

# MST 514– Introduction to Organisation Behaviour

Lecture 12

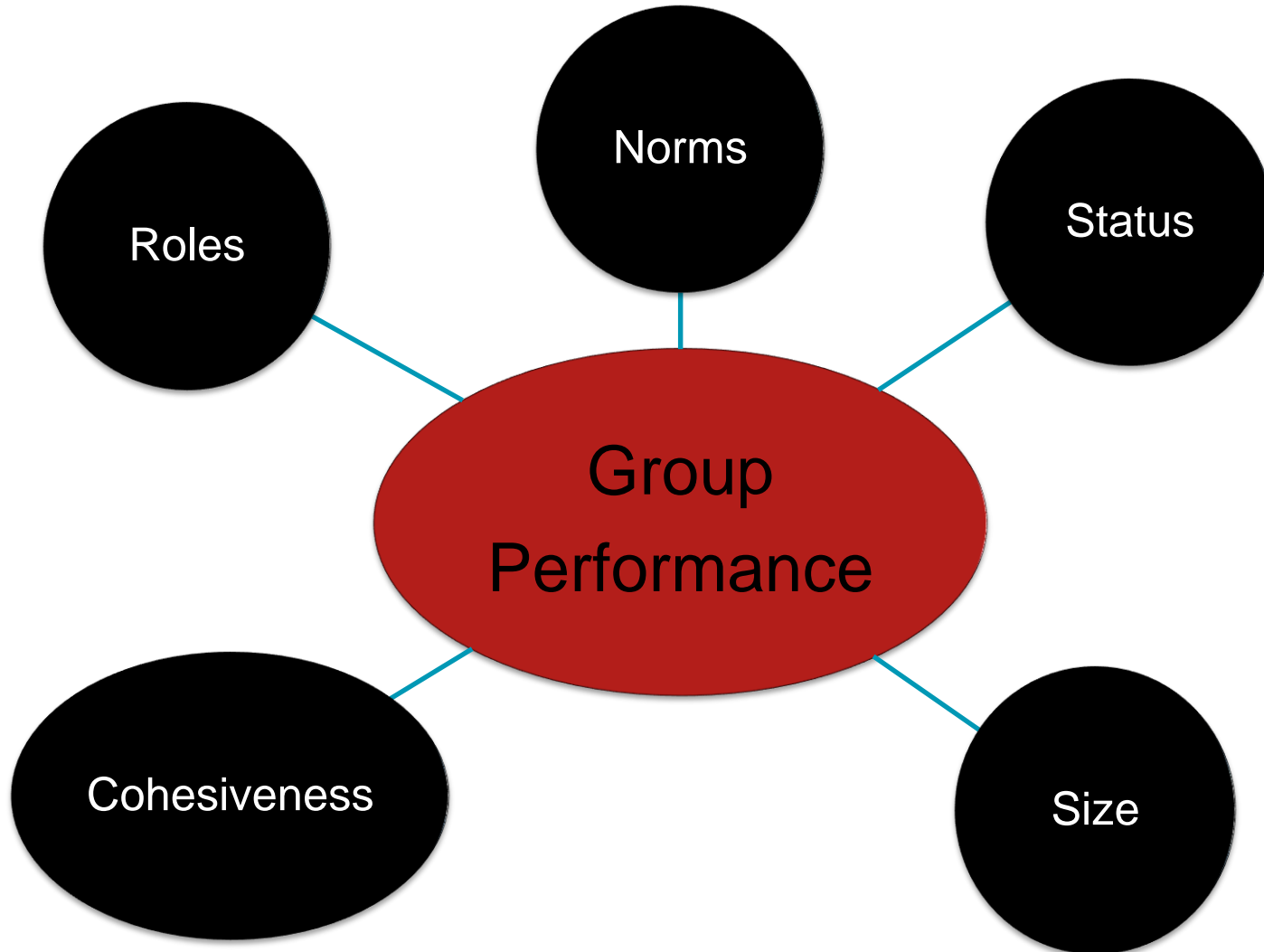
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# Topics to be covered today

1. Group properties

# Group Properties



# Group Property 1: Roles

## Role

- A set of expected behavior patterns attributed to someone occupying a given position in a social unit
- Role Perception
  - An individual's view of how he or she is supposed to act in a given situation
- Role Expectations
  - How others believe a person should act in a given situation
  - *Psychological Contract*: an unwritten agreement that sets out mutual expectations of management and employees
- Role Conflict
  - A situation in which an individual is confronted by divergent role expectations

# Zimbardo's Prison Experiment

- Done by Stanford University psychologist Philip Zimbardo and his associates.
- Set up a fake prison using student volunteers
- Randomly assigned student volunteers to guard and prisoner roles
- Within six days, the experiment was halted due to following concerns:
  - Guards had dehumanized the prisoners
  - Prisoners were subservient
  - Fell into the roles as they understood them
  - No real resistance felt

# Group Property 2: Norms

## Norms

– Acceptable standards of behavior within a group that are shared by the group's members

### • **Classes of Norms**

– Performance norms - level of acceptable work, how hard to work

– Appearance norms - what to wear

– Social arrangement norms - friendships and the like

– Allocation of resources norms - distribution and assignments of jobs and material

# Group Norms and the Hawthorne Studies

*A series of studies undertaken by Elton Mayo at Western Electric Company's Hawthorne Works in Chicago between 1924 and 1932*

- *Illumination test (Physical Conditions)*
- *Assembly test room experiment (elite group)*
- *Bank Wiring Observation room (Wage incentive plan) Rate busters and chiselers*

## **Research Conclusions**

- Worker behavior and sentiments were closely related
- Group influences (norms) were significant in affecting individual behavior
- Group standards (norms) were highly effective in establishing individual worker output
- Money was less a factor in determining worker output than were group standards, sentiments, and security

# Norms and Behavior

- **Conformity**

- Gaining acceptance by adjusting one's behavior to align with the norms of the group

- **Reference Groups**

- Important groups to which individuals belong or hope to belong and with whose norms individuals are likely to conform

## Asch's studies

- Demonstrated the power of conformity
- Culture-based



# Defying Norms: Deviant Workplace Behavior

- Deviant Workplace Behavior
  - Also called antisocial behavior or workplace incivility
  - *Voluntary behavior that violates significant organizational norms and, in doing so, threatens the well-being of the organization*
  - Typology:
    - Performance – working speed
    - Material – damage and stealing
    - Interpersonal – favoritism, gossip, and sexual harassment

# Group Influence on Deviant Behavior

- Group norms can influence the presence of deviant behavior
- Simply belonging to a group increases the likelihood of deviance
- Being in a group allows individuals to hide – creates a false sense of confidence that they won't be caught

# Group Property 3: Status

## Status

- A socially defined position or rank given to groups or group members by others – it differentiates group members
- Important factor in understanding behavior
- Significant motivator

## • Status Characteristics Theory

- Status derived from one of three sources:
  - Power a person has over others
  - Ability to contribute to group goals
  - Personal characteristics

# Status Effects

- **On Norms and Conformity**

- High-status members are less restrained by norms and pressure to conform
- Some level of deviance is allowed to high-status members so long as it doesn't affect group goal achievement

- **On Group Interaction**

- High-status members are more assertive
- Large status differences limit diversity of ideas and creativity

- **On Equity**

- If status is perceived to be inequitable, it will result in various forms of corrective behavior.

# Group Property 4: Size

## Size

- Twelve or more members is a “large” group
- Seven or fewer is a “small” group
- Group size affects behavior
- Best group sizes based on requirement:

Attribute	Small	Large
Speed	X	
Individual Performance	X	
Problem Solving		X
Diverse Input		X
Fact-finding Goals		X
Overall Performance	X	

# Issues with Group Size

## **Social Loafing**

- The tendency for individuals to expend less effort when working collectively than when working individually
- Ringelmann's Rope Pull: greater levels of productivity but with diminishing returns as group size increases
- Caused by either equity concerns or a diffusion of responsibility (*free riders*)

## • **Managerial Implications**

- Build in individual accountability
- Prevent social loafing by:
  - Setting group goals
  - Increasing intergroup competition
  - Using peer evaluation
  - Distributing group rewards based on individual effort

# Group Property 5: Cohesiveness

## Cohesiveness

– Degree to which group members are attracted to each other and are motivated to stay in the group

### •Managerial Implication

– To increase cohesiveness:

- Make the group smaller.
- Encourage agreement with group goals.
- Increase time members spend together.
- Increase group status and admission difficulty.
- Stimulate competition with other groups.
- Give rewards to the group, not individuals.
- Physically isolate the group.

# Thank you

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