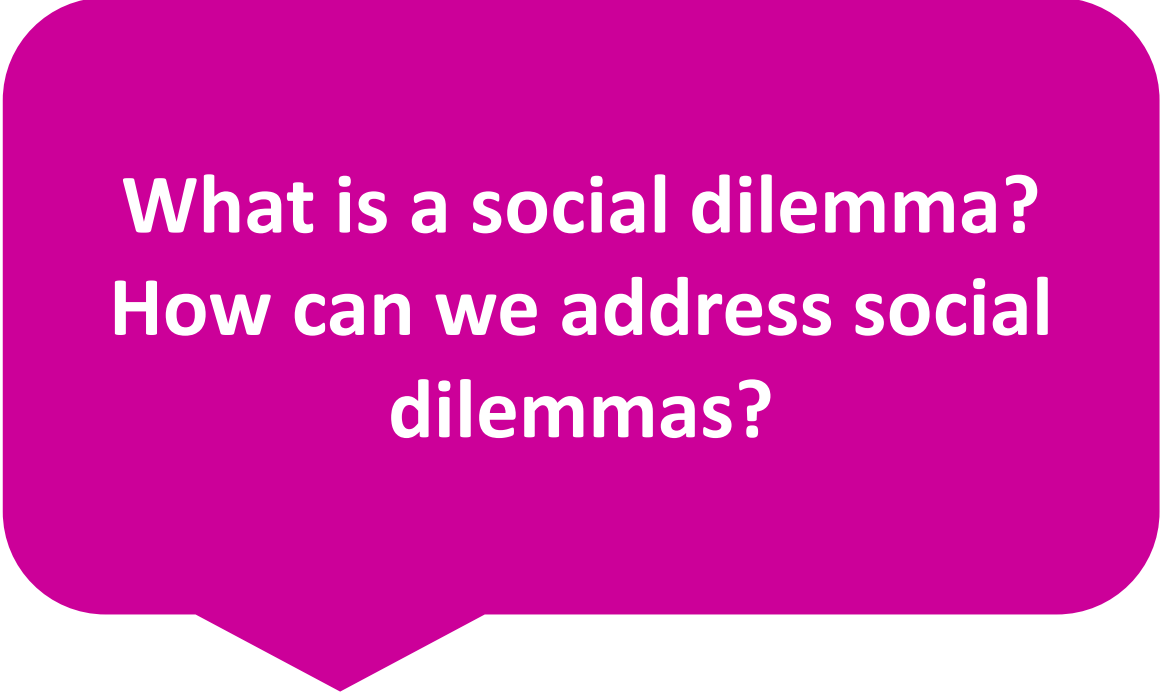
What is biased sampling?

- **Biased sampling:** The tendency for groups to spend more time discussing shared information than unshared information



What is biased sampling?

- Prevention strategies
 - Encourage group participation
 - Encourage sharing of new information
 - Ensure group members understand the task
 - Open lines of communication



**What is a social dilemma?
How can we address social
dilemmas?**





What is a social dilemma?

- **Social dilemma:** A situation in which a self-interested choice by everyone will result in the worst outcome for everyone
- Motivation to compete vs. motivation to cooperate



What is a social dilemma?

- **Prisoner's dilemma:** A dilemma in which one party must cooperate or compete with another party

Prisoners' dilemma		prisoner B			
		confess		remain silent	
prisoner A	confess	 5 years 5 years	 0 year 20 years		
	remain silent	 20 years 0 year	 1 year 1 year		

What is a social dilemma?



- **Resource dilemma:** A dilemma in which people must share resources
 - Commons dilemma – If everyone takes resources, nothing remains for the group.
 - Public goods dilemma – If no one contributes resources, nothing exists for the group.



Mike Keefe THE DENVER POST

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How can we address social dilemmas?

- Build trust
- Develop sense of belonging
- Identify shared identities and goals
- Punish competition
- Model selfless behavior
- Create small groups



How can we address social dilemmas?

- Use **Graduated and Reciprocated Initiatives in Tension-Reduction (GRIT)**: A tit-for-tat strategy in which one party reciprocates the other party's response
- Use **integrative agreements**: A negotiated resolution where all parties obtain outcomes that are superior to a 50/50 split