

Differences Between Groups and Teams in Organizations

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Groups and Teams Groups and teams are an important part of organisational infrastructure (Beersma, Hollenbeck, Humphrey, Moon, Conlon and Ilgen, 2005). Organisations form groups and teams in order to achieve organisational efficiencies and to aid in the growth and development of employees because they are found to be better than individual efficiency (Watson and Gallagher, 2005). However, groups and teams are often mixed up and confused for one another even though they are different. This paper is an attempt to understand the differences between groups and teams, the reasons for such an existence, and the importance of understanding this difference, before drawing conclusions from the analysis.

Groups and Teams: Similarities and differences A group is defined in many ways. For instance, Turner (1982, p.15 in Forsyth, 2005, p.4) defines a group as “two or more people who perceive themselves to be of the same category”. In another definition, Pennington (2002, p.3) defines a group as “a psychological group of any number of people who interact with each other, are aware of each other, and perceive themselves to be in a group”. In yet another definition, Keyton (2006) defines a group as two or more individuals that interact with each other, and also work interdependently on a commonly agreed task or goal. Finally Watson and Gallagher (2005) define a group as two or people

who may interact with each other, share common resources, but whose performance is measured and evaluated individually. Katzenbach and Smith (2005) also write that the performance of a group is evaluated individually; that a group has a group leader, has a common objective that is more closely aligned with the overall organisational objective, and has work that is..... middle of papercompetition, and team performance: Toward a contingency approach', Academy of Management Journal, 46, pp.572-590.Forsyth, D. (2005). Group Dynamics. Mason, Ohio: Cengage Learning.Katzenbach, J. and Smith, D. (2005). 'The discipline of teams', Harvard Business Review, July-August Issue.Keen, T. (2003). Creating effective and successful teams. Purdue, US: Purdue University Press.Keyton, J. and Beck, S. (2008). 'Team attributes, processes and values: a pedagogical framework', Business Communication Quarterly, 71 (4), pp. 488-504.Keyton, J. (2006). Communicating in groups: Building relationships for group effectiveness (3rd ed.). New York: Oxford University Press.Pennington, D. (2002). The social psychology of behaviour in small groups. Hove, UK: Psychology PressWatson, G. and Gallagher, K. (2005). Managing for results. Broadway, London: CIPD Publishing.

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