

Soft Skills
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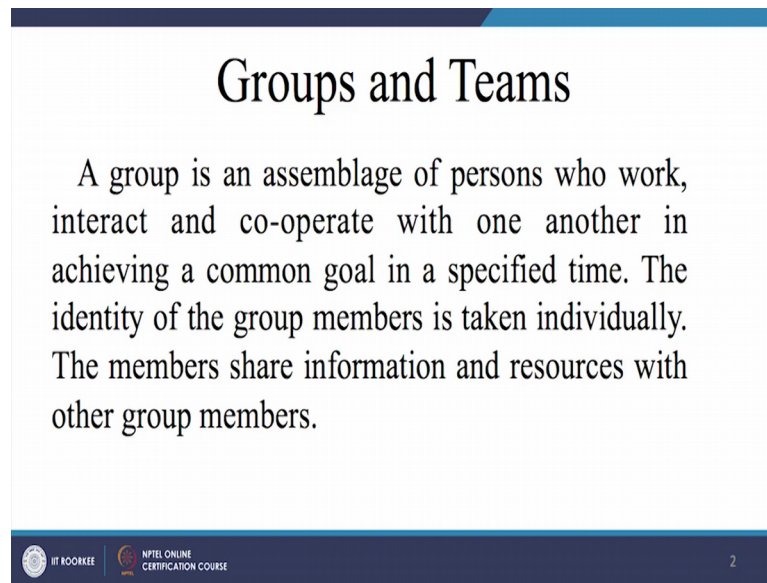
Lecture – 40
Group Communication Skills

Good morning friends, this is Binod Mishra, and you are listening to online lectures on Soft Skills. Today, we are going to talk about group communication skills. Prior to this you have read about reports, you have also read about memos and others. In the beginning of the lecture, we had a lecture entitled positive thinking. While listening to this lecture, you have to keep the ideas of that previous lecture in your mind, because today we are going to talk about group communication skills.

Friends all of us are human beings; and as humans we have a tendency to form groups, wherever you are, whether in an organization in an institution or you are trying to do something at a larger level, you will realize that it cannot be done alone, and that is why we need to have a group. Now, the question is what is a group, because at times, people interchangeably talk both about groups and about teams, though not much difference between the two terms. We will see how groups are different from teams, and how can be formulate groups, because once you are in organization, you will find that you will be given assignments, tasks, responsibilities, not only in isolation but in groups because there are certain features which makes group more important than individuals.



We are living in an age, where we want to fulfill our responsibilities, we want to finish our tasks in less amount of time. And for that we actually require a group work. There are several situations, where you will realize that groups can perform better than individuals. But before coming into the nitty gritty of groups, let us try to understand what exactly is a group. All of you when you join an organization, you join as an individual, but as you happen to be in the organization you are somewhere or the other attached to a group, because you have major tasks to perform. And as individuals you are not much experienced, you do not have that knowledge, you do not have that sort of experience, which can help you perform jobs in a limited amount of time.

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Groups and Teams

A group is an assemblage of persons who work, interact and co-operate with one another in achieving a common goal in a specified time. The identity of the group members is taken individually. The members share information and resources with other group members.

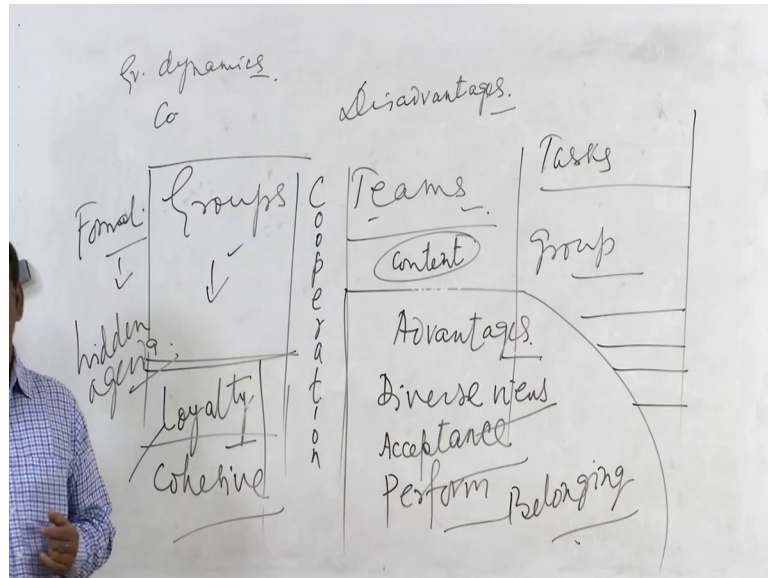
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Now let us see how we can define groups. A group is actually an assemblage of persons meaning thereby it is actually a collection of people who work, interact and co-operate with one another in achieving a common goal in a specified time. The identity of the group members is taken individually. The members share information and resources with other group members. Say for example, if you are just a student who is either in this third or fourth year of his college. He or she may find that there are certain functions in the college, the sports meet, cultural meet, you know there are different categories of such meets. But do you think that one man alone can perform the task of the entire festival, you cannot that is why you know you are given two or three days, because you cannot get a complete month for such festivals. You get two or three months, but you have to make it such an exemplary festival that people will remember in times to come.

And that for that you start formulating a group. And when you have a group because when you formulate a group, you also have to understand which people can perform which are all better. Initially there may be problems as we will discuss because initially not everyone is aware of everyone's talents, everyone's sparks, everyone's capabilities, everyone's characteristics, everyone's natures that is why initially you feel a little bit shaky. But as you are in a group as you come to know people, you will find that the job the task starts getting momentum, and after some amount of time maybe in a very small amount of time, because much depends upon the familiarity, acquaintance mixing of people in the group. So, when you work as a group, you perform a task better, and you

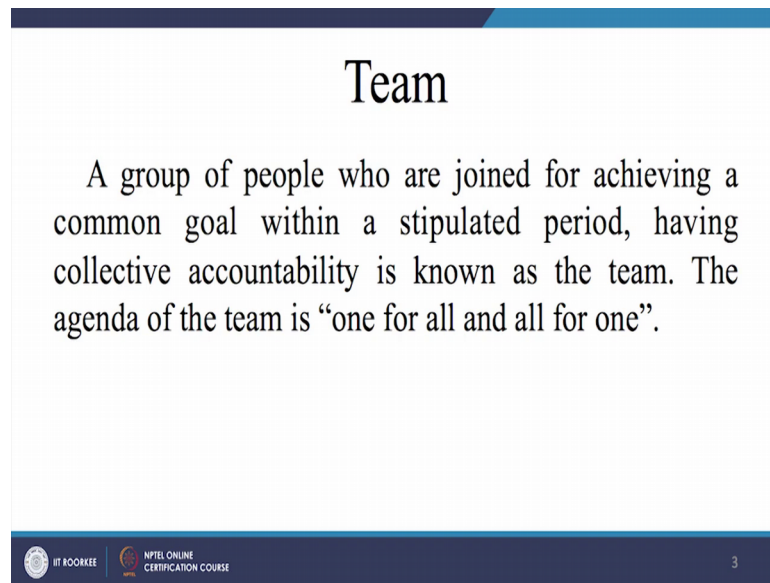
perform it more successfully. Since a times people often you know interchangeably are talk of groups as well as of teams.

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So, here we also or to understand the basic differences between groups and teams. We have already talked about how group is a collection of people, and how they have a common purpose, how they have a common goal. But then when we talk about a team a team is a group of people you know when as a group, you are going to have a cognizance as a group you are going to have some sports festival fine, but then when in a group you also divide the group into certain teams.

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The slide features a white background with a blue header and footer. The title 'Team' is centered at the top in a large, black, serif font. Below the title, a paragraph in a smaller black serif font defines a team as a group of people joined for a common goal within a set period, with collective accountability and the motto 'one for all and all for one'. The footer contains the logos for IIT ROORKEE and NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE, along with the number '3'.

Team

A group of people who are joined for achieving a common goal within a stipulated period, having collective accountability is known as the team. The agenda of the team is “one for all and all for one”.

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So, a group of people, who are joined for achieving a common goal within a stipulated period. You know if all the group members say for example, all the group members simply think that they have to complete this task in just short amount of time. Again that is not going to be successful. For that in order to make the job easier, you have to divide them into certain teams. And again when you are going to divide them into certain teams why I am focusing on group communication skills is because it is very difficult to mix with each other and to work. And in future the jobs, the assignments, which you are going to get you are going to get in groups as well as in teams that is why you need to have a sort of communication whose can make your task easier.

So, a group of people who are joined for achieving a common goal within a stipulated period within a limited time having collective accountability. Suppose, you are going to have a cultural festival and in that cultural festival, you have different program is not it? And for each program you need to find out people, who can manage, who can handle, who can lead who can finally, operate and make it successful. So, for that you have to have a sort of collective accountability which is known as the team. And you know the focus the purpose the aim of the team thus is one for all and all for one. As a group you decide to make cognizance a successful event.

But when you have several teams into it, all the teams you know all the teams have one goal and that is to complete the task successfully, but all these team because again group

is divided into teams, and these teams now they have another specific goal. So, the people involved in organizing the music show will be team of people who are concentrating only on music. There people who are given the task of organizing lectures, they will be entitled to organize contact people, and finally decide how this event will take place that is why we have to understand the difference between teams and groups.

Now, the question is what actually are the characteristics or the salient features of a group as well as of a team. Both the groups and the teams they have one common set of goals. So, the common set of goals is to make the event successful. Now, in order to make the event successful, since you have variety of teams what they will do is they will work jointly, they will have a sort of co-operation, because it is only the co-operation that will help them. And it is not only the co-operation, but when you co-operate each other, while cooperating what you do is you actually try to find out who can do what, you are also going to identify the skills among the team members. So, and then every team will have a leader.

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Characteristics

Work toward a common set of goals

- Work jointly
- Share common leadership
- Hold joint accountability for performance
- See themselves as being part of a team with common goals and shared fates

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Now, the question of this leadership is very troublesome, who will become the leader. We will we will discuss about leader, leadership, traits, qualities in the next lecture, but you will find that the team often is not even though team is aware of the goals, but at times team gets confused. At times these groups get confused as to how to handle, because there are certain situations, there are certain challenges that come in an between and we

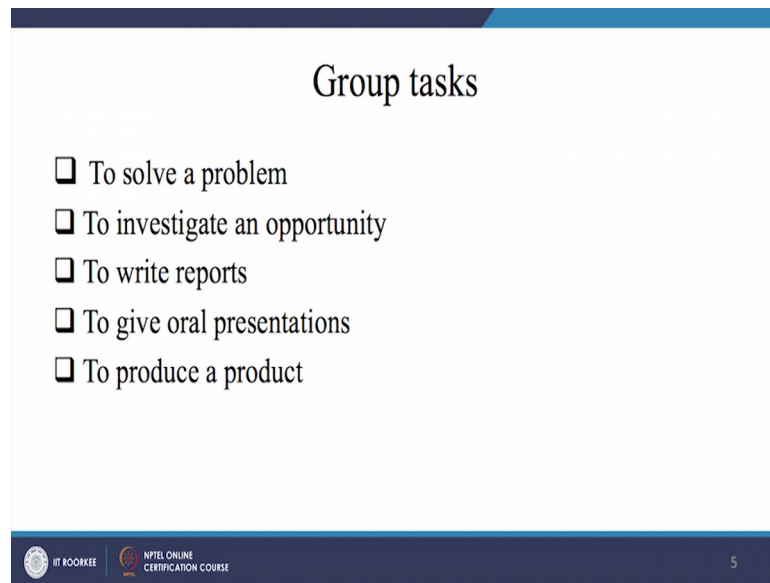
often feel ourselves at a block. In order to clear, that block you need somebody who can guide you. So, you have to share a common leadership. And if things go right or things go wrong, it is actually the responsibility of the team or responsibility of the group.

Hence the group as well as the team has to hold joint accountability for performance. And when you are in a team, you know you are an individual of course, you are an individual, but then as a team when you are working, you see to it that the goal of the team is achieved. Even though you are an individual, you are working towards the goal of the team. This lecture which you are already listening to it is not a one man. So, I am simply here as a person who is delivering talk, but behind that there is so many people helping me out.

And you know the entire modus operandi will have several teams, there will be teams who will be recording, there will be teams who will be editing, there will be teams who will be giving it a final touch, there will be tools will finally be approving and there will be teams will finally be posting these lectures. So, in a nutshell all you need to understand is these success of any event, any work depends upon the collective effort, the cooperative attitude of the team members.

Now, when you are a group or when you are a team you have to perform certain tasks. And since I am calling it group communications. So, what are these tasks? The tasks are you know sometimes there is a problem, and this problem you may have a solution, but how do you know that this solution is going to be very feasible, how do you know that this solution is going to be effective. Now, the question is in order to solve a problem, when you are doing it on your own that may be very difficult. But when you are doing it in a team since team has got so many people, and all these people they have got energy, they have got intelligence, they have got charisma, they have got some ways in means. So, these people have got different ideas. So, when you are have two solve the problem, it is actually the team that will come forward.

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Group tasks

- To solve a problem
- To investigate an opportunity
- To write reports
- To give oral presentations
- To produce a product

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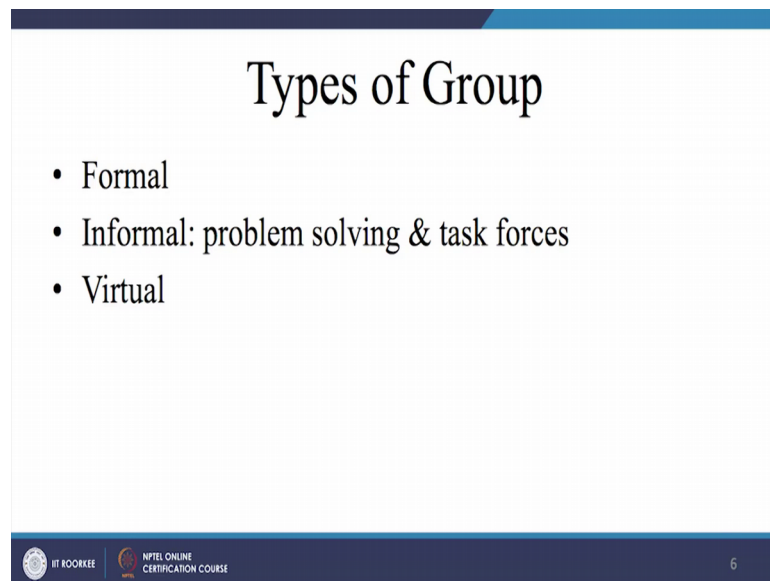
So, there are certain group tasks or team tasks, the first among them is to solve a problem. Second is to investigate an opportunity. Suppose, some organization is going either to launch a new product or going to buy a new product or going to announce a new policy even for that they require a team, which actually tries to find out what will be the outcomes, how to go ahead, what is something goes wrong. So, you have to investigate an opportunity.

Remember in the previous lectures we have talked about writing reports. Now, at times you might be thinking can this entire report be written by one person. You know if it is to be written by one person it will actually take a lot of time; and by the time, you realize that the solution has to be provided it might be too late. So, the one task of team is also to write reports. Sometimes you may find that you as the manager, as the CEO, as the in charge have to give an oral presentation of course, as a person you are giving in the oral presentation. But in order to understand the real presentation in order to provide you with the facts, data, whatsoever entire events there is a team. Sometimes it has also been seen that you have to give a presentation even as a group - group presentation.

And when you give a group presentation, there also you decide, there are some people you know who are in some way or the other and expert in that area. So, if he or she gives that particular part, he will be in a better position to answer to the queries which are put forward. So, one of the tasks of the group members is not only to write a report, but also

to give a presentation. And when you are you know most of the organizations nowadays they have got incubation centers. Do you think that this incubation centre works alone? It also works as a team and this team is busy devising a new product, evolving a new product, producing a new product, there all you require a team and this team will cooperate, the team will listen to each other. And finally, you know most of us actually see the final product, we do not see what goes behind that is why we have to understand that it is actually a teamwork, it is a group work.

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The slide is titled "Types of Group" and lists three types of groups: Formal, Informal: problem solving & task forces, and Virtual. The slide has a blue header and footer. The footer contains the IIT ROORKEE logo, the NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE logo, and the number 6.

Types of Group

- Formal
- Informal: problem solving & task forces
- Virtual

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Nowadays, if you are working alone and thinking that you will move this sky or you will shake the earth it is quite impossible my dear friend, so you have to believe in a team in a group. Now, there can be different types of group formal groups many organizations you will find there are formal groups, formal groups. Now, question is if you are working in an organization, there are several groups and there several units also. Now, they are formally divided, but do you think that this formal division of groups will help you have a successful you know successful experience or a successful event. Sometimes the informal groups work better. In the name of formality, we divide the group, but unless and until the members go here with each other informally, you know it is quite doubtful to say that will work.

So, there are formal groups, there also are informal groups nowadays everyone knows that there are virtual groups always know, if you are either on Whatsapp, the Facebook

whatsoever all these technological devices, there are virtual groups. And they share information, they communicate, and they in a way they are trying to make the world shorter, make the world becoming a real living entity even virtually. Now, the question is when we talk about the formal group and an informal group the task of the informal group is problem solving. Sometimes you will find not all, group members may be equally efficient and since you both of you belong to one group or so many people belong to one group, what we do is we actually share and sometimes we also go an extra mile to help because we have the group goal in our mind. And this group goal actually is going to help us in more ways than one, there that keeps people together. Fine next is do you think people at times raise questions that do groups have advantages of course.

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Advantages

- More Information
- Diverse views
- Acceptance of a solution
- Performance
- Creates sense of belonging

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And what are the advantages and disadvantages people in a group if you work in a group you will find that you have more information not every person is capable to have all the tricks in the world. No one has the time to read all the books, and read all the literature pertaining to a particular product or thought processes of a particular product. Hence when you are in a group the group actually has got more information. And you know it is one man may have one idea, but in order that this idea can have further developments, you actually require some other member. In order suppose, there is a problem and you are trying to reach a solution. So, when there are so many people in the group all of them will have and they have the capability to think of the problem in their own way and all of

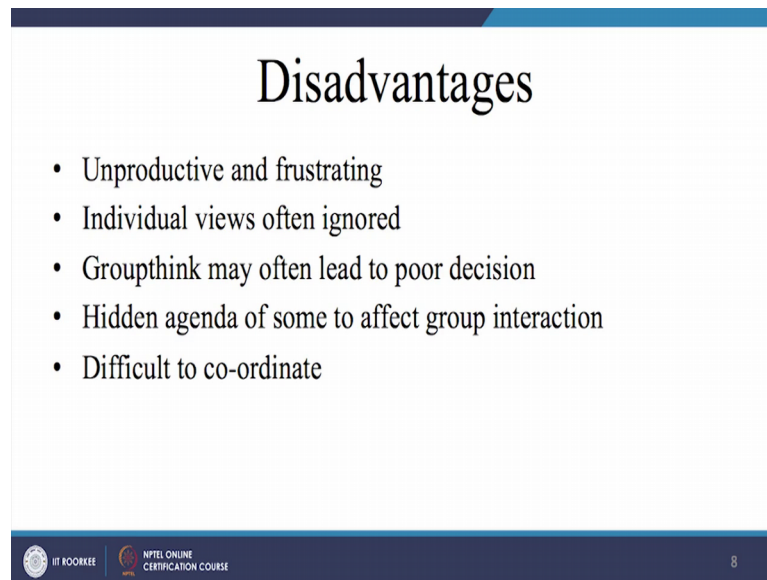
them come with their own viewpoints, and with their own views. Moreover these people, I mean the members of the group they have a sort of diverse views.

Sometimes you are working in a situation at times it so happens that there are some people who already have an experience of working on a similar product and that becomes more advantageous. So, you have diversity of opinion from different corners of people, who are actually your group members. So, the views are diverse. And then when you reach a solution or when you want to accept the views, you know no success of a group is possible unless and until you have an acceptance. Of course, at times you may feel that if somebody puts forth of you, you are not likely to accept that, but then there are other members also. And they look at it from different angles, they try to evaluate the pros and cons of the situation, and you feel that yes, we can accept, we can come to a sort of tongue senses.

Moreover, group has another advantage that is groups perform better. As I said in the beginning if I have to do one thing I can do it only at one time. But if I am in a group I have only one mission, but that mission can be finally be successful only when there are several people. And all these people depending upon their capability, depending upon their willingness, all the members agree to perform. So, the performance in a group is always better. And moreover if you belong to a group, it provides you with a sense of belonging at times you feel very proud to say that you belong to a particular group, you belong to a particular organization, you belong to a particular association, you know after all, all of us are human beings and we need a sense of belonging.

So, when you are in a group and as you go on being in that group you will find that you know more people, you actually enlarge your own knowledge also, you also come to know about so many things which you might have heard. But you might not have being able to understand so that is actually the benefit of being in a group and having the advantages of group communication. But remember anything that has a merit also has a demerit as well. You know every coin has got two sides. Of course, being in a group has got so many advantages, but it is not divide of disadvantages as well. There are several disadvantages also.

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Disadvantages

- Unproductive and frustrating
- Individual views often ignored
- Groupthink may often lead to poor decision
- Hidden agenda of some to affect group interaction
- Difficult to co-ordinate

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In every group, you will find there are people who in some way or the other who have their rigid idea who have a set pattern and that is why at times you find if the egos of people class it will appear that being in a group is only wasting time. And at times, it becomes very unproductive and frustrating. Moreover, some people also suffer from certain delusions and those delusions are as we have pointed it out while discussing communication that there are people who think that they are know it all, meaning thereby they have a sort of false impression about themselves that they only know others do not know. And in such a situation a group member may not accept the views, may not accept the views which have come to a sort of consensus.

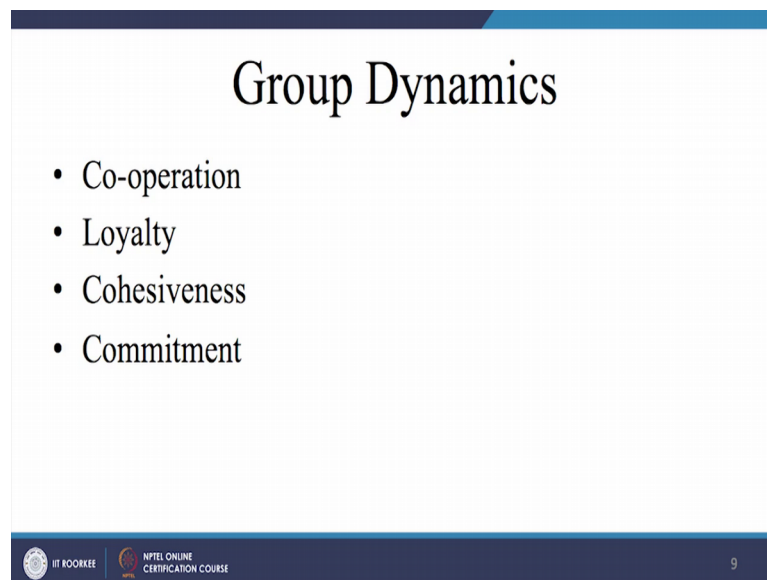
At times we also find because sometimes you find in a group people some people even there are groups within groups. So, sometimes some people who by one way or the other, they feel more important and they have more followers in the group, it is likely that some individual opinions may be ignored. Sometimes, those individual opinions may have a lot of spark, may have a lot of content, but yet those individual views are often ignored under the pressure of other people. So, individuals views may at times be ignored.

Sometimes you come to a decision I mean the group think we call that group think sometimes you come sometimes the group comes to a decision, and this group think may because you know it is in a group at times, it is only because of majority that sometimes things may not go right. So, if the group think or the group members come to a sort of

acceptance maybe at times we can come across a poor decision also. Because every group finally has to take a decision on a particular issue, but then if the majority of members of the group support a certain cause, and one individual who had his own personal views, but then independent is ignored, the group may come to a poor decision.

And do you know that some of the group members even some of the individuals or some of the group members may at times have a sort of hidden agenda. You know if people work with lot of trust and honesty and integrity, there is no problem, but at times it so happens that the hidden agenda of some of the people or some individuals may affect the group interaction, group say work. Of course, group members as I have said earlier that they are diverse people from different backgrounds, people from different cultures, people from different tastes, so it is very difficult to coordinate. And here comes the role of a messiah, here comes the role of a person who can act who can actually try to bring the group to the right path. If we have that of course, we can tied over with this situation; otherwise we often feel that there is a lot of difficulty in coordinating with all these people having diverse views.

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Group Dynamics

- Co-operation
- Loyalty
- Cohesiveness
- Commitment

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But then of course, group since it is not only of one individual, it is of different people coming for a common goal or purpose. And the group has to perform, group has to come to a decision. So, what actually can help in a group, what are actually the group dynamics what are the dynamics that should be followed. And these dynamics cannot be

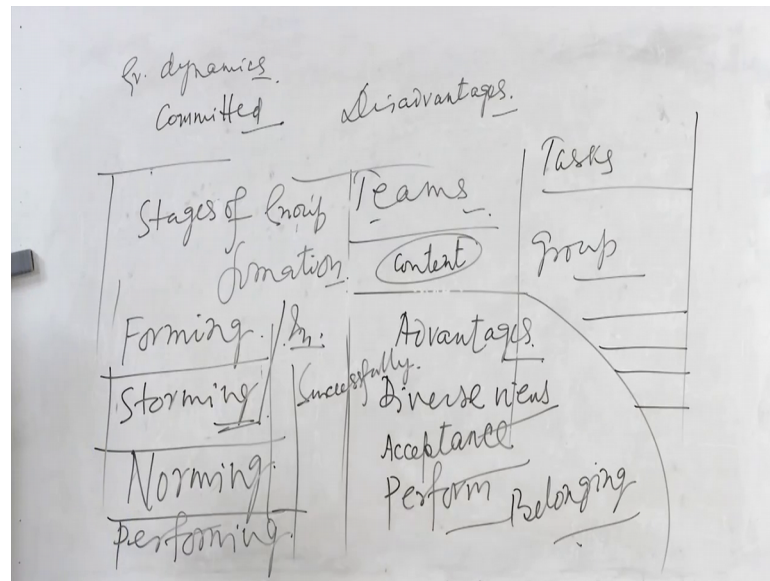
followed by one person alone the first in this regard is co-operation. If all the group members decide that they will co-operate in order to reach a solution, I think all the major impediments that are there all the major blocks that are there, they will be cleared. There may be at times roadblock, but then what is communication word for communication actually close that roadblock, communication a clears that barrier which arises because of people having diversity of views and at times not agreeing.

Then comes the question of loyalty, if I am loyal to a group, I feel proud are to be a part of this system. If I have this dedication if I have this feeling that I am loyal to the group. So, in order to maintain my own loyalty to the group; however, maybe at times I may have to make some small sacrifices, but then as a member if I think this is actually in the welfare of the group and if I have that sort of loyalty of course, the group will go forward. So, one of the dynamics of our group is loyalty.

Then is cohesiveness you know if there are you know there is an old saying that if there are so many utensils of course, there are going to be noises. Likewise if there are so many people in a group naturally, there are bound to be disagreements, but if we decide that will remain together will be cohesive with each other, and this cohesiveness can be created can ensue only out of a sort of cooperative attitude and the feeling that we have to remain committed towards our goal. If we realize the necessity of being loyal, if we realize the necessity of being committed, if we understand the reality of remaining cohesive nothing in the world can separate us, and nothing in the world can stop us from taking decisions from coming to an agreement from coming to a consensus.

Of course, you will feel that there are different stages when you are going to formulate a group my dear friend, because group formation is very important. And in order to formulate a group you know, when you join as a new person in an organization or in a group, you will find you are nervous, you are a new person. But then as you are in the organization, you will find after some time that some tasks are given and you are attached to a certain group.

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So, but then when you are in a certain group there are actually stages of group formation. What are the stages of group formation? As an individual you can also feel that the very first stage when you do not know anyone know, this is actually called the period of forming, there are four ways you know forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. So, the first stage is that of forming. When the group is formulated, you are new you actually have to be introduced to other people in the group. And as time precedes, as time flashes by you will find that slowly, you try to develop yourself in the group by befriending, people by trying to understand people.

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Stages of group development

- Forming
- Storming
- Norming
- Performing
- Adjourning

(Bruce Tuckman)

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So, the first stage is that of forming the formation period, the formation period all the people are new, and all these people they do not know much about each other. So, they try to have a sort of rapport of course, creation of rapport will take time. The second stage is that of storming. Now, what will happen in the first stage you are an individual; an individual having so many qualities so many capabilities, so many you know attributes in you and people try to understand you. So, every individual feels that she has this quality or he is full of these you know capabilities in all, but when the second stage when group members they actually start interacting and so when you interact, there is a storm like situation, because all these people have their own ideas. And all these people think that their ideas are great, naturally there is some amount of puzzle where and this storming period is very beneficial because so many new things may come out, people may decide me with each other there may be at time chances of classes with each other, but so many ideas will come out.

And after this period will be a norming period. Now, this norming period at during this norming period, people will realize. After you know after the storm passes off, there is peace; both before this storm and after the storm there is peace. So, this peace because when there is this norming period people realize each other, and they actually may know with their own ideas and they realize that since we have to work for a group, we have to accept the views, and they try to find out you know, what is important, what is unimportant this a just a sort of filtering. So, during this period after having filtered a sort of normalcy is there. And this normalcy will bring people closer in order that all these people when they realize their goals, when they realize the diversity of their views, they decide that they have to perform.

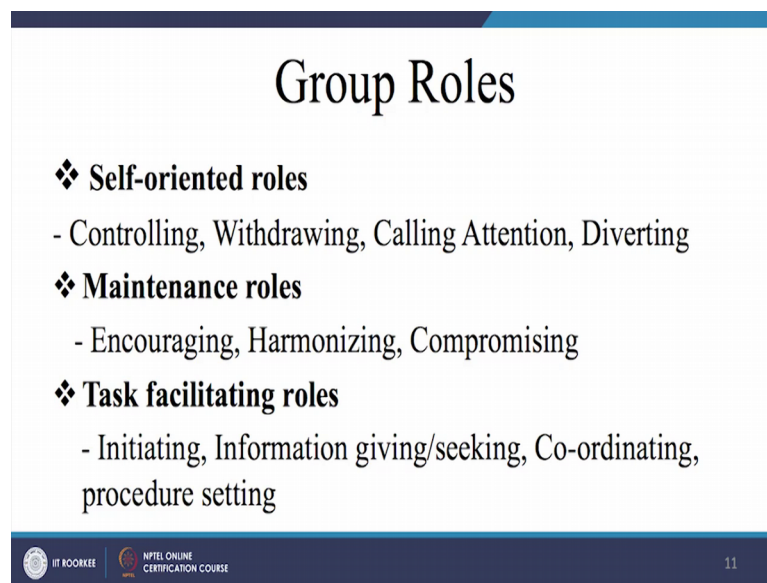
So, finally, they decide that they will perform. You know initially when you had a started forming the group, you did not know that finally, you may come to perform. But after having a lot of interaction with other people, other members in the group, and realizing their worth, realizing the worth of their ideas and your ideas as well when there has been crap fertilization of ideas you have finally, come to the stage of performing. And when you come to this stage with full gastro, with full energy, with full enthusiasm, you are now going to perform.

And finally, when you perform you find that you have performed very successfully. So, this success comes only after all this stages. Now, the last stage you know this

categorization of a group development had been given by a Bruce Tuckman a well known psychologist, who finally, after some years earlier there were only four stages who finally, added that there can be one more stage and that is of adjourning. So, suppose a task force has been made, and this task force finally, has completed its duty, and this task force has completed its duty very successfully, now is the time that this group has to be adjourned. In certain cases, we find when there is a lot of controversy, a lot of storming, some people feel that they should not be a part of this group, but then unless you know if you simply flee away from that group naturally you do not believe in group dynamics.

So, finally, when the task has been completed successfully you decide or a stage comes where this group is finally, adjourned this group is adjourned, but at the same time adjourn in the hope that in future when another new task comes in the way of the organization, a new team a new group will have to be formulated.

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Group Roles

- ❖ **Self-oriented roles**
 - Controlling, Withdrawing, Calling Attention, Diverting
- ❖ **Maintenance roles**
 - Encouraging, Harmonizing, Compromising
- ❖ **Task facilitating roles**
 - Initiating, Information giving/seeking, Co-ordinating, procedure setting

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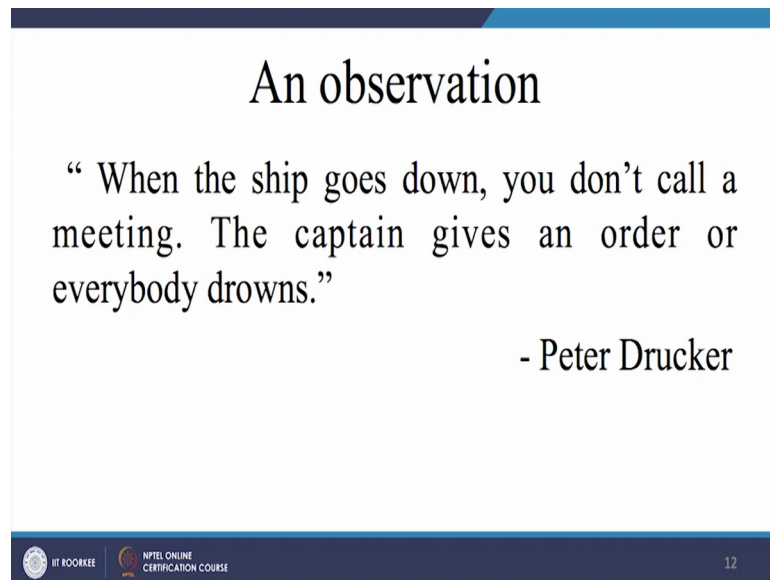
Now, there are certain group roles which you also have to understand. The group members have three sorts of roles. First is a self-oriented roles, then we have maintenance roles, than the task facilitating roles. In these stages, we have found that there will be some people, some members in the group, who are more you know anxious about their self bested interests. And such people only believe that their views have to be accepted, and they try to control the entire group. And if their views are not accepted, if

their ideas are not taken well care of, sometimes they also try to withdraw from the group. So, such a person of in a group is often the merging.

The next role of group members is maintenance roles. All the group members should realize that the group finally, has to come to a consensus that is why they have to encourage each other and they have to have a sort of coherence or harmony. And at times they may have to compromise with each other because their main target is to complete the task in a given amount of time. And then comes another role of group members that is task facilitating roles. Any member of the group or every member of the group should realize that somebody has to initiate, somebody has to undertake, somebody has to start. And then at times somebody you know if you feel that you have more information you are most welcome to provide your information. You may also seek information from other members and that will help keep the group in coordination, and finally, setting a procedure as to how to move forward in order to realize your groups.

Dear friends, whatever you do in a group, and when you come to a consensus in order to do something better, not that you are having a sort of conflict, but you have to come out of the conflict. You will find if there is a leader in the group of there emerges a leader in the group the leader actually sees that a sort of coordination is being made in the group and moreover a sort of consensus is there. But remember we should always be prepared that there are times when you feel you know when you feel that because of a lot of controversy, a lot of quarrel, lot of conflicts in the group, at times in order to save the group though the leader will try his level best to save it from very untoward situation.

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An observation

“ When the ship goes down, you don’t call a meeting. The captain gives an order or everybody drowns.”

- Peter Drucker

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But then let us look at this observation as a management guru Peter Drucker says when the ship goes down, you do not call a meeting. The captain gives an order or everybody drowns. As all of us in a globalized world of today, where we have to fulfill our tasks in a limited amount of time, we should realize that we have to belong to a group. And once you are in a group, please understand the ethical considerations of the group, the ethical realities of the group. And also as an individual realize your own responsibilities in order to make in order to help group come to a possible solution of the problem, because ultimately it is the group which has to take our decision.

I hope you will formulate better groups if you are in organization, and you will try to belong to the group so that not because of you the group comes to a deadlock, but because of you the group comes to an amicable solution or situation. I hope you will be realizing the importance of groups. And in the next lecture, we shall be talking about how it is the leader who comes in and between and makes the group realize their goals and also realize their responsibility in order to come to a better solution.

Thank you very much, formulate better groups, have a good day.