

## **CHAPTER 16: DEVELOPING & DELIVERING GROUP PRESENTATION**

**GROUP:** problem-solving groups: groups composed of four to seven people that are formed to carry out a specific task or solve a particular problem. Usually at the end of their deliberations, they present their findings and analysis, and recommend solutions to others in the organization.

### **RESPONSIBILITY OF GROUP MEMBERS**

When problem-solving groups work well, the product is better than what anyone member could have accomplished alone. This is known as **synergy**.

**GOAL:** when working in a small group: achieve synergy.

#### **Be committed to the group goal.**

Finding a way to align your expertise with the agreed-upon goal of the group. In addition to demonstrating responsibility, doing so also conveys both integrity and respect. Once your group decides on a topic, you need to be a good team member even if it means working on a topic that is not of your choice.

#### **Keep discussions on track.**

Offering only comments that are relevant and by gently reminding others to stay focused if the discussion starts to get off track.

#### **Complete individual assignments on time.**

One potential advantage of group work is that tasks can be divided among members. However, each member is responsible for completing his or her tasks thoroughly and on time.

#### **Encourage input from all members.**

All too often in problem-solving small groups, quiet members are overshadowed by extroverts. Sometimes, outspoken members interpret their silence as having nothing to contribute or not wanting to contribute. On the contrary, all members have valuable perspectives. If you are an extrovert, you have a special responsibility to refrain from dominating the discussion and to ask others for their opinions. Likewise, if you tend to be an introvert, make a conscious effort to express yourself.

#### **Manage conflict among members.**

All small groups experience some conflict—disagreement or clash among ideas, principles, or people. If managed appropriately, conflict can actually be beneficial to the group goal by stimulating thinking, fostering open communication, encouraging diverse opinions, and enlarging members' understanding of the issues.

## **CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN GROUP SETTING.**

All small groups experience some conflict but if managed effectively enhance synergy.

In fact, groups that don't experience some conflict risk the problem of **groupthink**—when group members accept information and ideas without subjecting them to critical analysis.

Behaviors that signal groupthink include:

- Avoiding conflict to prevent hurting someone's feelings.
- Pressuring members who do not agree with the majority of the group to conform.
- Reaching "consensus" without the support of all members.
- Discouraging or ignoring disagreements.
- Rationalizing a decision without testing it.

## **CONFLICT OVER ISSUES**

### **5 common conflict management style.**

**Withdrawing** involves physically or psychologically removing yourself from the conflict. When a group member engages in withdrawing as a conflict management style, the whole group suffers because everyone is not committed to the group goal and all members' input is not being considered.

**Accommodating** is a passive conflict management style of accepting others' ideas while neglecting your own, even when you disagree with their views. When a group member engages in accommodating as a conflict management style, the whole group suffers because not all potential ideas are being weighed in the discussion.

**Forcing** means satisfying your own needs with no concern for the needs of the others and no concern for the harm it does to the group dynamics or problem-solution process of reaching the best solution. When one member dominates the group discussion by forcing his or her opinions without considering other views or even allowing them to be expressed, the whole group suffers because input from all group members is not being heard. Researchers say this results in a win-lose solution.

**Compromising** occurs when individuals give up part of what they want in order to provide at least some satisfaction to other opinions. If the group members can't find an ideal time to meet outside of class because they all have busy schedules, they might compromise on a time to meet that isn't particularly ideal for any of them. In terms of coming to a solution, one drawback of this style is that the quality of the decision is probably affected when someone "trades away" a better solution to reach a compromise.

**Collaborating** is when you discuss the issues, describe feelings, and identify the characteristics of an effective solution before deciding what the ultimate solution will be. Researchers describe this as a win-win situation. Your goal in managing conflict is to achieve a win-win solution through collaborative conflict management among members. A win-win

solution occurs when input from all members is heard, valued, and evaluated honestly and fairly until the group reaches consensus about how to proceed.

### **PERSONALITY CONFLICTS**

Sometimes we disagree with a certain group member due to a personality conflict. The fact is we will all find ourselves **working in groups** where we **don't necessarily see eye-to-eye** with everyone even if we want to be friends with everyone. In these situations, manage disagreements by separating the issues from the people involved, keeping your emotions in check, and phrasing your comments descriptively, not judgmentally.

Rather than calling a particular idea stupid, for example, ask for clarification about why people think or feel the way they do. Seek first to understand. To help you put aside your personal feelings and manage conflicts effectively, employ perception checking or paraphrasing, using "I language" that phrases your interpretations and opinions as your own rather than defense-arousing "you language.

<b>"You" Statement</b>	<b>"I" Statement</b>
"You hurt my feelings."	"I feel hurt when you don't acknowledge what I say."
"You're so irresponsible."	"I feel my efforts don't matter when you come to the meeting unprepared."
"Don't be so critical."	"I feel disrespected when you say my opinion is stupid."

**Perception checking** is a verbal statement that reflects your understanding of another's behavior. It is a two-step process: (1) In a non-evaluative way, describe what you observed or sensed from someone's behavior. (2) Add to your statement your interpretations of the behavior.

**Paraphrasing** is a verbal statement that conveys your understanding of another person's verbal message. It is a four step process: (1) Listen carefully to the message; (2) notice what images, ideas, and feelings you experience from the message; (3) determine what the message means to you; (4) create your own a message that conveys these images or feelings and asks the other person to confirm what you have understood or correct it.

#### **Example:**

**Situation:** As you are offering your idea about who the group might interview to get more information on your topic, you notice that Tomika, who you see as uncommitted to the group, says, "Whatever..." and begins reading a message on her cell phone.

**Perception check:** Tomika, when you give a dismissive response to my ideas and then start checking your messages, I sense that you don't like my suggestion. Is that an accurate read, or are you just expecting an important message, or is it something else?

**Paraphrase:** From your “whatever” response, I sense that either you don’t really agree with my suggestion, you aren’t really committed to the project, or you just don’t respect me. Or is it something else?

### **SYSTEMATIC GROUP PROBLEM SOLVING METHOD**

When you meet with your classmates, teammates at your job, or members of community to work on a project, you will be trying to solve a problem. One effective means for doing this is the systematic problem-solving method. The method consists of six steps:

#### **Identify and define the problem**

Groups might begin by coming up with a number of problems or needs and then narrow them to a particular one. Define and identify the problems in a way all group members understand and agree with.

#### **Analyze the problem**

Find out as much as possible about the problem. Most groups begin by sharing the information individual members have acquired through their experiences. This process can be described as finding out what we already know.

#### **Determine criteria for judging solutions.**

Criteria are standards used for judging the merits of proposed solutions—a blueprint for evaluating them. Without clear criteria, groups may select solutions that don’t adequately address the real problem or, perhaps, solutions that create a host of new problems.

#### **Generate a host of solutions.**

Brainstorm for possible solutions. Brainstorming, an uncritical, non-evaluative process of generating alternatives by being creative, suspending judgment, and combining or adapting the ideas of others. It involves verbalizing your ideas as they come to mind without stopping to evaluate their merits. At least one member should record all solutions as they are suggested. To ensure that creativity is not stifled, no solution should be ignored, and members should build on the ideas presented by others.

#### **Evaluate the solutions and select the best one based on the criteria.**

You need to evaluate the merits of each potential solution based on the criteria established by the group.

#### **Implement the agreed-upon solution.**

Finally, the group implements the agreed-upon solution or, if the group is presenting the solution to others for implementation, makes recommendations for how the solution should be implemented.

## **PREPARING GROUP PRESENTATION**

### **Divide the topic into areas of responsibility.**

Each member can then be responsible for researching and organizing the content necessary to develop a particular main point.

### **Draft an outline of your topic area.**

Each group member should construct an outline for his or her main point.

### **Combine member outlines to form a group outline.**

Once the individual outlines are completed, the group is ready to combine them into a single outline. Members should share their individual outlines and then, as a group, develop the transitions between main points and make any other changes needed for continuity and consistency.

### **Finalize the details of delivery**

Because this is a group presentation, more than the usual number of decisions must be made about delivery. How will each member deliver the presentation and utilize the presentational aids.

### **Practice your presentation.**

It is crucial to practice both individually and as a group because group presentations pose additional complexities, there are more tasks to be done to complete the speech. As a result, there is even more need for practice if you are to succeed at conveying one seamless message to your listeners.

## **PUBLIC GROUP PRESENTATION FORMAT**

A **symposium** is a discussion in which a limited number of participants (usually three to five) present individual speeches of approximately the same length dealing with the same subject.

A **panel discussion** is a problem-solving discussion in front of an audience. After the formal discussion, the audience is often encouraged to question the participants.

A **town hall meeting** is an event in which a large number of people who are interested in a topic convene to discuss, and at times to decide, one or more issues.

**Electronic conferencing** is a widespread method for individuals to engage in live exchange in real time without being in the same room. The most common forms are **teleconferencing**, where individuals share information aurally over the telephone, and **videoconferencing**, where individuals share information aurally and visually over the Internet.

A **streaming video** is a pre-recording that is sent in compressed form over the Internet. You are probably familiar with streaming video from popular websites such as YouTube. Streaming videos are a great way to distribute oral reports, symposiums, or panel presentations.

A **streaming slide show** is a series of fifteen to twenty slides posted on the Internet, often including voice-over narration

### **EVALUATING GROUP DYNAMICS DURING THE PREPARATION PROCESS.**

To be effective, groups must work together as they define and analyze a problem, generate solutions, and select a course of action. They also need to work together as they prepare their written report, which in some public speaking classrooms is a formal group outline, and practice the oral presentation. So it is important to evaluate how effectively each member works in the group. This notion of how individuals work together as a team toward a common goal is known as group dynamics. You can evaluate group dynamics by judging the merit of each member's efforts in terms of the five group member responsibilities discussed earlier in this chapter.

### **EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS OF GROUP PRESENTATION.**

Effective group presentations depend on quality individual presentations as well as quality overall group performance. So evaluations of group presentations should consist of both an individual and a group component.