Social Psychology

Group Influence

What We Will Cover in This Section

- **What is a group.**
- **Behavior in groups.**
- **Group Decision Making.**

Question

What is a group?

What Is a Group?

Several <u>interdependent people</u> who have emotional ties and interact on a regular basis.

Two or more people who <u>interact</u> and <u>influence each other</u>.

What Makes a Group

- **Interaction.**

- **Perception of group membership.**

- **Interdependence.**

Elements of Group Structure

- **Social Norms.**
  Expected standards of behavior and belief established and enforced by the group.
- **Social Roles.**
  Clusters of socially defined expectations that individuals are expected to fulfill.
- **Status Systems.**
  Distribution of power in the group.

Factors that Influence Cohesiveness

1. **Group size.**

2. **Member similarity.**
   - **Shared interests.**
   - **Diversity adds flexibility.**

Phases of Group Membership

1. **Investigation Phase.**
   Seeking out potential members.
2. **Socialization.**
   Shaping of the new member's thinking.
3. **Maintenance.**
   Defining member's roles.
4. **Resocialization.**
   When full members become marginal their status is redefined.
5. **Remembrance.**
   Developing evaluation of the member.

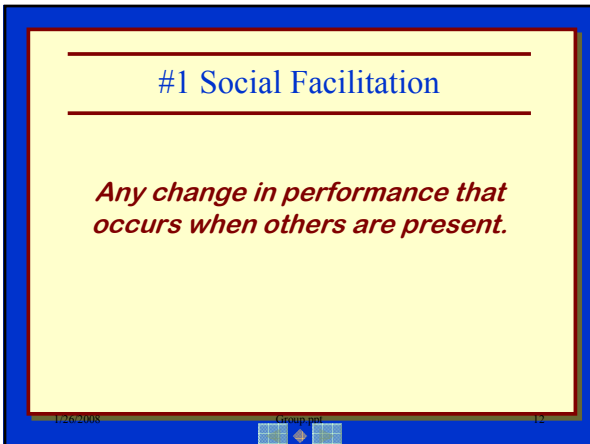## Major Functions of Group Membership

- **Accomplish instrumental tasks.**
  - **Do things you cannot do alone.**
- **Satisfy socioemotional needs.**
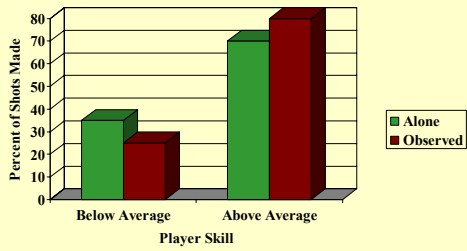 - **Sense of belonging.**
  - **Meet social needs.**

Group Influence

#1 Social Facilitation

Any change in performance that occurs when others are present.

Pool and Social Facilitation

Zajonc: Social Arousal

The presence of others strengthens the dominant response.

Presence of others is emotionally arousing.

When aroused our dominant response is enhanced.

Cottrell: Evaluation Apprehension

1. **Presence of others leads to EVALUATION APPREHENSION.**
2. **Evaluation Apprehension leads to increased arousal.**
3. **Arousal leads to either facilitation or declines in performance.**

Sanders, Baron: Distraction-Conflict

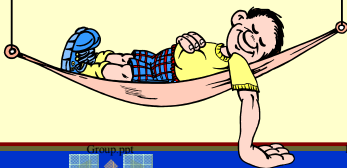**The presence of others is distracting and our attention becomes divided between the task and the observers.**

#2 Social Loafing

The tendency for people to reduce their efforts on a common goal or simple tasks when their efforts are pooled.

Free Riders

People who benefit from the group but give little in return.

Diffusion of Responsibility

The belief that the presence of other people makes one less personally responsible for the events that occur in that situation.

Dealing With Social Loafing

1. **Motivation.**
   - **Increase sense of personal responsibility.**
   - **Feel that contributions are important.**
2. **Identification.**
3. **Make the activity interesting.**
4. **Optimize interpersonal trust.**

Question

If you could do anything humanly possible with complete assurance that you would not be detected or held accountable, what would you do?
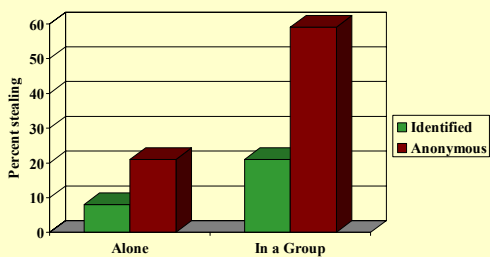
#3 Deindviduation

Loss of a sense of individuality and a loosening of normal constraints against deviant behavior.

Halloween Candy Study*

*Diener, Fraser, Beaman, & Kelem (1976)

Deindividuation Is Influenced By

- Group size.
- Physical anonymity.
- Social cues.
- Self-awareness.

#4 Group Polarization

Tendency for people to exaggerate preexisting attitudes as a result of group discussion. They move to more extreme <u>shared</u> attitudes.

Group Polarization is Influenced By

- Information and discussion.
- Group norms.
- Social comparison.

Group Decision Making

Brainstorming

A process by which group members are asked to produce as many ideas as they can.

PRODUCTION BLOCKING

The inhibition of group members' expressing their ideas because of the social norm that only one person should speak at a time.

Influence of Group Composition

- **STATUS.**
- **SELF-CONFIDENCE.**
- **GENDER**
  - **Males**
    - Do better on stereotypically male-oriented tasks.
    - Use a task-oriented style.
  - **Females**
    - Do better on stereotypically female oriented tasks.
    - More interpersonally oriented in style.

Group Think

Group decision-making style characterized by such an excessive tendency among group members to seek concurrence that they lose the ability to impartially evaluate alternative points of view.

Characteristics of the Group

- **Leader is not impartial.**
- **Group insulation.**
- **Lack of procedural norms.**
- **Member homogeneity.**
- **Emotional/provocative situation.**

Symptoms of Group Think

1. **The group is invulnerable.**
2. **Discounting information that conflicts with the majority view.**
3. **Viewing other groups stereotypically.**
4. **Dissenters are pressured to conform.**
5. **Illusion of unanimity.**
6. **"Mindguards" emerge.**

THE END