

SMALL GROUP COMMUNICATION

How big is a small group?

- 5-7 is optimum size for productivity
- Highest ever suggested is 20

How big is a small group?

- 5-7 is recommended for greatest productivity
- 20 is largest number ever suggested

Characteristics of a Small Group

- Equal opportunity to communicate
- Concentration on a single task
- Able to function with sub-dividing into small groups

Advantages of Small Group decision-making

- Synergy: the whole is greater than the sum of its parts
- Risky shift phenomenon: you will risk as a group what you won't risk as an individual

Disadvantages

- **GROUPTHINK:** may have such a cohesive group that negative thinking is deterred
- **Pollyanna-Nietzsche effect:** Excessive optimism and belief that the group is superhuman

Ways to combat disadvantages

- **Always** have a Central Negative (devil's advocate)
- Recognize that cohesion can lead to Groupthink
- EVALUATE any solution as it is implemented (to combat P-N-E)

CONSENSUS DECISION- MAKING

- REQUIRES 100% AGREEMENT, NOT JUST MAJORITY
- Results in
 - Increased cohesion
 - Increased ownership
 - Commitment to course of action

Achievement of Consensus

- Compromise
- Collaboration

Leadership Styles



laissez-faire

democratic

authoritarian

ROLES OF GROUP MEMBERS (P. 274-275)

Task Roles

- Initiator-contributor
- Information-seeker
- Opinion-seeker
- Information-giver
- Opinion-giver
- Elaborator
- Coordinator
- Orienter
- Evaluator
- Energizer
- Procedural technician
- recorder

Maintenance roles

- Encourager
- Harmonizer
- Compromiser
- Gatekeeper
- Standard setter
- Observer
- Follower