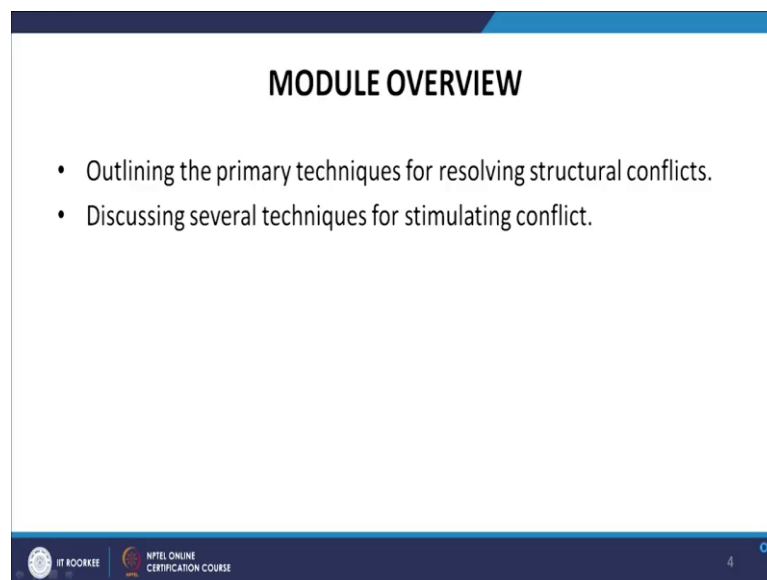


**Organization Theory/Structure and Design**  
**Prof. Zillur Rahman**  
**Department of Management Studies**  
**Indian Institute of Technology, Roorkee**

**Lecture - 36**  
**Managing Organizational Conflict - 11**

Welcome to module-36 of this course Organization Theory Structure and Design. So, we started talking about Managing Organizational Conflict in module-35, and we will continue with this topic in this module, that is module-36 also.

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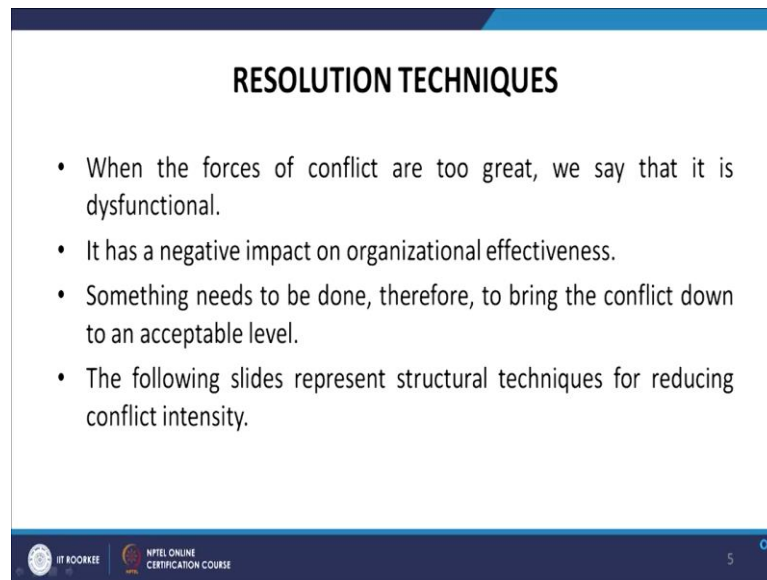
**MODULE OVERVIEW**

- Outlining the primary techniques for resolving structural conflicts.
- Discussing several techniques for stimulating conflict.

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Now, this is what we will cover in this module. Outlining the primary techniques for resolving structural conflicts, and then we will discuss several techniques for stimulating conflict.

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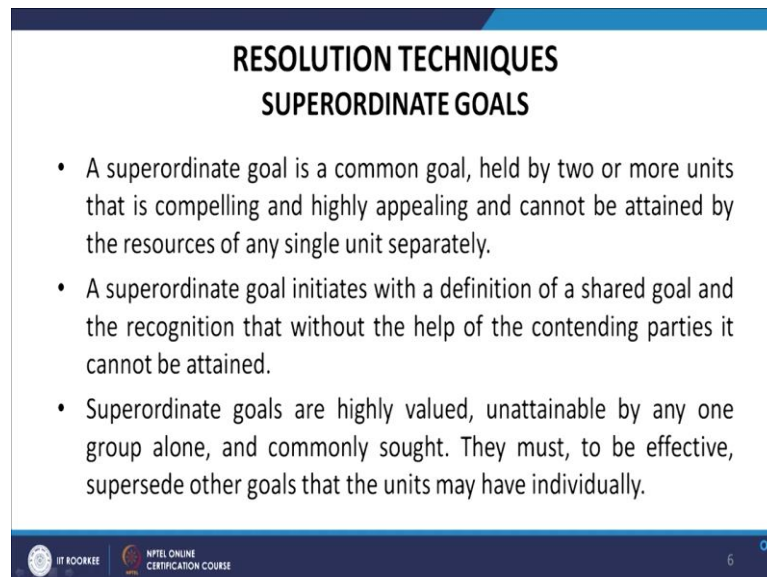
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**

- When the forces of conflict are too great, we say that it is dysfunctional.
- It has a negative impact on organizational effectiveness.
- Something needs to be done, therefore, to bring the conflict down to an acceptable level.
- The following slides represent structural techniques for reducing conflict intensity.

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So, we will start with resolution techniques. When the forces of conflict are too great, we say that it is dysfunctional. It has a negative impact on organizational effectiveness. Something needs to be done, therefore, to bring the conflict down to an acceptable level. The following slides represent structural techniques for reducing conflict intensity.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**SUPERORDINATE GOALS**

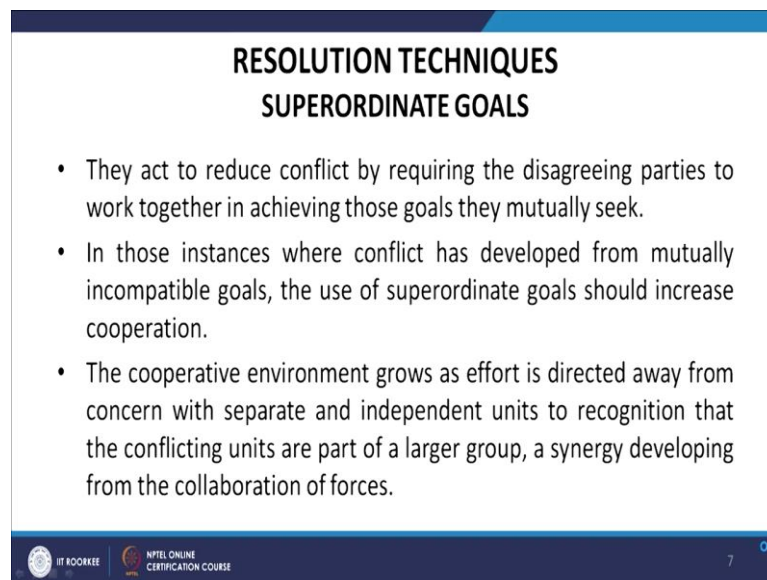
- A superordinate goal is a common goal, held by two or more units that is compelling and highly appealing and cannot be attained by the resources of any single unit separately.
- A superordinate goal initiates with a definition of a shared goal and the recognition that without the help of the contending parties it cannot be attained.
- Superordinate goals are highly valued, unattainable by any one group alone, and commonly sought. They must, to be effective, supersede other goals that the units may have individually.

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So, we will start with the first one that is the superordinate goals. A superordinate goal is a common goal, held by two or more units that is compelling and highly appealing and cannot be attained by the resources of any single unit separately. A superordinate goal

initiates with a definition of a shared goal and the recognition that without the help of the contending parties it cannot be attained. Superordinate goals are highly valued, unattainable by any one group alone, and commonly sought. They must, to be effective supersede other goals that the unit may have individually.

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The slide is titled "RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES" in bold, with "SUPERORDINATE GOALS" in bold below it. It contains three bullet points. The footer includes the IIT ROORKEE logo, the text "NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE", and a page number "7" with a small blue circle icon.

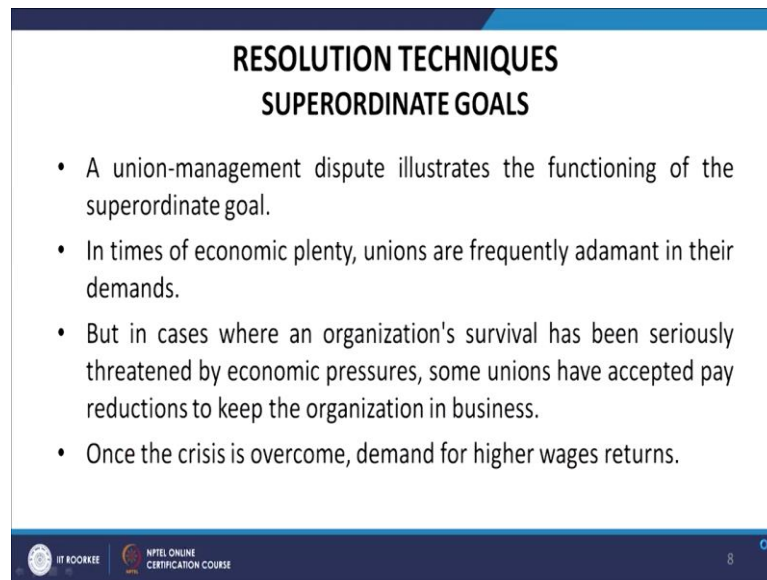
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**SUPERORDINATE GOALS**

- They act to reduce conflict by requiring the disagreeing parties to work together in achieving those goals they mutually seek.
- In those instances where conflict has developed from mutually incompatible goals, the use of superordinate goals should increase cooperation.
- The cooperative environment grows as effort is directed away from concern with separate and independent units to recognition that the conflicting units are part of a larger group, a synergy developing from the collaboration of forces.

IIT ROORKEE NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 7

They act to reduce conflict by requiring the disagreeing parties to work together in achieving those goals they mutually seek. In these instances, where conflict has developed from mutually incompatible goals, the use of superordinate goals should increase cooperation. The cooperative environment grows as effort is directed away from concern with separate and independent units to recognition that the conflicting units are part of a larger group, a synergy developing from the collaboration of forces.

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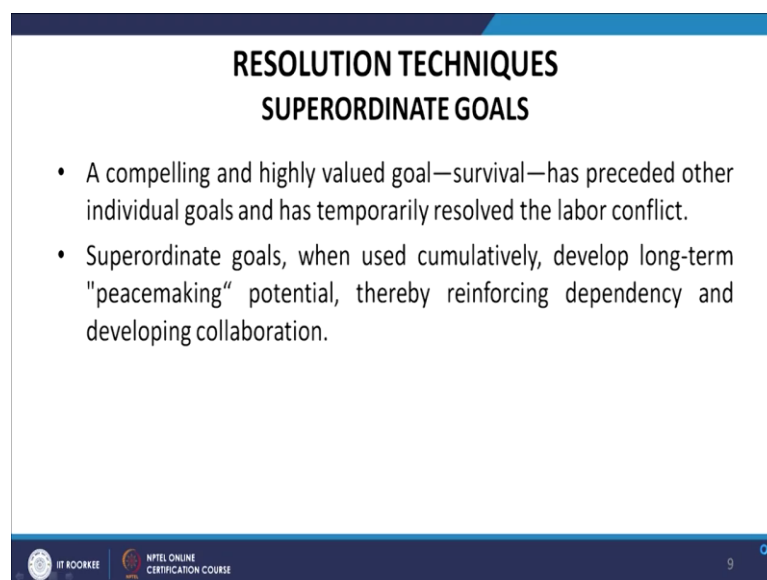
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**SUPERORDINATE GOALS**

- A union-management dispute illustrates the functioning of the superordinate goal.
- In times of economic plenty, unions are frequently adamant in their demands.
- But in cases where an organization's survival has been seriously threatened by economic pressures, some unions have accepted pay reductions to keep the organization in business.
- Once the crisis is overcome, demand for higher wages returns.

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A union-management dispute illustrates the functioning of the superordinate goal. In times of economic plenty, unions are frequently adamant in their demands. But in cases where an organization's survival has been seriously threatened by economic pressures, some unions have accepted pay reductions to keep the organization in business. Once the crisis is overcome, demand for higher wages returns.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**SUPERORDINATE GOALS**

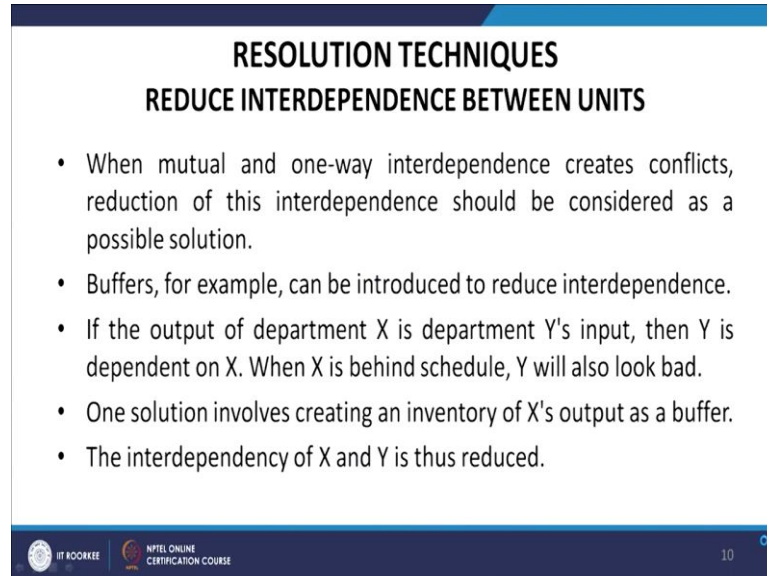
- A compelling and highly valued goal—survival—has preceded other individual goals and has temporarily resolved the labor conflict.
- Superordinate goals, when used cumulatively, develop long-term "peacemaking" potential, thereby reinforcing dependency and developing collaboration.

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A compelling and highly valued goal—survival—has preceded other individual goals and has temporarily resolved the labor conflict. Superordinate goals, when used

cumulatively, develop long-term “peacemaking” potential, thereby reinforcing dependency and developing collaboration.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**

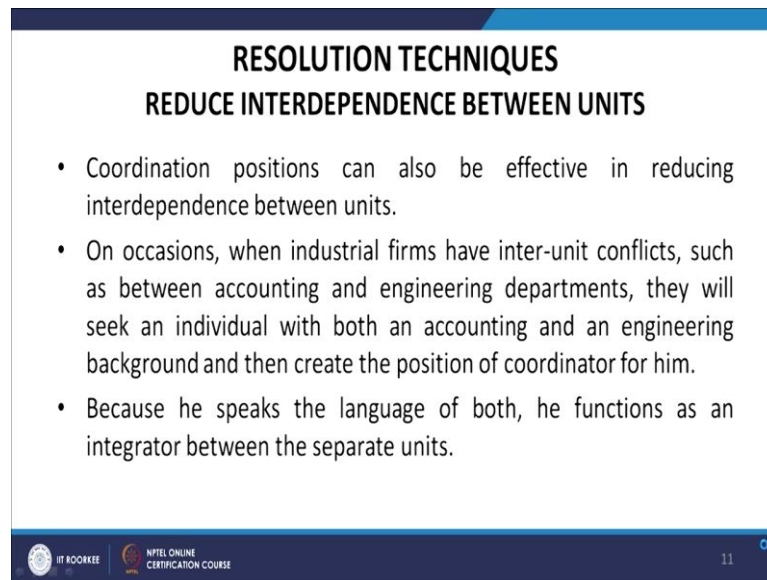
**REDUCE INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN UNITS**

- When mutual and one-way interdependence creates conflicts, reduction of this interdependence should be considered as a possible solution.
- Buffers, for example, can be introduced to reduce interdependence.
- If the output of department X is department Y's input, then Y is dependent on X. When X is behind schedule, Y will also look bad.
- One solution involves creating an inventory of X's output as a buffer.
- The interdependency of X and Y is thus reduced.

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Another resolution technique is to reduce interdependence between units. When mutual and one-way interdependencies create conflicts, reduction of this interdependence should be considered as a possible solution. Buffer, for example, can be introduced to reduce interdependence. If the output of department X is department Y’s input, then Y is dependent on X. When X is behind schedule, Y will also look bad. One solution involves creating an inventory of X’s output as a buffer. The interdependency of X and Y is thus reduced.

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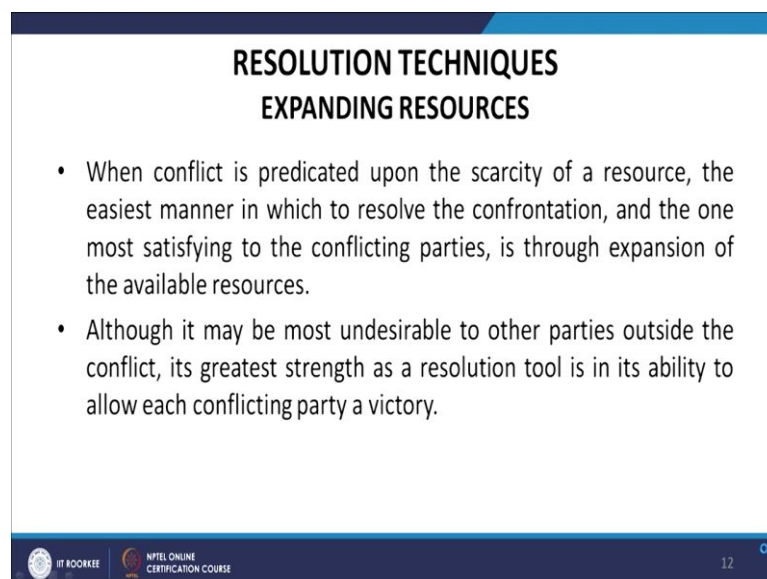
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**REDUCE INTERDEPENDENCE BETWEEN UNITS**

- Coordination positions can also be effective in reducing interdependence between units.
- On occasions, when industrial firms have inter-unit conflicts, such as between accounting and engineering departments, they will seek an individual with both an accounting and an engineering background and then create the position of coordinator for him.
- Because he speaks the language of both, he functions as an integrator between the separate units.

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Coordination positions can also be effective in reducing interdependence between units. On occasions, when industrial firms have inter-unit conflicts, such as between accounting and engineering departments, they will seek an individual with both an accounting and an engineering background and then create the position of coordinator for him. Because he speaks the language of both, he functions as an integrator between the separate units.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**EXPANDING RESOURCES**

- When conflict is predicated upon the scarcity of a resource, the easiest manner in which to resolve the confrontation, and the one most satisfying to the conflicting parties, is through expansion of the available resources.
- Although it may be most undesirable to other parties outside the conflict, its greatest strength as a resolution tool is in its ability to allow each conflicting party a victory.

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Another resolution technique is expanding resources. When conflict is placed on the scarcity of resources, the easiest manner in which to resolve the confrontation, and the one most satisfying to the conflicting parties, is through expansion of the available resources. Although it may be most undesirable to other parties outside the conflict, its greatest strength as a resolution tool is in its ability to allow each conflicting party a victory.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**EXPANDING RESOURCES**

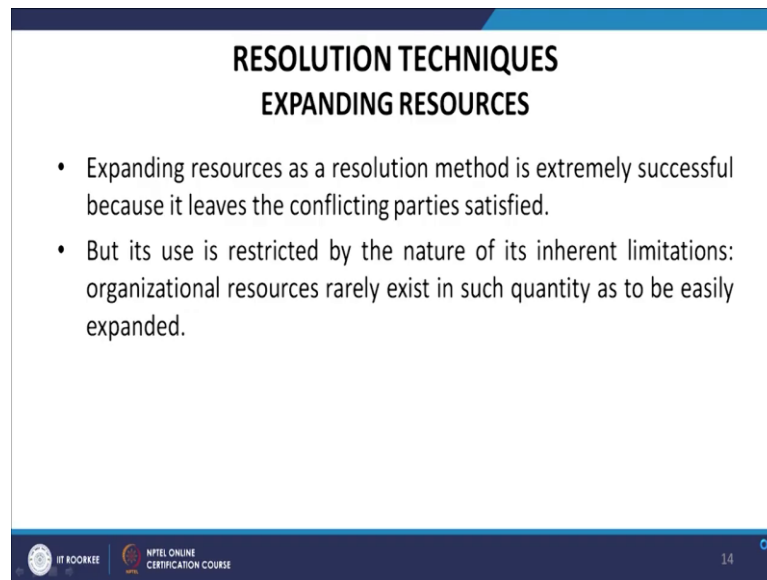
- If the purchasing department in a moderately sized industrial firm is allocated only ₹32,000 for monthly salary increases, to be distributed among the department's four members, any individual's gain above ₹8,000 is at the expense of others in the unit.
- If each of the four departmental members expects a ₹10,000-a-month raise, then there is a conflict: demand for the fixed resources exceeds its supply.
- One solution is to allocate more money for salary adjustments.
- An increase of ₹8,000 in the allocation would resolve the conflict.

IT ROORKEE NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 13

If the purchasing department in a moderately sized industrial firm is allocated only rupees 32,000 for monthly salary increases, to be distributed among the department's four members, any individual's gain above rupees 8000 is at the expense of others in the unit.

If each of the four departmental members expects a rupees 10,000—a-month raise, then there is a conflict: demand for the fixed resources exceeds its supply. One solution is to allocate more money for salary adjustments. An increase of rupees 8000 in the allocation would resolve the conflict.

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The slide features a dark blue header with the title 'RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES' in white, bold, uppercase letters, followed by the subtitle 'EXPANDING RESOURCES' in a smaller, bold, uppercase font. The main content area is white and contains two bullet points. The footer is dark blue and includes the IIT ROORKEE logo, the text 'NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE', and the slide number '14'.

## RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES

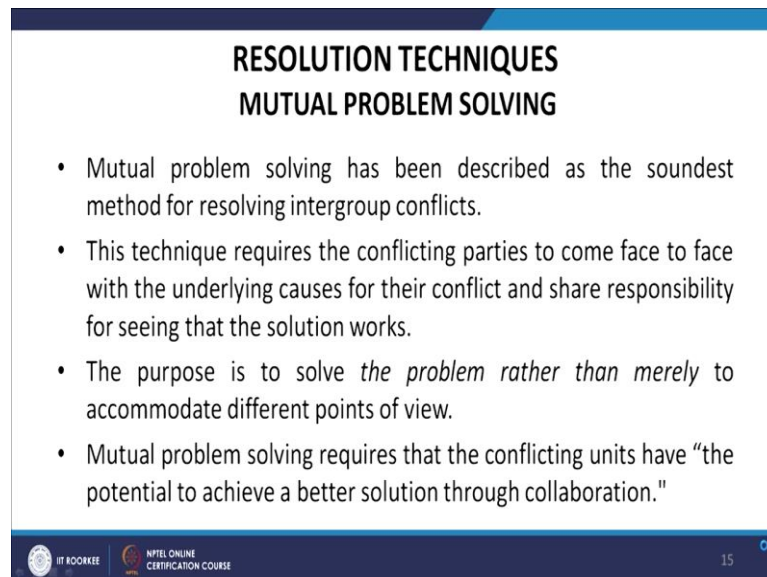
### EXPANDING RESOURCES

- Expanding resources as a resolution method is extremely successful because it leaves the conflicting parties satisfied.
- But its use is restricted by the nature of its inherent limitations: organizational resources rarely exist in such quantity as to be easily expanded.

IIT ROORKEE NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 14

Expanding resources as a resolution method is extremely successful because it leaves the conflicting parties satisfied. But its use is restricted by the nature of its inherent limitations: organizational resources rarely exist in such quantities as to be easily expanded.

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The slide features a dark blue header with the title 'RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES' in white, bold, uppercase letters, followed by the subtitle 'MUTUAL PROBLEM SOLVING' in a smaller, bold, uppercase font. The main content area is white and contains four bullet points. The footer is dark blue and includes the IIT ROORKEE logo, the text 'NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE', and the slide number '15'.

## RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES

### MUTUAL PROBLEM SOLVING

- Mutual problem solving has been described as the soundest method for resolving intergroup conflicts.
- This technique requires the conflicting parties to come face to face with the underlying causes for their conflict and share responsibility for seeing that the solution works.
- The purpose is to solve *the problem rather than merely* to accommodate different points of view.
- Mutual problem solving requires that the conflicting units have "the potential to achieve a better solution through collaboration."

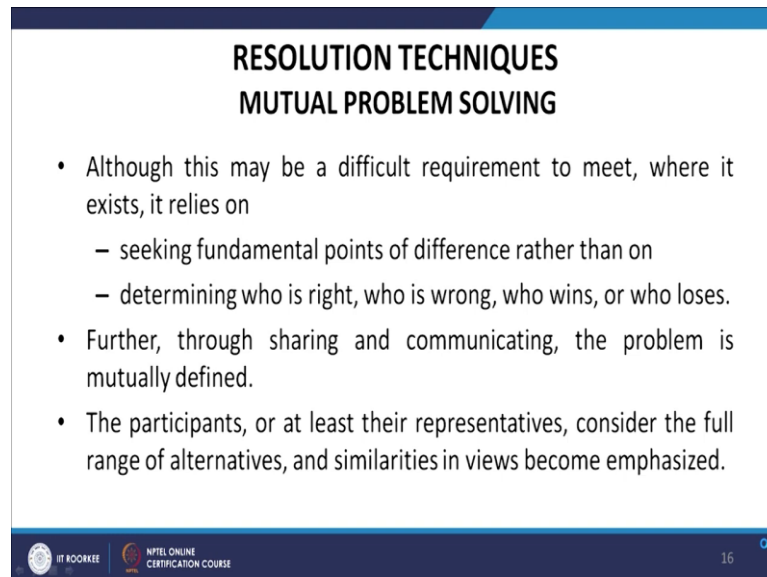
IIT ROORKEE NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 15

Another resolution technique is mutual problem solving. Mutual problem solving has been described as the soundest method for resolving intergroup conflicts. This technique requires the conflicting parties to come face to face with the underlying causes for their



conflict and share responsibility for seeing that the solution works. The purpose is to solve the problem rather than merely to accommodate different points of views. Mutual problem solving requires that the conflicting units have “the potential to achieve a better solution through collaboration.”

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The slide is titled "RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES" and "MUTUAL PROBLEM SOLVING". It contains three bullet points. The first bullet point states that although this may be a difficult requirement to meet, where it exists, it relies on two sub-points: seeking fundamental points of difference rather than on determining who is right, who is wrong, who wins, or who loses. The second bullet point states that further, through sharing and communicating, the problem is mutually defined. The third bullet point states that the participants, or at least their representatives, consider the full range of alternatives, and similarities in views become emphasized. The slide footer includes the IIT ROORKEE logo, the text "NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE", and the number "16".

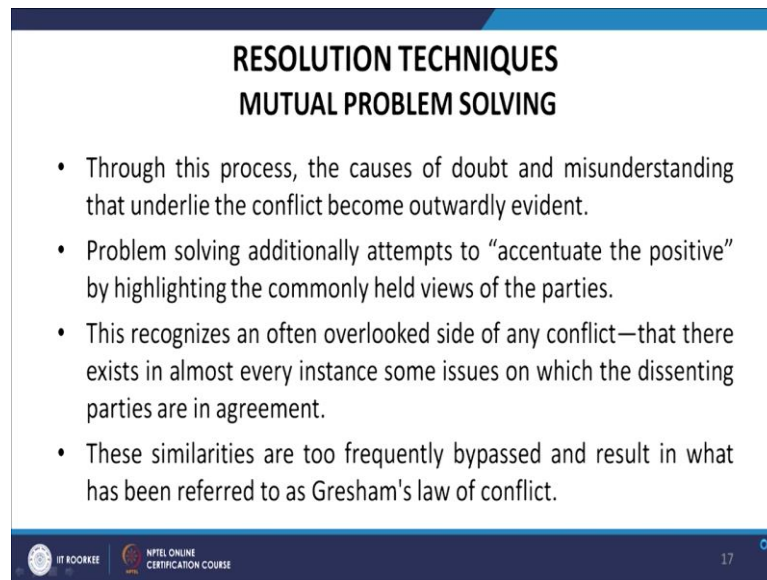
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**MUTUAL PROBLEM SOLVING**

- Although this may be a difficult requirement to meet, where it exists, it relies on
  - seeking fundamental points of difference rather than on
  - determining who is right, who is wrong, who wins, or who loses.
- Further, through sharing and communicating, the problem is mutually defined.
- The participants, or at least their representatives, consider the full range of alternatives, and similarities in views become emphasized.

IIT ROORKEE NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 16

Although this may be a difficult requirement to meet, where it exists, it relies on – seeking fundamental points of differences rather than on, - determining who is right, who is wrong, who win, and who loses. Further, through sharing and communicating the problem is mutually defined. The participants, or at least their representatives, consider the full range of alternatives, and similarities in views become emphasized.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**MUTUAL PROBLEM SOLVING**

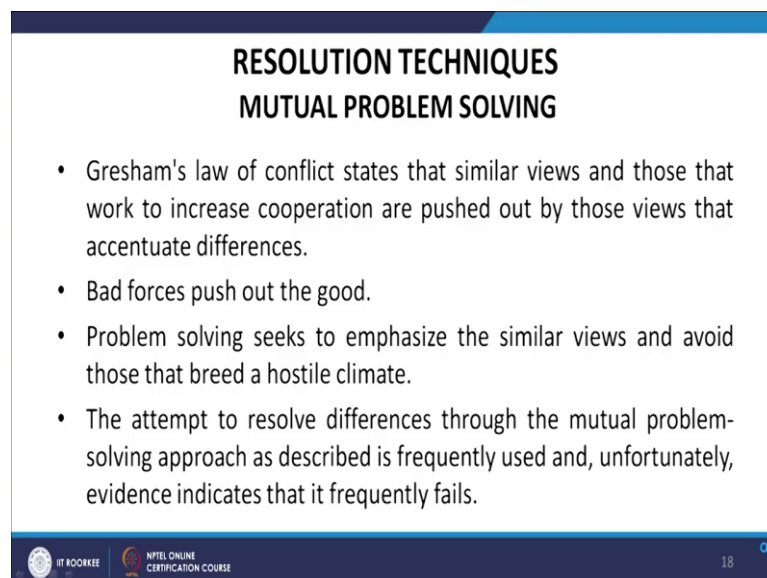
- Through this process, the causes of doubt and misunderstanding that underlie the conflict become outwardly evident.
- Problem solving additionally attempts to “accentuate the positive” by highlighting the commonly held views of the parties.
- This recognizes an often overlooked side of any conflict—that there exists in almost every instance some issues on which the dissenting parties are in agreement.
- These similarities are too frequently bypassed and result in what has been referred to as Gresham's law of conflict.

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Through this process, the causes of doubt and misunderstanding that underlie the conflict become outwardly evident. Problem solving additionally attempts to, “accentuate the positive” by highlighting the commonly held view of the parties.

This recognizes an often overlooked side of any conflict—that there exists in almost every instance some issues on which the dissenting parties are in agreement. These similarities are too frequently bypassed and result in what has been referred to as the Gresham’s law of conflict.

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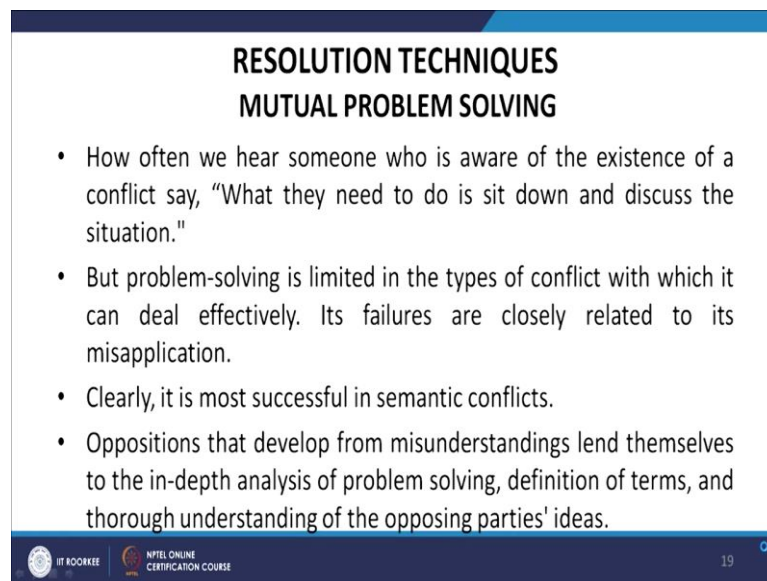
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**MUTUAL PROBLEM SOLVING**

- Gresham's law of conflict states that similar views and those that work to increase cooperation are pushed out by those views that accentuate differences.
- Bad forces push out the good.
- Problem solving seeks to emphasize the similar views and avoid those that breed a hostile climate.
- The attempt to resolve differences through the mutual problem-solving approach as described is frequently used and, unfortunately, evidence indicates that it frequently fails.

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This Gresham's law of conflict states that similar views and those that work to increase cooperation are pushed out by those views that accentuate differences. Bad forces push out the good. Problem solving seeks to emphasize the similar views and avoid those that breed a hostile climate. The attempt to resolve differences through the mutual problem-solving approach as described is frequently used and, unfortunately, evidence indicates that it frequently fails.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**MUTUAL PROBLEM SOLVING**

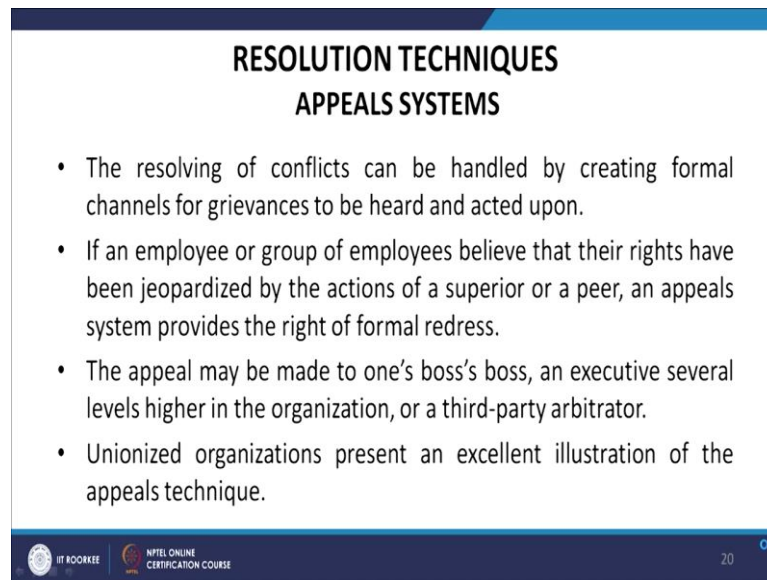
- How often we hear someone who is aware of the existence of a conflict say, "What they need to do is sit down and discuss the situation."
- But problem-solving is limited in the types of conflict with which it can deal effectively. Its failures are closely related to its misapplication.
- Clearly, it is most successful in semantic conflicts.
- Oppositions that develop from misunderstandings lend themselves to the in-depth analysis of problem solving, definition of terms, and thorough understanding of the opposing parties' ideas.

IT ROOKIEE | NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE | 19

How often we hear someone who is aware of the existence of a conflict say, "what they need to do is to sit down and discuss the situation." But problem-solving is limited in the types of conflict with which it can deal effectively. Its failures are closely related to its misapplication. Clearly, it is most successful in semantic conflicts.

Oppositions that develop from misunderstandings lend themselves to the in-depth analysis of problem solving, definition of terms, and thorough understanding of the opposing parties' ideas.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**APPEALS SYSTEMS**

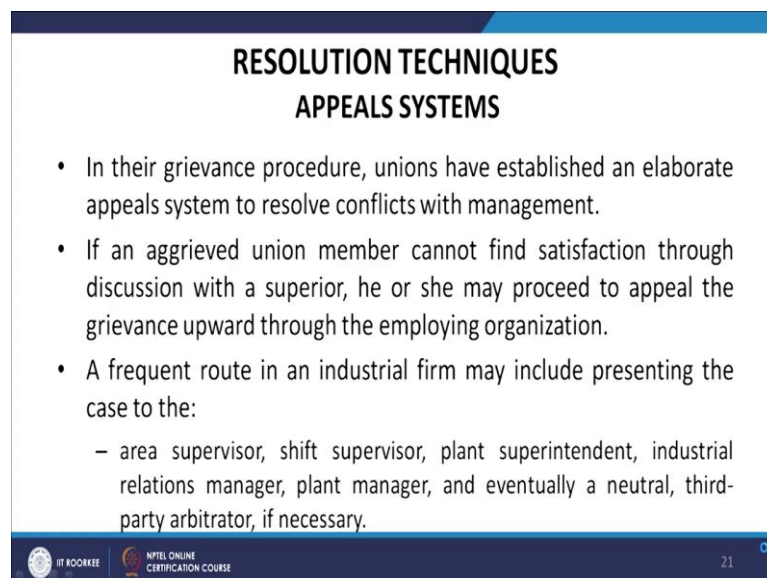
- The resolving of conflicts can be handled by creating formal channels for grievances to be heard and acted upon.
- If an employee or group of employees believe that their rights have been jeopardized by the actions of a superior or a peer, an appeals system provides the right of formal redress.
- The appeal may be made to one's boss's boss, an executive several levels higher in the organization, or a third-party arbitrator.
- Unionized organizations present an excellent illustration of the appeals technique.

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Another resolution technique is appeals systems. The resolving of conflicts can be handled by creating formal channels for grievances to be heard and acted upon. If an employee or group of employees believe that their rights have been jeopardized by the actions of a superior or a peer, an appeals system provides the right of formal redress.

The appeal may be made to one's boss's boss, an executive several levels higher in the organization, or a third-party arbitrator. Unionized organizations present an excellent illustration of the appeals technique.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**APPEALS SYSTEMS**

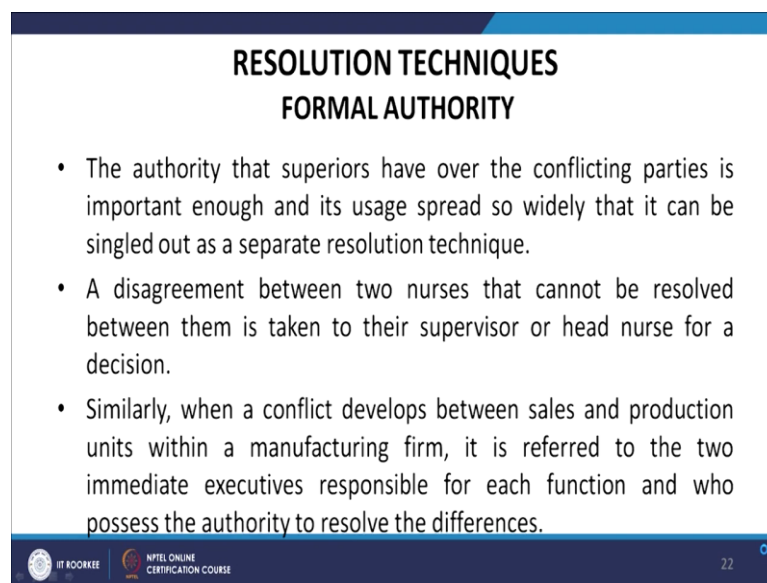
- In their grievance procedure, unions have established an elaborate appeals system to resolve conflicts with management.
- If an aggrieved union member cannot find satisfaction through discussion with a superior, he or she may proceed to appeal the grievance upward through the employing organization.
- A frequent route in an industrial firm may include presenting the case to the:
  - area supervisor, shift supervisor, plant superintendent, industrial relations manager, plant manager, and eventually a neutral, third-party arbitrator, if necessary.

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In the grievance procedure, unions have established an elaborate appeals system to resolve conflicts with management. If an aggrieved union member cannot find satisfaction through discussion with a superior, he or she may proceed to appeal the grievance upward through the employing organization.

A frequent route in an industrial firm may include presenting the case to the: – area supervisor, shift supervisor, plant superintendent, industrial relations manager, plant manager, and eventually a neutral, third-party arbitrator, if necessary.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**FORMAL AUTHORITY**

- The authority that superiors have over the conflicting parties is important enough and its usage spread so widely that it can be singled out as a separate resolution technique.
- A disagreement between two nurses that cannot be resolved between them is taken to their supervisor or head nurse for a decision.
- Similarly, when a conflict develops between sales and production units within a manufacturing firm, it is referred to the two immediate executives responsible for each function and who possess the authority to resolve the differences.

IT BOOKEE NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 22

Formal authority is another resolution technique. The authority that superiors have over the conflicting parties is important enough and its usage spread so widely that it can be singled out as a separate resolution technique.

The disagreement between two nurses that cannot be resolved between them is taken to their supervisor or head nurse for a decision. Similarly, when a conflict develops between sales and production units within a manufacturing firm, it is referred to the two immediate executives responsible for each function and who possess the authority to resolve the differences.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**FORMAL AUTHORITY**

- If an agreement cannot be reached at this level, their mutual superior will act as the ultimate judge, and in the majority of cases, the authority of the superior will be accepted by both parties.
- Individuals in organizations, with rare exception, recognize and accept the authority of their superiors as an acceptable way of resolving conflicts.
- Although they may not be in agreement with these decisions, they abide by them.
- Thus, formal authority is highly successful in achieving reductions in conflict.

IIT ROORKEE NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 23

If an agreement cannot be reached at this level, their mutual superior will act as the ultimate judge, and in the majority of cases, the authority of the superior will be accepted by both parties. Individuals in organizations, with rare exception, recognize and accept the authority of the superiors as an acceptable way of resolving conflicts.

Although they may not be in agreement with these decisions, they abide by them. Thus, formal authority is highly successful in achieving reductions in conflict.

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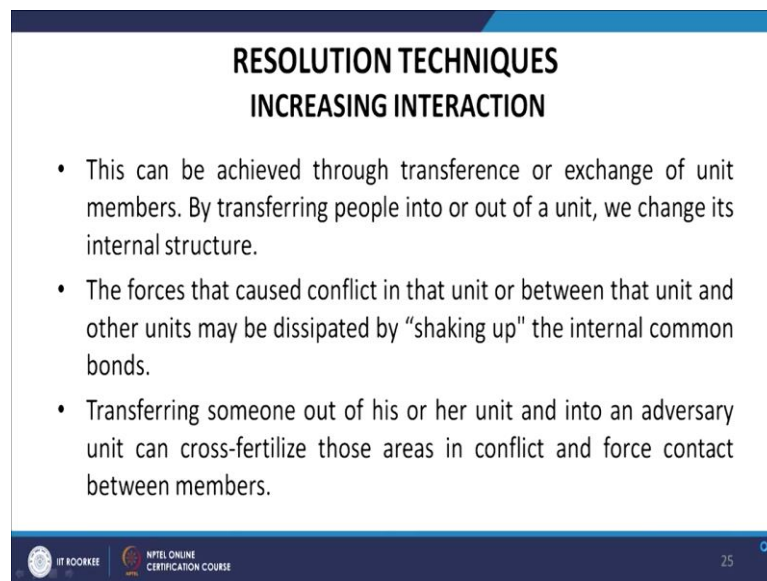
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**INCREASING INTERACTION**

- All other things held equal, the more people interact with each other, the more likely they are to find common interests and bonds that can facilitate cooperation.
- Certainly, if parties with distinctly opposing values are forced to interact regularly, there is a high probability of conflict.
- But our point is that continued interaction should reduce the conflict.
- It may never be as low as management might desire, but the direction should be downward.

IIT ROORKEE NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 24

Now, let us see how increasing interaction can work as our resolution technique. All other things held equal, the more people interact with each other, the more likely they are to find common interests and bonds that can facilitate cooperation. Certainly, if parties with distinct opposing values are forced to interact regularly, there is a high probability of conflict. But our point is that continued interaction should reduce the conflict. It may never be as low as management might desire, but the direction should be downward.

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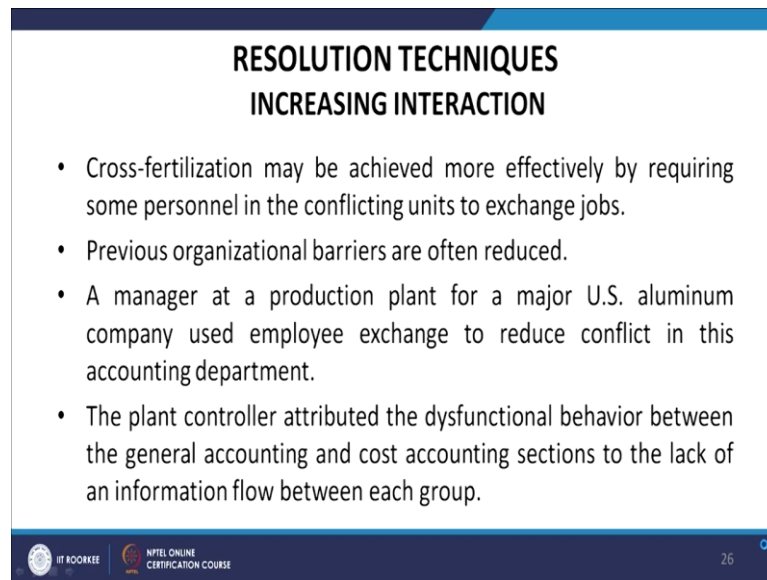
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**INCREASING INTERACTION**

- This can be achieved through transference or exchange of unit members. By transferring people into or out of a unit, we change its internal structure.
- The forces that caused conflict in that unit or between that unit and other units may be dissipated by “shaking up” the internal common bonds.
- Transferring someone out of his or her unit and into an adversary unit can cross-fertilize those areas in conflict and force contact between members.

IT ROOKIEE | NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 25

This can be achieved through transference or exchange of unit members. By transferring people into or out of a unit, we change its internal structure. The forces that caused conflict in that unit or between that unit and other units may be dissipated by “shaking up” the internal common bonds. Transferring someone out of his or her unit and into an adversary unit can cross-fertilize those areas in conflict and force contact between members.

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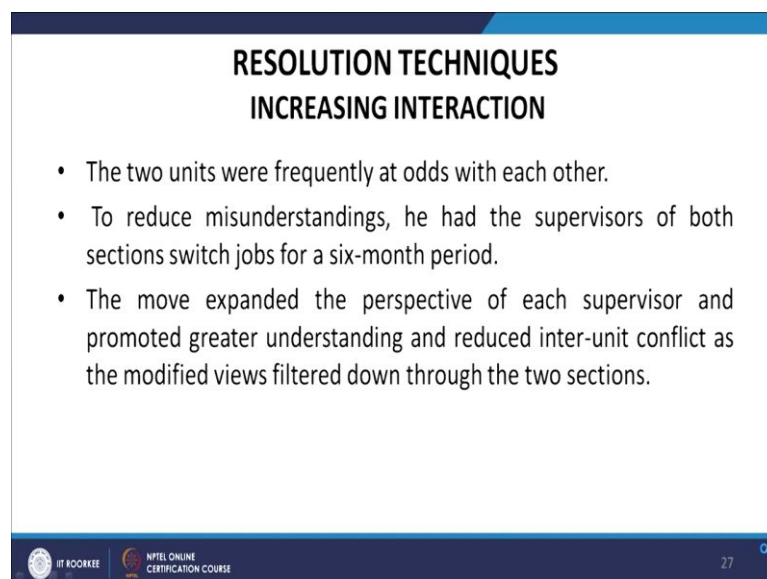
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**INCREASING INTERACTION**

- Cross-fertilization may be achieved more effectively by requiring some personnel in the conflicting units to exchange jobs.
- Previous organizational barriers are often reduced.
- A manager at a production plant for a major U.S. aluminum company used employee exchange to reduce conflict in this accounting department.
- The plant controller attributed the dysfunctional behavior between the general accounting and cost accounting sections to the lack of an information flow between each group.

IT ROORKEE NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 26

Cross-fertilization may be achieved more effectively by requiring some personnel in the conflicting units to exchange jobs. Previous organizational barriers are often reduced. A manager at a production plant for a major U.S. aluminum company used employee exchange to reduce conflict in this accounting department. The plant controller attributed the dysfunctional behavior between the general accounting and cost accounting sections to the lack of an information flow between each group.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**INCREASING INTERACTION**

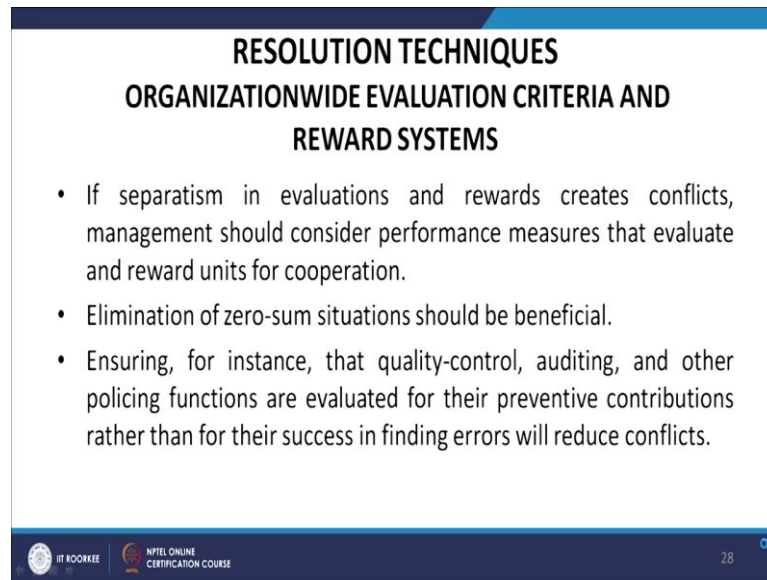
- The two units were frequently at odds with each other.
- To reduce misunderstandings, he had the supervisors of both sections switch jobs for a six-month period.
- The move expanded the perspective of each supervisor and promoted greater understanding and reduced inter-unit conflict as the modified views filtered down through the two sections.

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The two units were frequently at odds with each other. To reduce misunderstandings, he had the supervisors of both sections switch jobs for a six-month period. The move expanded the perspective of each supervisor and promoted greater understanding and reduced inter-unit conflict as the modified views filtered down through the two sections.

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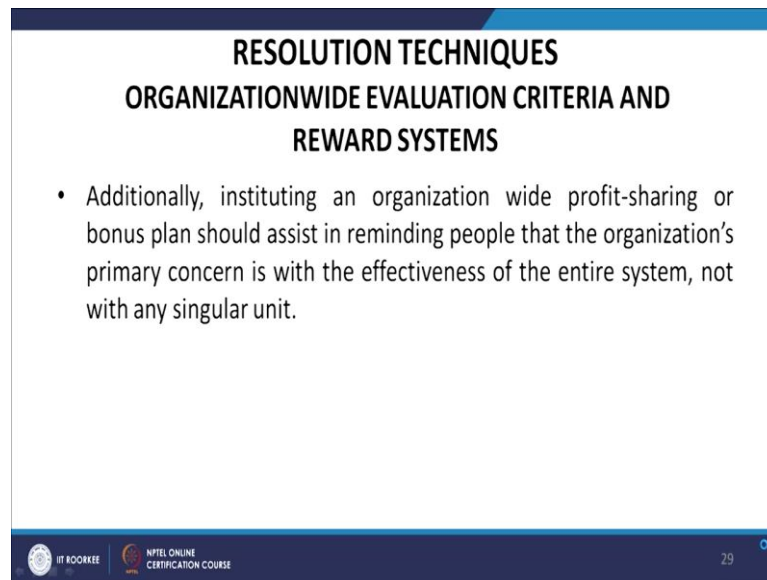
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**ORGANIZATIONWIDE EVALUATION CRITERIA AND**  
**REWARD SYSTEMS**

- If separatism in evaluations and rewards creates conflicts, management should consider performance measures that evaluate and reward units for cooperation.
- Elimination of zero-sum situations should be beneficial.
- Ensuring, for instance, that quality-control, auditing, and other policing functions are evaluated for their preventive contributions rather than for their success in finding errors will reduce conflicts.

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Another resolution technique is, organization wide evaluation criteria and reward system. If separatism in evaluations and rewards creates conflicts, management should consider performance measures that evaluate and reward units for cooperation. Elimination of zero-sum situations should be beneficial. Ensuring, for instance, that quality-control, auditing and other policing functions are evaluated for their preventive contributions rather than for their success in finding errors will reduce conflicts.

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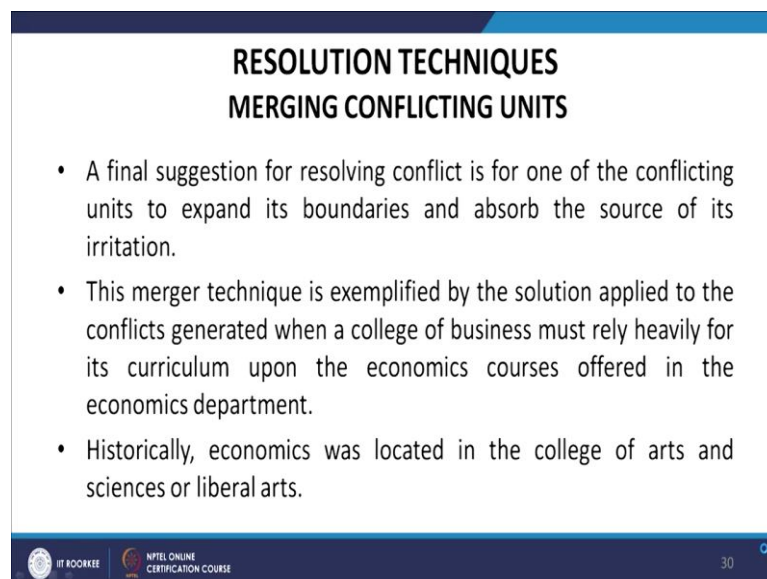
**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**ORGANIZATIONWIDE EVALUATION CRITERIA AND  
REWARD SYSTEMS**

- Additionally, instituting an organization wide profit-sharing or bonus plan should assist in reminding people that the organization's primary concern is with the effectiveness of the entire system, not with any singular unit.

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Additionally, instituting an organization wide profit-sharing or bonus plan should assist in reminding people that the organization's primary concern is with the effectiveness of the entire system, not with any singular unit.

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**RESOLUTION TECHNIQUES**  
**MERGING CONFLICTING UNITS**

- A final suggestion for resolving conflict is for one of the conflicting units to expand its boundaries and absorb the source of its irritation.
- This merger technique is exemplified by the solution applied to the conflicts generated when a college of business must rely heavily for its curriculum upon the economics courses offered in the economics department.
- Historically, economics was located in the college of arts and sciences or liberal arts.

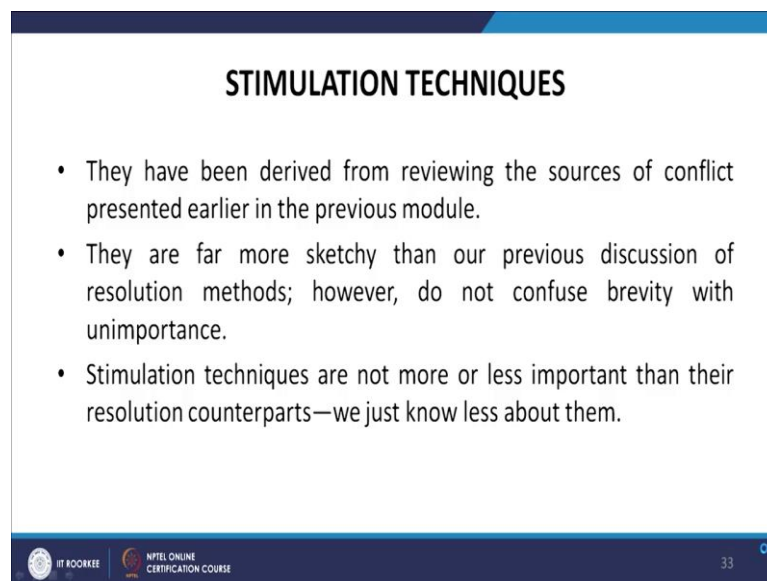
IT ROORKEE | NPTEL ONLINE CERTIFICATION COURSE 30

Another resolution technique is merging conflicting units. A final suggestion for resolving conflict is for one of the conflicting units to expand its boundaries and absorb the source of its irritation.

This merger technique is exemplified by the solution applied to the conflicts generated when a college of business must rely heavily for its curriculum upon the economics courses offered in the economics department. Historically, economics was located in the college of arts and sciences or liberal arts. The philosophical conflicts that often develop between business or economics can be reconciled through expansion of the business program to include the economics department.

Now, we will look at the stimulation techniques. The interactionist view recognize that conflict may at times be too low as well as too high. When it is too low, Managers need to stimulate opposition to create functional conflict. Unfortunately, from the theoretical stand point, we know a great deal more about how to resolve conflicts effectively, than we know about stimulating them. The following discussion contain some potential stimulation techniques.

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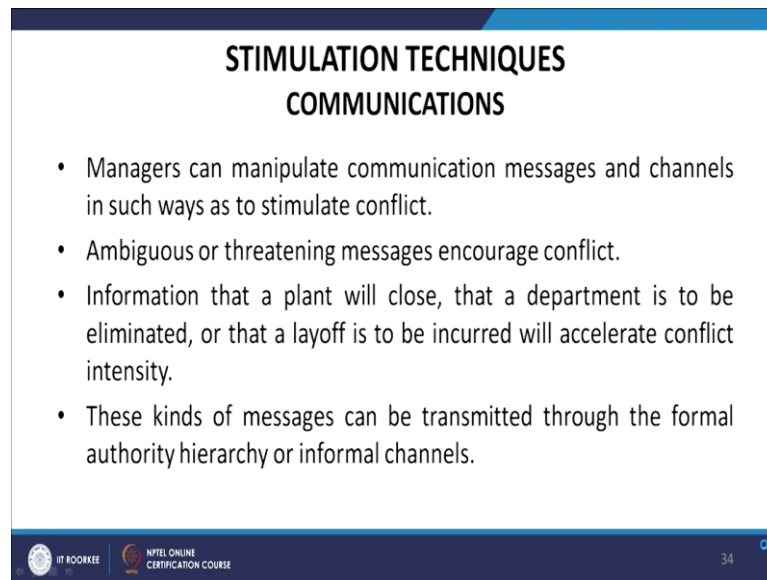
**STIMULATION TECHNIQUES**

- They have been derived from reviewing the sources of conflict presented earlier in the previous module.
- They are far more sketchy than our previous discussion of resolution methods; however, do not confuse brevity with unimportance.
- Stimulation techniques are not more or less important than their resolution counterparts—we just know less about them.

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They have been derived from reviewing the sources of conflict presented earlier in the previous module. They are far more sketchy than our previous discussion of resolution methods; however, do not confuse brevity with unimportance. Stimulation techniques are not more or less important than their resolution counterparts—we just know less about them.

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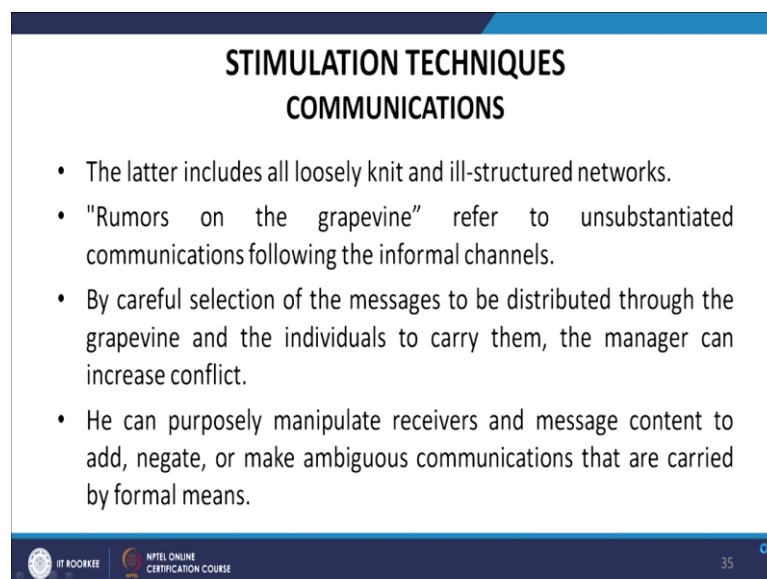
**STIMULATION TECHNIQUES  
COMMUNICATIONS**

- Managers can manipulate communication messages and channels in such ways as to stimulate conflict.
- Ambiguous or threatening messages encourage conflict.
- Information that a plant will close, that a department is to be eliminated, or that a layoff is to be incurred will accelerate conflict intensity.
- These kinds of messages can be transmitted through the formal authority hierarchy or informal channels.

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So, one stimulation technique is communications. Managers can manipulate communication messages and channels in such ways as to stimulate conflict. Ambiguous or threatening messages encourage conflict. Information that a plant will close, that a department is to be eliminated or that a layoff is to be incurred will accelerate conflict intensity. These kinds of messages can be transmitted through the formal authority hierarchy or informal channels.

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**STIMULATION TECHNIQUES  
COMMUNICATIONS**

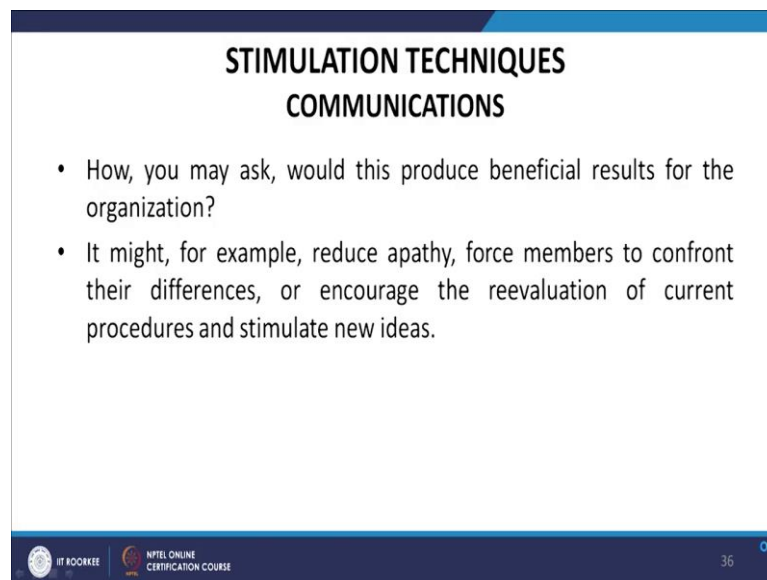
- The latter includes all loosely knit and ill-structured networks.
- "Rumors on the grapevine" refer to unsubstantiated communications following the informal channels.
- By careful selection of the messages to be distributed through the grapevine and the individuals to carry them, the manager can increase conflict.
- He can purposely manipulate receivers and message content to add, negate, or make ambiguous communications that are carried by formal means.

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He can purposely manipulate receivers and message contents to add, negate, and make ambiguous communications that are carried by formal means.

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**STIMULATION TECHNIQUES  
COMMUNICATIONS**

- How, you may ask, would this produce beneficial results for the organization?
- It might, for example, reduce apathy, force members to confront their differences, or encourage the reevaluation of current procedures and stimulate new ideas.

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How, you may ask, would this produce beneficial results for the organization? It might, for example, reduce apathy, force members to confront their differences, or encourage the reevaluation of current procedures and stimulate new ideas.

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**STIMULATION TECHNIQUES**  
**HETEROGENEITY**

- One way in which to "shake up" a stagnant unit is to add one or more individuals whose background, experience, and values vary significantly from those currently held by members in a unit.
- Heterogeneity can be synthetic as well as real.
- The infiltrator may play the role of the proverbial "devil's advocate," who though sharing similar views with other unit members, is assigned the task of questioning, attacking, inquiring and otherwise resisting any homogeneity of views.
- Either way, the status quo has been disturbed by introducing heterogeneous people.

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Heterogeneity is another stimulation technique. One way in which to “shake up” a stagnant unit is to add one or more individuals whose background, experience, and values vary significantly from those currently held by the members in a unit. The heterogeneity can be synthetic as well as real.

The infiltrator may play the role of the proverbial “devil’s advocate,” who though sharing similar views with other unit members, is assigned the task of questioning, attacking, inquiring and otherwise resisting any homogeneity of views. Either way, the status quo has been distributed by introducing heterogeneous people.

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### STIMULATION TECHNIQUES

#### COMPETITION

- Management can stimulate conflict by creating competitive situations between units.
- Of course, where the stakes in the competition are zero sum, you can expect the conflict to be that much more intense.
- For instance, when city fire units compete against each other to win the "best firehouse" award, the result is generally a more effective firefighting organization.
- Equipment is kept in top condition, units respond rapidly to alarms, and teamwork is high.

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Now, let us see how competition can act as a stimulation technique. Management can stimulate conflict by creating competitive situations between units. Of course, where the stakes in the competition are zero sum, you can expect the conflict to be that much more intense.

For instance, when city fire units compete against each other to win the “best firehouse” award, the result is generally a more effective firefighting organization. Equipment is kept in top condition, units respond rapidly to alarms, and teamwork is high.

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### STIMULATION TECHNIQUES

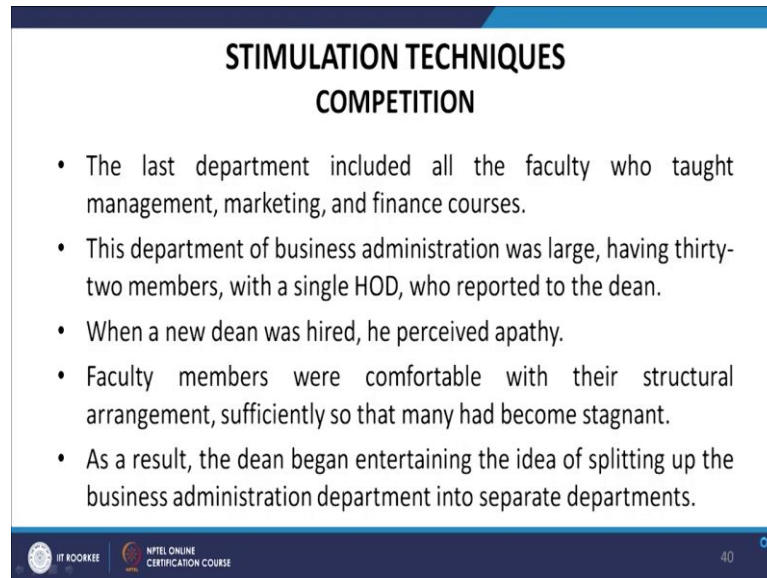
#### COMPETITION

- Many companies that continually promote sales contests within their sales staffs believe that this competition leads to a more effective sales force.
- Changing the structure by increasing horizontal differentiation has been suggested as an excellent way to create conflict.
- The example is offered of a school of business made up of just a few departments—accounting, economics, and business administration.

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Many companies that continually promote sales contests within their sales staffs believe that this competition leads to a more effective sales force. Changing the structure by increasing horizontal differentiation has been suggested as an excellent way to create conflict. The example is offered of a school of business made up of just a few departments – accounting, economics, and business administrations.

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**STIMULATION TECHNIQUES**  
**COMPETITION**

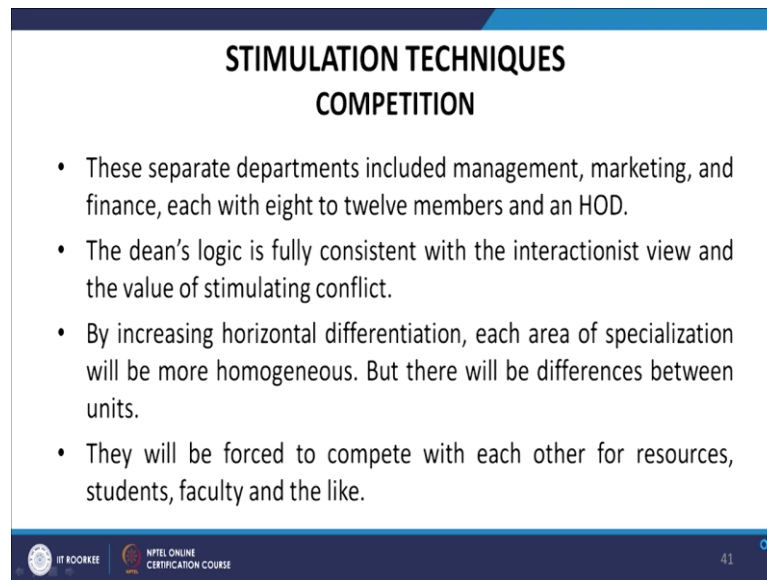
- The last department included all the faculty who taught management, marketing, and finance courses.
- This department of business administration was large, having thirty-two members, with a single HOD, who reported to the dean.
- When a new dean was hired, he perceived apathy.
- Faculty members were comfortable with their structural arrangement, sufficiently so that many had become stagnant.
- As a result, the dean began entertaining the idea of splitting up the business administration department into separate departments.

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The last department included all the faculty who taught management, marketing, and finance courses. The department of business administration was large, having thirty-two members, with a single HOD, who reported to the dean. When a new dean was hired, he perceived apathy. Faculty members were comfortable with their structural arrangement, sufficiently so that many had become stagnant. As a result, the dean began entertaining the idea of splitting up the business administration department into separate departments.



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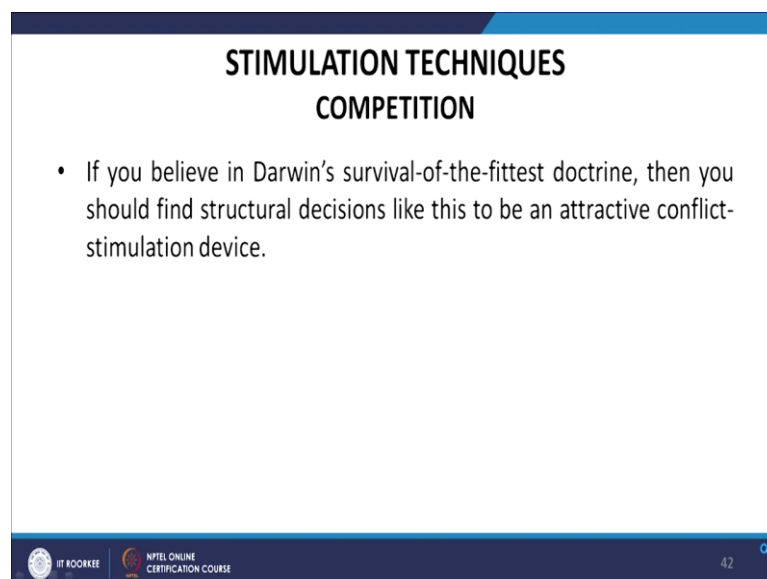
**STIMULATION TECHNIQUES**  
**COMPETITION**

- These separate departments included management, marketing, and finance, each with eight to twelve members and an HOD.
- The dean's logic is fully consistent with the interactionist view and the value of stimulating conflict.
- By increasing horizontal differentiation, each area of specialization will be more homogeneous. But there will be differences between units.
- They will be forced to compete with each other for resources, students, faculty and the like.

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These separate departments included management, marketing, and finance, each with eight to twelve members and a head of the department. The dean's logic is fully consistent with the interactionist view and value of stimulating conflict. By increasing horizontal differentiation, each area of specialization will be more homogenous. But there will be differences between units. They will be forced to compete with each other for resources, students, faculty and the like.

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**STIMULATION TECHNIQUES**  
**COMPETITION**

- If you believe in Darwin's survival-of-the-fittest doctrine, then you should find structural decisions like this to be an attractive conflict-stimulation device.

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If you believe in Darwin's survival-of-the-fittest doctrine, then you should find structural decisions like this to be an attractive conflict-stimulation device.

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**PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

- Conflict is a process in which an effort is purposely made by one person or unit to block another that results in frustrating the attainment of the other's goals or the furthering of his or her interests.
- Views toward conflict can be labeled as traditional and interactionist.
- The traditional views all conflict as bad.
- The interactionist encourages conflict.

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Now, how do we go about putting it all together? Conflict is a process in which an effort is purposely made by one person or unit to block another that results in frustrating the attainment of the other's goals or the furthering of his or her interests. Views toward conflict can be labeled as traditional and interactionist. The traditional views all conflict as bad. The interactionist encourages conflict.

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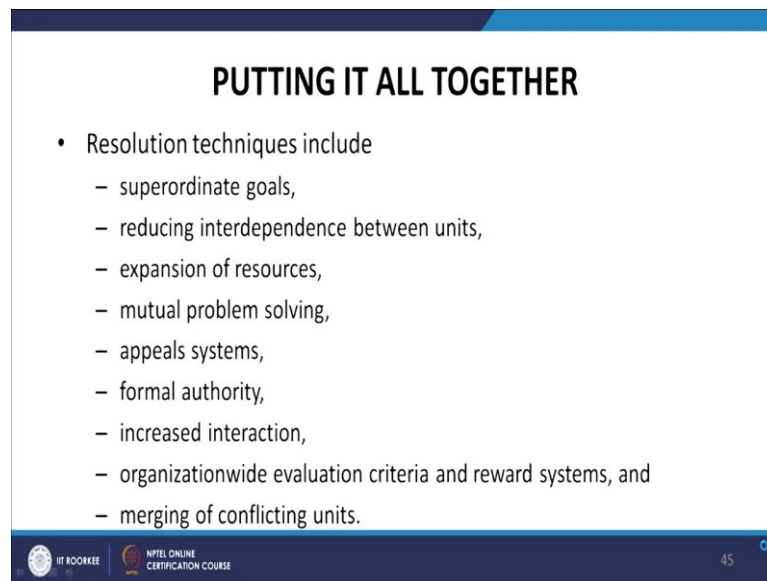
**PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

- The interactionist perspective is currently in vogue among theorists, but the traditional perspective dominates in practice.
- The most frequently cited structural sources of conflict are
  - mutual task dependence
  - high horizontal differentiation
  - dependence on common scarce resources
  - differences in evaluation criteria and reward systems
  - participative decision making
  - status incongruence
  - communication distortions
  - one-way task dependence
  - low formalization
  - heterogeneity of members
  - role dissatisfaction

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The interactionist perspective is currently in vogue among theorists, but the traditional perspective dominates in practice. The most frequently cited structural sources of conflict are mutual task dependence – that is one way task dependence; high horizontal differentiation – that is low formalization; dependence on common scarce resources; participative decision making; status incongruence; communication distortions.

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**PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

- Resolution techniques include
  - superordinate goals,
  - reducing interdependence between units,
  - expansion of resources,
  - mutual problem solving,
  - appeals systems,
  - formal authority,
  - increased interaction,
  - organizationwide evaluation criteria and reward systems, and
  - merging of conflicting units.

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Resolution techniques include superordinate goals, reducing interdependence between units, expansion of resources, mutual problem solving, appeals system, formal authority, increased interaction, organization wide evaluation criteria and reward systems, and merging of conflicting units.

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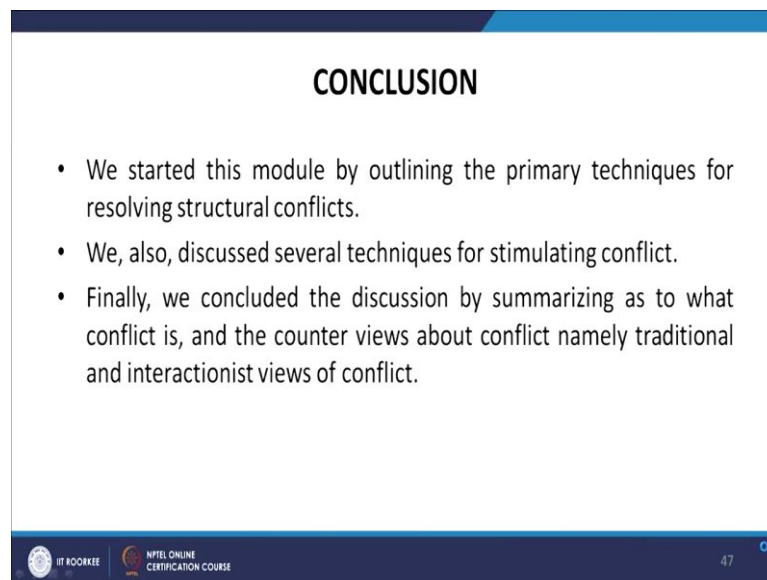
**PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER**

- Stimulation of conflict can be achieved by
  - manipulating communication messages and channels,
  - creating heterogeneous units, or
  - creating competition between units.

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Stimulation of conflict can be achieved by manipulating communication messages and channels, creating heterogeneous units, or creating competition between units.

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**CONCLUSION**

- We started this module by outlining the primary techniques for resolving structural conflicts.
- We, also, discussed several techniques for stimulating conflict.
- Finally, we concluded the discussion by summarizing as to what conflict is, and the counter views about conflict namely traditional and interactionist views of conflict.

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So, to conclude this module, we started this module by outlining the primary techniques for resolving structural conflicts. We, also, discussed several techniques for stimulating conflict. Finally, we concluded the discussion by summarizing as to what conflict is, and the counter views of a conflict, namely traditional and interactionist views of conflict.

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The material for this module was taken from these four books.

Thank you.