

Situational Judgment in Work Teams: A Team Role Typology

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As work teams become more prevalent in organizations, it becomes more important to better understand and predict effective team member contributions. Functional team roles are a potentially important tool for understanding the contributions made by individuals to teams. This chapter develops a typology of team roles and discusses how they can be used to develop a situational judgment test (SJT).

The contributions made by individuals to the requirements of the team environment can be understood by considering the roles that team members play in executing critical team functions. These functional team roles represent clusters of related behaviors that perform critical functions within the team. These functions are necessary for effective internal execution of the team's work, effective management of the team's relationship with its environment, and preserving the team's vitality through meeting

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the social needs of members (Hackman, 1987; McGrath, 1984; Sundstrom, De Meuse, & Futrell, 1990).

This chapter makes two primary contributions. The first is furthering the understanding of functional roles in teams. The chapter draws on the past research on team roles to create a comprehensive and parsimonious typology of functional team roles. Although past research has referred to roles as being a valuable focus of research (Ancona & Caldwell, 1988), and roles often appear in textbook discussions of group dynamics (Steers, 1991), surprisingly little attention has been given to evaluating extant typologies such as Benne and Sheat's (1948) seminal typology of work-group roles (Mudrack & Farrell, 1995), or integrating the more recent research by Ancona (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992) dealing with boundary-spanning roles or Belbin's (1981, 1993) work using individual differences to predict team-role behavior. This chapter lays the foundation for knowledge about team roles by reviewing the extant literature and creating an integrated typology of functional team roles.

The second contribution is to integrate team roles with situational judgment. This will enhance understanding of how team members' knowledge of when a particular team role should be adopted impacts their performance of that role within the team. This diagnostic ability to assess team situations and determine which role is required is critical to being an effective team member because it allows the team member to be flexible and assume different roles depending on the demands of the situation and the roles taken by other team members. This chapter outlines how the situational judgment perspective can be used effectively to assess these team-role abilities.

PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON TEAM ROLES

One way to conceptualize the behavior of team members is to consider the different roles that team members take while interacting as a team. A *role* is generally defined as a cluster of related and goal-directed behaviors characteristic of a person within a specific situation (Stewart, Manz, & Sims, 1999). It is often considered to be one of the fundamental and defining features of organizations (Katz & Kahn, 1978) and teams (Hackman, 1990b). Early research attempted to outline typologies of roles that team members take in interacting with their teammates (e.g., Benne & Sheats, 1948). The fulfillment and coordination of these roles by team members was hypothesized to be necessary in order for the team to perform effectively and avoid process losses associated with dysfunctional conflict, role ambiguity, and social loafing (Steiner, 1972).

The use of the role construct provides several advantages for understanding how individuals contribute to the group. First, roles have been considered one of the defining features of work groups (Hackman, 1990a; Sundstrom et al., 1990), and are often cited as important determinants of team performance (Belbin, 1993). Second, the concept of a role is well suited to capture the notion that team members play different, but complementary, parts in the team. This includes the importance of taking situational and social cues into account, and enacting an appropriate role. Third, the concept of a role is more dynamic and flexible than the concepts of jobs. The specific allocation of tasks among employees is often done in a more real-time and changing manner, which is better captured with the role construct. Fourth, the role-knowledge construct provides a useful alternative to personality for understanding the contributions that team members make to teams. The link between personality and the team's work requirements is often distal and emphasizes only the social functions within the team. Roles provide a more proximal description that corresponds to the needs of the team with respect to social, task, and boundary-spanning functions.

Previous research has made several contributions to the understanding of team roles. Benne and Sheats (1948) and Bales (1950) provided insight into two critical functions that roles are instrumental in performing—task execution and the maintenance of the social viability of the team. Another primary contribution made by Benne and Sheats and Bales is that their research showed the utility of using the role construct to cluster behaviors exhibited in groups. The work by Belbin (1981, 1993), McCann and Margerison (1989), and Parker (1996) highlights the utility of using individual differences as predictors of which roles individuals are likely to take within teams. All three typologies are built on the classic personality model of Carl Jung (1923), and categorize individuals according to their "role preferences." Finally, the work by Ancona addresses the functions that team members must execute outside of the team context in terms of interactions, exchanges, and behavior interfacing with constituents outside the team.

There are also several limitations in the previous research on team roles. First, although Benne and Sheats is the theory of choice for most current discussions of team roles (Forsyth, 1990; Stewart et al., 1999), there has been only scant empirical testing to justify its acceptance (Mudrack & Farrell, 1995). Second, this typology, like that of Bales (1950), was created out of research on ad hoc groups working in laboratory settings, with uncertain generalizability to work teams in organizations. Third, as illustrated by Ancona's (Ancona & Caldwell, 1988, 1992) work, there is a need to integrate both internal and external team roles into the typologies. Fourth, the theories that attempt to predict the adoption of team roles using individual differences are all personality-based measures (Belbin, 1993; McCann &

Margerison, 1995). They assume that the role a person takes is determined by preference, neglecting the possibility that there is a knowledge component that determines role enactment. Finally, the primary focus of research on functional team roles has been the creation of descriptive typologies of roles with less attention paid to applying this knowledge to organizational issues.

An Integrated Team-Role Typology

The purpose of this chapter is to overcome the fragmentation in the team-role literature by integrating the existing typologies of roles. The team-role literature was thoroughly reviewed, and the roles from the various typologies were catalogued. Each of the roles was recorded and given a descriptive label, yielding 120 team roles. The roles were then sorted independently into homogeneous groups by two researchers using a Q-sort methodology. The percentage of time that roles were placed in the same category was 83% and Cohen's kappa, which indicates the level of agreement after correcting for chance agreement, was .80. The researchers then met to discuss the groupings and reconcile any discrepancies. The resulting team roles and their relationship with previous roles in the literature are presented in Table 15.1.

This typology is considered exhaustive because it inductively incorporated all roles from the extant team-role literature. It is also considered parsimonious because the behaviors are functionally grouped into 10 team roles and further organized into three broad categories suggested by the literature—task roles, socioemotional roles, and boundary-spanning roles. In the discussion that follows, these roles are described in terms of their definitions, behaviors, and situations in which they are most appropriate based on previous research. Each of these elements plays a part in the development of the SJT. Table 15.2 presents a summary.

TASK ROLES

The existence of teams within organizations is, to a large extent, driven by their utility in accomplishing work. The review of the literature suggested that task roles could be further broken down into the following six team roles.

Contractor

Teams exist in an environment that is interdependent (Campion, Medsker, & Higgs, 1993; Hackman, 1987) and, to varying degrees, autonomous

(Wellins, Byham, & Wilson, 1991). Because the behaviors of one team member influence those of another, there is a need for team members to coordinate their actions by sequencing tasks, synchronizing schedules, and harmonizing actions. In addition, if the team is accountable, it creates a degree of ambiguity in terms of which team member is responsible for which behaviors, because now the team is responsible for allocating tasks.

Definition. The task organization and coordination is accomplished by team members taking a contractor role. This role serves to provide structure to the team's task and the task-related behaviors. Behaviors related to the contractor role include attempts at (a) organizing and coordinating the actions of group members relative to the task by suggesting task allocations, deadlines, task sequencing, follow-ups, and motivating members to achieve team goals; and (b) clarifying team member abilities, resources, and responsibilities, summarizing the team's task accomplishments to date, and providing task focus to meeting time. The focus here is on efficiency.

Appropriate Situations. There are several situational characteristics that call for the contractor role. Among the most prominent are the complexity and ambiguity surrounding the work in which the team is engaged. Work complexity represents the number of informational cues and actions required, the dynamism of the requirements, and the relationship among them (Campbell, 1988; Wood, 1986). Ambiguity represents the clarity of the information and action requirements. To the degree that these conditions are present in the situation, the contractor role is helpful to clarify, segment, and assign the work among the team members.

Work complexity and ambiguity are often present in teams because of the shared and interdependent nature of the work. Another source of ambiguity is the level of task-based experience possessed by the team members. Leadership research suggests that more organizing and directive leadership behaviors increase in importance when team members have little experience with the task (Hersey & Blanchard, 1993; Vecchio, 1987). Ambiguity can also be created in situations where team members are familiar with the task, but have never worked with the other team members (McIntyre & Salas, 1995). For example, this situation exists in cockpit crews, where the teams are formed literally hours before they must perform and members often have not even met each other (Ginnett, 1990; Hughes, Ginnett, & Curphy, 1996). In such situations, effective captains are those who explicitly discuss the tasks that need to be coordinated within the team (Ginnett, 1990), thus fulfilling a contractor role.

Previous Literature Related to the Integrated Team-Role Typology

This Chapter	Bene and Sheats (1948)
Ancona and Caldwell (1988, 1992)	Bales (1950)
McCann and Margerson (1989, 1995)	Belbin (1981, 1993)
Barry (1991)	DuBrin (1995)
	Parker (1994, 1996)

Task Roles

Coordinator	Gives orientation	Coordinator	Assessor	Organizing	Collaborator	Collaborator
Initiator-contributor	Asks for orientation	Shaper	Thruster		Summarizer	Collaborator
Opinion contributor	Asks for opinion					
Information seeker	Asks for information					
Opinion giver	Gives opinion	Plant	Creator	Envisioning		
Information giver	Gives suggestion	Specialist				
Elaborator		Completer	Concluder		Knowledge contributor	Contributor
Technical Recorder		Implementer	Controller	Reporter		Contributor

Critic	Evaluator-critic	Disagrees	Shows tension	Shows antagonism	Monitor	Evaluator	Challenger
Communicator	Encourager	Shows solidarity	Tension release	Agrees	Team worker	Upholder	People supporter
Cooperator	Follower	Compromiser	Harmonizer	Gate keeper	Group observer	Standard Setter	Communicator
Calibrator	Gate keeper	Group observer	Standard Setter	Gatekeeper	Mediator	Conciliator	Observer
Collector	Investigator	Resource coordinator	Task Explorer	Spanning	Scout	Ambassador	Guard
Consul							

Boundary-Spanning Roles

Socioemotional Roles

TABLE 15.2
Definitions, Examples, and Situations for the Integrated Team-Role Typology

<i>Role</i>	<i>Definition</i>	<i>Examples</i>	<i>Situations in Which Role is Appropriate</i>
Task Contractor	Behaviors that function to structure the task-oriented behaviors of other group members. Organizes and coordinates the actions of group members relative to the task by suggesting task allocations, deadlines, task sequencing, follow-ups, and motivating members to achieve team goals. Summarizes the team's task accomplishments to date, and assures that team meeting time is spent efficiently focusing on task issues.	Organizer Orientor Energizer	<p>Work Ambiguity Work ambiguity represents uncertainty surrounding the work to be accomplished or the strategy for accomplishing it. It includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When task demands are technically complex (Herold, 1978, 1980) • When team members have little task experience (Vecchio, 1987) • When team members have little experience working together (Bettenhausen & Murnighan, 1985; Ginnett, 1990)
Task Creator	Behaviors that function to change or give original structure to the task processes and strategies of the team. Provides new, innovative, or compelling visions of the team objective and approaches to the task, or strategies for accomplishing the task. These behaviors may involve a "reframing" of the team's objective, the means that should be used to accomplish it, and looking at the big picture, as well as providing creative solutions to the task's problems.	Envisioner Creator Plant	<p>Creative and Strategic Stagnation Creative and strategic stagnation is when the team needs creativity in terms of task strategy or task ideas and solutions. It includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When team is new and members have little task experience (Gersick & Hackman, 1990) • When the work is predominantly "creative" in nature (Hackman & Morris, 1975; McGrath, 1984) • When the team's purpose is unclear or current strategy is failing (Gersick, 1988, 1989) • When the team is in its initial meeting, or at its developmental midpoint transition (Gersick, 1988; 1989; Hackman & Walton, 1986)
Task Contributor	Behaviors that function to contribute critical information or expertise to the team. These include being assertive when dealing with areas that are within the domain of the team member's expertise, sharing critical knowledge within the team, and may involve enough self-promotion to convey his or her credentials to the team. Clarifying team member abilities, resources, and responsibilities, and training individual team members, as well as the team in general.	Information giver Specialist Elaborator	<p>Distributed Expertise Distributed expertise represents situations in which task required resources are heterogeneously distributed among the members. It includes the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the work is predominantly "choice"-oriented (McGrath, 1984) • When team members have little experience working together (Ginnett, 1990) • When high-status differentials (Ginnett, 1990; McIntyre & Salas, 1995) • When task resources are heterogeneously distributed among team members (Libby, Trotman, & Zimmer, 1987)
Task Completer	Behaviors that function to execute the individual-oriented tasks within the team. May involve "doing homework" to prepare for team meetings, volunteering to take personal responsibility to complete certain tasks within the team, assisting team members with completing their tasks, and following through on commitments made within the team.	Completer-finisher Implementer Concluder	<p>Individual-Oriented Work Individual-oriented work represents the situations in which team effectiveness depends on the performance of behaviors by individuals working alone outside the team environment.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the work is predominantly "execution"-oriented (Larson & LaFasto, 1989; McGrath, 1984) • When there are individual-oriented and unitary tasks that must be completed (Steiner, 1972) • When the team is at its second developmental phase (Gersick, 1988, 1989; Hackman & Walton, 1986)

(Continued)

TABLE 15.2
(Continued)

	Role	Definition	Examples	Situations in Which Role is Appropriate
Task	Critic	Behaviors related to going against the "flow" of the group. They function to subject the ideas or decisions of the group to critical evaluation and scrutiny. Questioning the purpose or actions of the team or ideas proposed within the team, even if a formal "leader" has sponsored an idea. The role insists on evaluating "worst-case scenarios" and points out flaws or assumptions the group is making, and a willingness to present negative information to the team.	Challenger Evaluator Monitor	<p>Unscrutinized Concurrence Unscrutinized concurrence represents situations in which the team is approaching consensus on a task without adequately analysis of positive and negative contingencies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the team is prematurely seeking concurrence (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969) • When there is a high level of trust among team members (McIntyre & Salas, 1995) • When the work is predominately a "decision-making dilemma" (Katz & Kahn, 1978) • When task demands are technically and/or socially complex (Herold, 1978, 1980; Longley & Pruitt, 1980) • When the team is highly cohesive, insulated, and has directive leadership in a stressful environment (Janis, 1972)
		Behaviors functioning to conform to the expectations, assignments, and influence attempts of other team members, the team in general, or constituents to the team. This should be a proactive role where there is critical inquiry into the decision, and provision of input, but then supporting the team's decision once it has been made, allowing the team to move forward. This role involves acknowledging the expertise of others, and supporting their direction.	Compromiser Follower	<p>Scrutinized Concurrence Scrutinized concurrence represents situations in which the team has critically evaluated and clearly established the merits of a particular decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the team has had adequate differentiation before seeking concurrence (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969) • When the work is predominantly "negotiation"-oriented (McGrath, 1984) • Distributed expertise and high-status differentials (Ginnett, 1990; Libby, Trotman, & Zimmer, 1987; McIntyre & Salas, 1995)
Social	Communicator	Behaviors functioning to create a social environment that is conducive to collaboration. Including paying attention to the feelings of team members, listening to the opinions/contributions of others, communicating effectively, or injecting humor into tense situations. This role does not deal with direct "influence attempts" as does the calibrator.	Encourager Team worker Listener	<p>Social Sensitivity Social sensitivity represents situations in which team effectiveness is elastic with regard to social processes.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the work is predominantly "negotiation"-oriented (McGrath, 1984) • When task demands are socially complex (Herold, 1978, 1980) • When team context is emotionally demanding or stressful (McIntyre & Salas, 1995; Morgan & Bowers, 1995) • When team is diverse in terms of values and attitudes (Jackson, May, & Whitney, 1995)
		Behaviors functioning to observe the group social processes, make the group aware of them, and suggest changes to these processes to bring them in line with functional social norms. The overt creation of new group norms dealing with group process issues (not task issues). This may involve initiating discussion of power struggles or tensions in the group, settling disputes among team members, summarizing group feeling, soliciting feedback, and so on.	Harmonizer Gate-keeper Mediator Conciliator	<p>Nonfunctional Group Processes Nonfunctional group process represent situations in which functional patterns of social interaction have not been established in the team, or they have been disrupted by malfunctional behavior.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the team is new and team members have little experience working together or there are changes in group composition (Ginnett, 1990) • When there is emotional or task-based conflict or distrust in the team (Jehn, 1995, 1997) • When the work is "negotiation"-oriented and the context is socially demanding (Herold, 1978, 1980; McGrath, 1984)

(Continued)

Creator

The creator role relates to creativity and leadership in teams. Teams are often used within organizations to foster innovation. However, teams also can have a tendency to form norms that limit such innovation. The creator role embodies those behaviors that create change in the group's task processes to solve problems and bring about this innovation.

Definition. The creator role provides new, innovative, or compelling visions of the team objective and approaches to the task, or strategies for accomplishing the task. This might include reframing the team's objectives, redesigning methods, looking at the big picture, and making sense of events in the environment. The creator role fosters creativity and adaptation within the team. The distinction between the creator and the contractor roles has parallels with the distinction between management and leadership (e.g., Bennis & Nanus, 1985; Yukl, 1994). Management focuses on the efficient execution of systems and leadership focuses on vision, innovation, and change (House & Aditya, 1997). Similarly, the creator role emphasizes taking creative approaches to the team's task that often go beyond organizing.

Appropriate Situations. The creator role is especially important when there is strategic ambiguity, the current team strategies are inadequate, or the work has a large creative component. Strategic ambiguity represents a lack of clarity among the team members as to the most effective way to proceed and is often accompanied by the perception among team members that their current approach is not working. Research by Gersick (1989) suggests that the most advantageous times for establishing a new strategy are in a team's first encounter, in response to poor performance, or when performance appears to be floundering. The creator role is also important when the work has a large creative component (Hackman & Morris, 1975; McGrath, 1984). Teams have a general tendency to form habitual routines for dealing with situations that they encounter frequently (Gersick & Hackman, 1990). This tendency usually helps the team save time and energy, but it reduces innovation.

Contributor

Often the driving reason for using teams is to provide a social structure for the integration of ideas, actions, and processes from different areas or individuals in an organization (Parker, 1994). In these situations, each team member has a distinct set of knowledge, skills, and abilities, as well

TABLE 15.2
Continued

Situations in Which Role is Appropriate		Role
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When team does not possess the needed information, money, personnel, and so on (Hackman & Walton, 1986) • When the team is new, and somewhat experimental and constituents need status updates (Ancona, 1990) 	<p>External Resource Dependence External resource dependence represents situations in which the existence and effectiveness of the team is dependent on support and resources from its environment.</p>	<p>Consult Behaviors that involve interactions that take place primarily outside the team setting that function to collect information and resources from relevant parties in the organization. This involves presenting the light, influencing constituent perceptions of the likelihood of team success and willingness to provide resources.</p>
<p>External Activity Interdependence External activity interdependence represents situations in which the activities of the team must be coordinated with the activities of teams, customers, and individuals outside the team.</p>	<p>Coordinator Behaviors that involve interactions that take place primarily outside the team setting that function to interface with constituents, coordinate team efforts with other parties. It also involves soliciting timely feedback on the team's performance</p>	<p>Spanning Coordinator</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When the activities of the team are interdependent with activities of other teams (Ancona, 1990; Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Green, McComb, & Compton, 2000) • When the activities of the team are interdependent with customers or suppliers (Ancona, 1990; Ancona & Caldwell, 1992; Barry, 1991) 	<p>Task Behaviors that involve interactions that take place primarily outside the team setting that function to interface with constituents, coordinate team efforts with other parties. It also involves soliciting timely feedback on the team's performance</p>	<p>Coordinator Behaviors that involve interactions that take place primarily outside the team setting that function to interface with constituents, coordinate team efforts with other parties. It also involves soliciting timely feedback on the team's performance</p>

as different preferences and priorities. Teams are a social mechanism for integrating the expertise held by diverse individuals (Larson & LaFasto, 1989). This is increasingly important as the scope and complexity of the work increases to the point that one individual is unlikely to be able to perform it.

Definition. The contributor role represents those behaviors that function to contribute critical information or expertise to the team. Behaviors consistent with the contributor role include sharing knowledge, communicating ideas, and training others. To assume this role, it may be necessary to engage in sufficient self-promotion to convey credentials to the team, and hence involves a degree of assertiveness. This role is context-specific in that it is only appropriate when one has relevant expertise. The team member who correctly detects when he or she has relevant expertise and then takes steps to share that expertise is an effective team member.

Appropriate Situations. The contributor role is most likely to be called for under conditions of distributed expertise, high-status differentials, and choice-related tasks. With distributed expertise, the team cannot achieve optimal performance without receiving input from all members (Steiner, 1972). Taking a contributor role gives the team a clearer picture of who has the needed expertise (Libby, Trotman, & Zimmer, 1987). With high-status differentials, there is a tendency to reduce the flow of information in the team, particularly information that runs counter to the position endorsed by the high-status individuals (McIntyre & Salas, 1995). The contributor role can counteract this tendency. Finally, with choice-related tasks (McGrath, 1984), performance is sensitive to the amount and quality the information used to make the choice, thus increasing the importance of the contributor role.

Completer

When conceptualizing the work that teams accomplish, often the implicit assumption is made that all of the work takes place in a team setting via joint collaboration. This assumption is often incorrect and ignores the fact that a large portion of the work may be performed by individual team members outside of the team context (Larson & LaFasto, 1989).

Definition. The completer role represents behaviors that contribute to the effectiveness of the team by individuals working alone. This may involve volunteering to take personal responsibility for a particular task,

following through on commitments made in team meetings, coming to team meetings prepared, and assisting teammates.

Appropriate Situations. The completer role is called for any time there is a task to be completed that is relatively unitary (unable to be divided among multiple individuals; Steiner, 1972), is execution in nature (McGrath, 1984), or is relatively unassigned. As the proportion of the team's work that involves unitary or execution tasks increases, the completer role becomes more important. In a situation involving unassigned tasks, the individual volunteering to take responsibility and then following through on that commitment is taking the completer role. This role is especially important when the team is in its post-midpoint phase of development (Gersick, 1988, 1989). This is characterized by an increase in task activity in preparation for a deadline when it is critical for members to take individual responsibility (Hackman & Walton, 1986).

Critic

Among the most cited constructs in group discussions is Janis' (1972) work on "groupthink." Janis proposed that many faulty decisions reached by teams can be traced to the groupthink phenomena, which is "a mode of thinking that people engage in when they are deeply involved in a cohesive in-group, when the members' strivings for unanimity override their motivation to realistically appraise the alternative courses of action" (p. 9). So, cohesive teams may avoid critically evaluating proposed courses of action for fear of disrupting the positive relations among team members.

Definition. The critic role captures behaviors that "go against the flow" of the group. They function to subject the ideas or decisions to critical evaluation and scrutiny. They may question the purpose or actions of the team or ideas proposed within the team, even if contrary to the views of the formal leader. The role insists on evaluating worst-case scenarios, pointing out flaws or assumptions the group is making, and presenting negative information.

Appropriate Situations. The critic role is most essential in conditions of unscrutinized consensus in the team. Unscrutinized consensus refers to situations in which the team is going forward with an idea or a decision without having considered all the potential costs of the decision, or without conducting adequate research into the problem, a situation referred to by Lawrence and Lorsch (1969) as premature concurrence seeking. In such

situations, the team needs a "devil's advocate" to bring out the potential oversights and negative aspects of the team's direction.

The task can also influence the likelihood of the critic role being appropriate. When the task is a decision-making dilemma (novel and complex tasks with nonstandard solutions; Katz & Kahn, 1978) or as a decision-making task (choice tasks with no single correct answer; McGrath, 1984) or a socially complex task (high team-member involvement in the task; Herold, 1978), then it is more important for the critic role to be taken (Longely & Pruitt, 1980).

This role can also be important when there is directive leadership within the team because such status differentials tend to decrease the likelihood of bringing up alternative viewpoints (McIntyre & Salas, 1995).

Finally, this role is also most appropriately taken when a trusting relationship exists among team members (McIntyre & Salas, 1995). To accept the monitoring of the critic role, and feedback that accompanies it, requires that there is a psychological contract (McIntyre & Salas, 1995) among the team members that accepts such evaluations because they are for the good of the team.

SOCIOEMOTIONAL ROLES

One of the most fundamental realities of work teams is that effective team members must have certain interpersonal as well as technical skills (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; Stevens & Campion, 1994, 1999; Stewart et al., 1999).

Communicator

Teams typically are interdependent and require communication with others to accomplish the work (Shea & Guzzo, 1987), to resolve conflicts and solve problems (Stevens & Campion, 1994, 1999), and to share information, resources, and opinions.

Definition. The communicator role encompasses behaviors that create a social environment that is positive, open, and conducive to collaboration. These behaviors include paying attention to the feelings of team members, listening to the opinions of others, communicating personal sentiments effectively, being friendly, or injecting humor as appropriate. This role does not deal with direct influence attempts (as does the calibrator), but instead focuses on the smoothness of interactions.

Appropriate Situations. The communicator role is generally required in almost all team situations, but there are situations when it is particularly vital. One such situation is when the task is socially complex, such as a negotiation task as opposed to an execution task (McGrath, 1984). Herold (1978, 1980) categorized tasks as having complex social demands if they dealt with emotionally charged issues for which members were ego-involved and held different opinions. Another situation is high-stress environments, such as in times of change, when communication is especially important to deal with nonroutine tasks (McIntyre & Salas, 1995) and to provide social support (Hackman, 1987; Sundstrom et al., 1990). Finally, in situations where there is great diversity in the team, communication patterns can be affected (Jackson, May, & Whitney, 1995), and the communicator role becomes more important.

Cooperator

Benne and Sheats (1948) lamented that too much research attention has focused on the leader within teams without considering the follower, a view that has been echoed by other authors (Barry, 1991; Katzenbach & Smith, 1993). The cooperator role acknowledges the importance of supporting the team through being open to influence, and not letting ego get in the way of allowing other team members to take more directive roles when appropriate (Katzenbach & Smith, 1993).

Definition. The cooperator role behaviors function to support the progress of the team by conforming to the expectations and influence attempts of other team members or the team in general. Once the team has made a decision, the cooperator role reflects a willingness to support that decision independent of the individual's original position on the matter (Kelley, 1988). This role allows the team to move forward.

Appropriate Situations. Situations in which the cooperator role is particularly important are conditions of scrutinized concurrence, distributed expertise, high-status differentials, and negotiation tasks. Scrutinized concurrence represents team unity in a decision that has resulted from critical evaluation of alternatives, with all dissenting opinions in the team being heard (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1969; Longely & Pruitt, 1980). Distributed expertise means that in order for the team to bring the best possible information and judgment to bear on the task, the individuals possessing that expertise must be allowed to contribute the most (Libby et al., 1987). That means other team members, especially high-status members (Gimnett, 1990; Hughes et al., 1996), need to be willing to take a cooperator role

(McIntyre & Salas, 1995). High-status differentials can result in the inappropriate weighting of ideas (Hackman & Walton, 1986).

Calibrator

Research on teams indicates that it is important for teams to overtly address their norms for interacting (Hackman, 1987). The notion of process facilitation is grounded in the premise that by reflecting on their norms, assumptions, and patterns of interacting, teams can improve those processes and their performance. The calibrator role refers to behaviors that serve to change the social process of the team.

Definition. The calibrator role observes the team social processes, makes the team aware of the processes, and suggests changes to the processes to improve team functioning. It facilitates the creation of norms dealing with group-process issues. This may involve initiating discussion of power struggles or tensions in the group, settling disputes among team members, summarizing group feeling, soliciting feedback, and so forth.

Appropriate Situations. The calibrator role is most essential under situations of process uncertainty or conflict. Process uncertainty occurs when ambiguity surrounds the best way for team members to interact and is most common in new teams or teams with changing composition. The calibrator role is appropriate in this situation because it helps establish initial social structures and team norms for interacting. Conflict in teams can have both positive and negative consequences (Jehn, 1995, 1997). Generally, emotional conflict is always a liability to team performance, whereas task-based conflict may show some benefits for teams performing non-routine tasks (Jehn, 1997). The calibrator role is functional when conflict arises because it helps minimize the occurrence and duration of emotional conflict and bring focus to task-based conflict.

BOUNDARY-SPANNING ROLES

Teams exist within an organizational context, and the boundaries that determine where the group begins and where that context begins are somewhat permeable. Early research on teams created typologies of roles that only occurred within the team's boundaries (Ancona & Caldwell, 1988; Sundstrom et al., 1990). Boundary-spanning roles recognize that important behaviors by team members occur outside the team.

The degree to which a team's effectiveness depends on the environment has been referred to as *external dependence* (Ancona, 1990) and is similar to Sundstrom and Altman's (1989) *work-team integration* and differentiation and Green, McComb, and Compton's (2000) *external linkages*.

Consul

One of the most intriguing findings of Ancona (1990) was that the effectiveness of externally dependent teams is influenced by the image of the team held by external constituents. Ancona found that initial reputations of newly formed teams tended to endure in the minds of people who evaluate teams. This need to manage the team's image and relationship with important decision makers highlights the need for the consul role.

Definition. The consul role involves interactions that take place primarily outside the team setting that function to present the team, its goals, and its interests in a favorable light, and to influence constituent perceptions of the likelihood of team success and willingness to provide resources.

Appropriate Situations. The consul role is essential under conditions of external resource dependence. When the team needs money, information, training, equipment, new members, time, or other resources from outside the team, it is critical to take a consul role (Hackman & Walton, 1986). This role is especially important for new teams who need to establish their utility and reputation to the organization in order to survive.

Coordinator

The activities of teams are often highly interdependent with other activities within the organization (Sundstrom et al., 1990). Teams, and in particular self-managed teams, must manage this interdependence in order to be truly effective in meeting customer expectations (Hackman, 1987). The key role in dealing with this interdependence is the coordinator.

Definition. The coordinator role involves interactions that take place primarily outside the team setting that function to interface with constituents and coordinate team efforts with other parties. This may involve visiting other departments, passing on schedule information to other teams in the organization, or communicating with customers about their specific needs. In all these interactions, it can involve soliciting timely feedback on the team's performance.

Appropriate Situations. The coordinator role is most essential when the team's work is externally interdependent. That is, when the activity, product, or service that the team provides is closely related to that of other teams and functions in the organization. This role is especially important in cross-functional teams (Green et al., 2000).

Also, this role takes on added importance when formal integration structures are not in place (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992). In the absence of formal mechanisms for communication between departments, the informal execution of this role by team members is vital. This role is particularly important if the team's task involves interfacing with external clients with changing needs. Research indicates that the failure to execute this role in an externally interdependent environment is detrimental to team success (Ancona & Caldwell, 1992).

TEAM ROLES AND SITUATIONAL JUDGMENT TESTS

SJTs are well suited for assessing team roles for several reasons. First, because SJTs are an effective tool in performance contexts with discretionary behaviors, they are likely to be well suited to predict team-role behavior. The team context provides team members greater flexibility in their behaviors and opportunity for discretionary actions such as organizational citizenship behaviors, both of which increase the importance of situational judgments. Second, SJTs tap into the capability of the individual in a context-rich manner, with judgments being informed by information about the situation. The appropriateness of team roles is also driven by their context, with the appropriateness of any given role being driven by situational factors. Thus, team roles lend themselves well to the development of SJTs that provide those contextual cues. Third, SJTs allow for the assessment of behavior in a multi-cue environment. Multi-cue assessments are those that require individuals to recognize and evaluate multiple elements of their environment and use these elements in arriving at a course of action. The team environment, in which team roles are carried out, is clearly one such environment.

Finally, an SJT based on team roles would be particularly useful for selection in team-based organizations. The SJT could be used in several ways. First, by selecting employees with the ability to discern and carry out the most appropriate roles in the team, organizations could acquire the general collaborative abilities needed throughout the workforce. Second, basic teams where formal leadership is designated (e.g., team leader), the information from the SJT could be used to assure that those given the position of leader possess the requisite team-role capabilities. Finally, organizations

using more advanced team forms (e.g., self-led teams), could use the team roles to make decisions about staffing teams to assure that each team has each role capability present.

Situational Judgment and Team Roles: Test Development

Several steps should be followed in developing an SJT for assessing team-role capabilities. The first step is to clearly define the desirable team-role behaviors. This chapter has presented one typology intended to generalize to most teams, but the relative importance of the roles and their precise definitions should be adapted to the specific context where the SJT will be used. This adaptation would best be made through the involvement of subject matter experts from the teams, management, and other experts in team dynamics.

The second step is to clearly delineate the situational contingencies that should govern taking the team role. This chapter has developed many of those contingencies based on previous research.

The third step involves the creation of the stimulus. This can take the form of a written scenario, a video enactment, or a structured interview question. The stimuli should have three characteristics. First, they should be grounded in the organizational context where they will be used. Second, they should clearly illustrate the relevant situational contingencies as defined in Step 2. Third, care should be taken to ensure that, to the extent possible, there is one clear correct role for each stimulus.

The fourth step is the creation of response alternatives. The responses alternatives should represent feasible behavioral responses to the situation. The correct responses are those with behaviors most consistent with the role suited to the situation.

Situational Judgment and Team Roles: Future Directions

Using SJTs in the team-role context would benefit research and practice. Due to the newness of the application, however, several intriguing research questions remain unanswered. First, research needs to investigate the effectiveness of team-role based SJTs. Several questions dealing with the context of the application need to be answered. For example, is the SJT equally effective for all types of teams? One could argue that in team types allowing for greater behavioral discretion (e.g., self-directed work teams) the SJT would more effectively predict behavior. A related question is whether the nature of the work in which the team is engaged affects the usefulness of the SJT. For example, teams involved in creative work may

find performance is more sensitive to team roles than teams engaged in psychomotor work (Matteson, Mumford, & Sintay, 1999).

Second, research needs to investigate the role that realism plays in the SJT. Team roles take place in multi-cue environments (e.g., task, time, social, etc.), and it represents a significant challenge to capture those environments in the stimulus material. Future research should investigate innovative methods for presenting the stimuli such as video-based presentation. Alternatively, the method could be adapted to a structured interview form. Future research should investigate the effectiveness of these alternative methods.

Finally, a challenging area for future research lies in investigating the role that team norms play in team roles. If for example, the appropriate team role depends on norms within the team, then perhaps the correctness of any team role could be defined by comparing it to these team norms. Future research should investigate the extent to which this type of norming is possible and advantageous.

CONCLUSION

This research has attempted to make two contributions for both research and practice. First, based on a thorough review and integration of the literature, this chapter provides a framework of 10 roles that are important for effective team member performance. Second, the chapter drew on the research literature to extract situations in which each team role is most appropriate. Future research could use this information to develop various human resource systems to improve team performance including the development of an SJT for selection and development in a team context.

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