

COMMUNICATIONS

UNDERSTANDING GROUP PSYCHOLOGY

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WHAT IS YOUR GROUP FOCUS?

DEPENDENCY

Protection from an individual where members act as if they need to be "rescued" by a powerful leader

FIGHT/FLIGHT

Survival via fighting with aggression or blaming (fight) or fleeing to passivity and avoidance (flight)

PAIRING

Bonding between two individuals leaving other members inactive

ONENESS

Connection to an external force or commitment as a way of survival

Paradoxes in Groups

Organizations are built on people and the groups with which they identify. Understanding these groups - as well as their needs and stresses - are key to understanding how to effectively communicate with them.

Eventually, groups within an organization will experience conflict. When members within a group experience opposing motivations/desires, group paradox and freezing will occur. It will be up to administrators and key communicators to break this cycle of "stuckness" and create equilibrium in the workplace.

Psychological Defenses

In periods of paradox or stress, groups and individuals may experience **psychological defenses** that are designed to defend against anxiety as a method to deal with turmoil.

THE EFFECT OF SELF-ESTEEM ON WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR AND MINDSET

ABOVE AVERAGE

AVERAGE

BELOW AVERAGE



PERFECTIONISTIC / NARCISSISTIC

NORMAL

SELF-EFFACING / RESIGNED

PSYCHOLOGICAL DEFENSES

ANXIETY AT WORK

REPRESSION

KEEPING
SOMETHING FROM
THE CONSCIOUS
MIND

CONSISTENCY

REGRESSION

CHILDLIKE
BEHAVIOR AND
UNREALISTIC
EXPECTATIONS

COACHING

SPLITTING

DIVISION OF
OTHERS INTO
CATEGORIES OF
"GOOD" VS "BAD"

ACCOUNTABILITY

PROJECTION

APPLYING SELF-
MADE IMAGES
ONTO OTHERS

EMPATHY

INTROJECTION

TAKING IN THE
EXTERNAL
PROJECTIONS OF
OTHERS

EMPOWERMENT

COMPROMISE

BALANCE BETWEEN
OPPOSING
THOUGHTS
LEAVING NEITHER
SATISFIED

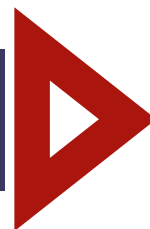
REFOCUS

CHANGE CYCLE

UNFREEZE
(listening)



MOVING
(communicating)



REFREEZE
(consistency)

GROUPS/PEOPLE IN DISTRESS

FINDING COMMON GROUND

WHAT DOES YOUR ORGANIZATION VALUE?

WHAT DOES YOUR LEADERSHIP VALUE?

WHAT DO THE PEOPLE IN YOUR ORGANIZATION VALUE?

OPPOSING AND COMMON VALUES

SHARED VALUES

DEVELOPING ADVOCATES

What groups do you need to communicate with?

What is the main focus or major values of those groups?

LISTEN AND COMMUNICATE CONSISTENTLY

What anxieties exist and what defenses are groups exhibiting?

What messages do you want these groups to accept?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Allcorn, Seth and Michael A. Diamond. (1997). *Managing People During Stressful Times: The Psychologically Defensive Workplace*. Quorum Books.

Freud, S. (2013). *The Ego and the Id*. United States: Stellar Classics.

Gaylin, Willard. (2004). *Hatred: The Psychological Descent into Violence*.

Smith, K. K., & Berg, D. N. (1997). *Paradoxes of group life: understanding conflict, paralysis, and movement in group dynamics*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Truman National Security Project - Strategic Communications. www.trumanproject.org