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Virginia H. Foster
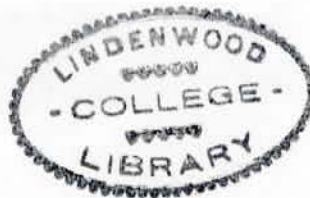
"Group Dynamics in a Task Oriented Work Group"

by

Virginia H. Foster

J. Dale Chastain
Faculty Sponsor

Sharon Rubin
Faculty Administrator

Submitted in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
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INTRODUCTION

This report reflects the major facet of my culminating project. The primary focus of the project was the analysis of the dynamics taking place within the life cycle of a task oriented work group. Through this focus, my goal was to become more effective in working with individuals and groups in a volunteer, non-profit organization and thereby increase volunteer involvement and productivity. The secondary focus of my culminating project was the preparation of a plan, developed by a volunteer committee, for the implementation of a formal transportation program for the elderly and handicapped, much needed by the organization for which I work.

The purpose of my primary focus, the study of group dynamics, was to increase and broaden my depth of knowledge in the life cycle of groups through a program of appropriate readings in the field of group dynamics and social psychology, coupled with experience in observing and analyzing the group process. This process was designed to include the analysis of how individuals relate to each other in a group situation and to the group as a whole; the effect individual behavior has on the stages of group development; and the different levels of group maturity

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as it relates to the process of establishing credentials, team building,

work cycles, and individual roles. These were important areas to study

because it is my belief that group productivity is directly related to a

leader's ability to: understand the group and its individual members;

utilize individual skills, and by doing so, lead the group through its

various cycles with as little disruption as possible.

As a member of the staff of a national voluntary association, I felt

the opportunity was available for formalized study in the area of group

dynamics and defined my goals in the Lindenwood 4 application for

admission.

It seemed imperative that the group I studied be newly formed so

that its beginning steps could be observed even before it formally met

together for the first time. The five committees in financial development

and public relations with which I normally work had been functioning for

two years and did not meet the criterion of being "a new group." I there-

fore requested that the organization's Executive Director permit me to

cross staff lines of responsibility in order to assume the staff support

role of the newly forming Transportation Committee, in addition to my

regular job responsibilities. Permission was granted and this committee

became the vehicle for my study.

The analytical process was implemented by me, in my staff role,

by observing the development that took place in the group's life cycle

for a period of nine months, from October 1976 through June 1977. The

observations were documented in analytical reports prepared after each

meeting which examined the dynamics that took place within the group,

the events that took place and how they affected the group in its efforts

to achieve its goals, and the role of the staff person in enabling the

committee to carry out its job. These analytical reports appear in the

Appendix of this paper.

My participation with the committee required that I assume two

roles--overt and covert. The overt role was the staff support role which

required that I assist the committee to structure and facilitate activity,

act as a resource and enable the Chairman to carry out his job. The

covert role was the analytic observer role, assumed for the purpose of

carrying out my culminating project. This dual relationship of participant,

as well as observer, faces all staff working with volunteers to some

degree and it is a difficult task to provide dispassionate observation in

the analysis process. This dilemma provides an ever-present challenge

to staff to be aware of the necessity of separating out personal desires

from the desires and needs of the group--a necessity if one is to avoid

manipulation. It is also exceedingly difficult because the staff person

must honestly assess his own participation in the analytic process.

The Transportation Committee was appointed by the organization's

Board of Directors because the organization was experiencing rapid

growth in the number of vehicles being acquired for its portal-to-portal

transportation program for the elderly and handicapped. It was also

having great difficulty in meeting the demands of the burgeoning program,

not only in regard to requests for service, but also in volunteer driver

recruitment and management of the service. The Board directed the

Transportation Committee to:

1. Study the problem of transportation for the elderly and the
   handicapped in terms of:

   - community needs

   - agency needs

2. Develop and recommend an action plan for:

   - immediate action to alleviate current pressing problems

   - long range service expansion

   - management of the system

   - funding sources for the program

The Transportation Committee was comprised of a staff person and

nine volunteers who had varying levels of technical expertise in the area

of transportation planning and in volunteerism. The membership of the

committee included:

- the Chairman . . . appointed by the organization's Chairman of
  Volunteers . . . a transportation planner by profession . . . no
  previous volunteer experience;

- a second professional transportation planner . . . some previous
  involvement with the organization of an individual but not a group
  level;

- the key volunteer in the organization's existing transportation
  program . . . familiar with the organization and its needs and
  problems;

- the Chairman of Volunteers for the organization . . . appointed
  by the Board of Directors to form the committee;

- a volunteer driver associated with the current transportation pro-
  gram . . . responsible for the maintenance of all the organiza-
  tion's vehicles;

- an insurance specialist . . . recently retired from the
  organization's national staff;

- the former Director of Volunteers . . . provided staff support for
  the transportation program when she was on the organization's
  staff;

- a graduate student desiring to test the use of the Nominal Group
  Process as a planning tool . . . an employee of the Washington
  Metropolitan Transit Authority . . . no previous experience as a
  volunteer;

- a social worker who is a transportation client served by the
  organization . . . physically handicapped;

- the staff member . . . ex officio on the committee . . . assigned
  by the organization to provide resource support to the committee,
  to assist the committee in structuring its work, and to assist the
  Chairman in facilitating committee activity . . in addition,
  assumed an analytical observer role, unknown to the committee,
  for the purpose of carrying out this culminating project.

The results of the Transportation Committee's efforts to develop a
policy statement and a formalized plan for the operation of the organiza-
tion's portal-to-portal transportation program for the elderly and the
handicapped, are included in a packet of materials (under separate cover)
accompanying this report and reflect the secondary focus of my culminating
project.

CHAPTER I

THE HISTORY OF SMALL GROUP STUDY AND

A REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This Chapter briefly examines the history and evolution of the study of small groups, and reviews some of the literature in the field over the years. First, however, it is important to define group dynamics as it relates to small groups and Knowles cites four uses of the term which are noted below:

1. In its most basic sense group dynamics is something that is happening in all groups at all times, whether anyone is aware of it or not. It is a complex force that acts upon every group to cause it to behave the way it does.

2. "Group Dynamics" is also a field of study, a branch of the social sciences to determine why groups behave as they do.

3. Another use refers to a basic body of knowledge about group behavior.

4. Finally, group dynamics has come to be used to describe a growing body of applied knowledge, which attempts to translate finding and theories into principles and methods. It is concerned with the use

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of knowledge about group processes.[1]

Small groups have been studied for centuries and studies probably

began with such philosophers as Plato and Aristotle. Later, Machiavelli's

The Prince (1518) and Hobbes' Leviathan (1651) became classic sources

for the analysis of power and the probable social consequences of its

application--important to survival at that point in history.[2]

According to Knowles in his Introduction to Group Dynamics, the

group has always been important in the struggle against enemies although

the realization of its dynamics has been through trial and error rather than

through research early in its history. Knowles states:

> The group has always been an important means for the accomplish-
> ment of human purposes. First in the family, then the clan, the tribe,
> the guild, the community, and the state, groups have been used as
> instruments of government, work, fighting, worship, recreation and
> education. Very early in this historical development men began to
> discover by trial and error that certain ways of doing things in groups
> worked better than others, and so a body of folk wisdom began to
> accumulate regarding the selection of leaders, the division of labor,
> procedures for making decisions, and other group techniques. It is
> natural that in an era of struggle against natural and human enemies
> the major concern was with assuring disciplined subservience to
> leadership rather than with improving the ability of group members to
> work together creatively and cooperatively.[3]

It seems ironic that man did not begin to seriously study small

groups with which he was intimately familiar until after he had devoted

centuries of thought to the larger, more remote aspects of social organ-

ization. Earliest studies of groups deal with large groups of people, but

late in the seventeenth century speculative thinking began about the

social nature of man and the relationship between individuals and

collectivities. Nineteenth century sociologists narrowed the scope even

further, and dealt with the crowd, the mob, the public and mass move-

ments of fads, fashions and hysteria.[4]

The twentieth century was characterized by conflict which arose

between the environmentalist-behaviorist theory and the instinct theory,

as quoted below from Jacobson.

> The early twentieth century was characterized by some turbulence
> in small group research, perhaps best exemplified in the conflict
> between John Watson's environmentalist-behaviorist theory and
> William McDougall's instinct theory of the origins of man's social
> behavior. Much has been written about the arguments of these view-
> points, but the important thing to remember is that eventually the
> debate was resolved with Watson's view holding way. By this time
> researchers were weary of the emphasis on the philosophical approaches
> to behavior and chose to develop specific hypotheses. Gordon
> Allport's work on social facilitation typified the concern for more pre-
> cise laboratory analyses of man's social behavior, and so it was
> predictable that the 1920's would emphasize the development of
> methodology with little regard for matters of content.

> The ensuing twenty years saw the small group researcher emerge
> from the laboratory and beginning to study behavior in relation to
> social issues such as mass movements, prejudice, rumor flow, and
> many other phenomena as they occurred in their natural settings. The
> Hawthorne Western Electric Studies demonstrated the concern for
> extra-laboratory research, stressing the importance of the social and
> psychological variables operating within small groups. Significant to
> this period was the development of the group dynamics school under
> the direction of Kurt Lewin. His research on factors such as leader-
> ship styles, attitude change, and frustration of goal achievement
> provided not only valuable theory on small group behavior but also
> set the tone for experimental studies in the field. Lewin's work The
> Conceptual Representation and Measurement of Psychological Forces
> (1938) was unique in that it combined theory and empirical data.[5]

With Lewin having accomplished the union of theory and empirical

data, small group researchers in the 1940's expanded their scope and

accumulated considerable empirical and experimental findings. These

years might be described as a period of expansion for small group
researchers and perhaps the most significant development was the
emergence of social psychology as a separate field of study.[6]

"With social psychology firmly established as the major discipline
concerned with small group behavior, the research production curve in
group studies rose sharply through the 1950's into the 1960's and still
shows no signs of abating," according to Jacobson.[7] The modern era in
the scientific study of group behavior has several notable character-
istics: 1) a rapidly increasing volume of technical literature;
2) establishment of a number of research centers focusing on group
phenomena; and 3) the growth of training programs, laboratories, work-
shops, institutes and seminars.[8]

While many apparently competing theories and explanations exist
in the field, Cartwright and Zander point out that they do not actually
contradict but rather augment and amplify one another.[9] The confusion
in the literature is partly the result of many different kinds of groups
used for research, partly because of the diversity of problems and partly
is the product of the inter-disciplinary character of the field. But more
fundamental than these differences are the variations in theoretical
approaches to the study of groups. Six approaches are outlined by
Knowles and are:

1. The field theoretical approach which makes the assumption
that a group at any point of time exists in a psychological field which
consists of a number of forces that affect the behavior of the group. The

direction and relative strength of these forces determine where the movement will take the group;

2. The factor analysis approach which seeks to determine the major dimensions of groups by identifying their key elements;

3. The formal organization approach which is primarily concerned with developing a satisfactory conception of organization and an understanding of the nature of leadership;

4. The sociometric approach which focuses on the social aspects of group life, especially the emotional quality of the interpersonal relationships among group members;

5. The psychoanalytic approach which stresses the emotional-- primarily unconscious--elements in the group process and their effect on personality; and

6. The social group work approach which consists of the analysis of narrative records of the group workers and the extraction of generalizations from the case histories of the group. Group workers have tended to be more interested in practice than in research so the volume of scientifically validated studies from this approach has not been great. In recent years, however, there has been a shift in group work research from descriptive research to action-research.[10] This culminating project thesis falls into the above category because the design of the study required that analytical observations be documented in narrative reports for future study and analysis.

As trends in the study of small groups were projected in 1973,

Helmreich, Bakeman and Scherwitz predicted that:

It seems likely that increased emphasis will be placed on studies of process within groups and on the interactions of multiple situational and individual variables over time. Given the proliferation of variables determined to influence individual and group behavior and the often conflicting results generated by studies examining only one or a few aspects of group behavior, more and more investigators may be motivated to turn to multivariate, longitudinal research. Such a shift in approach may bring more unity to the area of attraction, new life to the study of leadership, and more understanding of the complexities of inter-personal communication and influence.[11]

They further predicted that much future research is likely to be nonexperimental, involving the systematic study of natural groups over time, realizing the limitations of the laboratory in providing complete information.[12]

In 1976 Davis, Laughlin and Komorita state that interest in actual social interaction is increasing. As quoted from their "Social Psychology of Small Groups," in The American Review of Psychology:

Interest in actual social interaction is increasing. As many have noted, the Lewinian emphasis on the dynamics of interacting groups which dominated the social psychology of the forties and fifties was replaced by an emphasis on the social cognition of individuals in the late fifties and sixties. Much of the renewed interest in small group interaction derives from the discovery of the "risky shift," the larger question of choice shifts in group decision making and the increasing realization that the fundamental question is the effect of group discussion on group decision. Zeitgeist considerations are also relevant. As Steiner has indicated, social psychologists are responsive to the needs of their times. The great needs of our times are the three E's-- energy, economy, and environment--in a world of suddenly limited resources relative to increased populations. This renews research interest in the collective behavior of interacting individuals and fundamental questions about the individual's relationship to the collective. Thus we predict that the experimental study of social interaction will increasingly address the basic questions of classical political economy: how are resources distributed, what are the processes of group decision making, how do the motives and objectives of individuals relate to the collective welfare?[13]

The needs of our times as identified in the three "E's" are problems of society at large, and they along with other community needs will undoubtedly be addressed by many public and private agencies in the future. The private, nonprofit agency that uses volunteer groups for planning and policy determination will be addressing these needs via small groups and will have to be especially aware of the dynamics taking place within a group and the affect it has on the productivity of the group as it works to accomplish its goals.

The use of small groups as a vehicle to address society's problems continues to be an accepted way of work, and an increasing number of complex demands are being made on the group as a planning body. In order to best enable groups to be productive, the leadership (both volunteer and paid) must understand the dynamics taking place within the groups with which they work, and have a clear understanding of their respective roles. Because of this realization, I have entered into a course of study on group dynamics that, hopefully, will assist me to be more effective in my role as either staff or volunteer with leadership responsibility.

According to Knowles, the field of group dynamics is too new for anyone to know what its ultimate status in the social sciences will be, or what its full contribution to society will be. He states that there is some aura of controversy about the field and critics are asking, "Will the new knowledge and methods being uncovered enable unscrupulous people to manipulate groups more easily toward their selfish ends?",

"Isn't there a danger that all this emphasis on group behavior will lead to a loss of individuality—that 'group thing' will take over?", "Isn't the group dynamics field focusing too much attention on the process of groups at the expense of the content of their work?", and "Will not inexperienced or poorly trained people make use of techniques that might cause damage?"[14]

While these questions go unanswered, it is important to add up the accomplishments of group dynamics to date, and however important these discoveries have been, it seems obvious that the surface has only been scratched. Knowles states, "The years ahead are bound to bring further exciting developments, both in pushing back the frontiers of knowledge about human relations and in applying these unlocked secrets to practical human affairs."[15]

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FOOTNOTES

[1] Malcolm Knowles and Hulda Knowles, Introduction to Group Dynamics (New York: Association Press, 1959), pp. 11-14.

[2] Wally D. Jacobson, Power and Interpersonal Relations (Belmont, Cc.: Wadsworth Publishing Co., 1972), pp. 4-6.

[3] Knowles, Group Dynamics, p. 15.

[4] Ibid., pp. 15-16.

[5] Jacobson, Power and Interpersonal Relations, pp. 4-5.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Knowles, Group Dynamics, p. 22.

[9] Dorwin Cartwright and Alvin Zander, Group Dynamics Research and Theory (Evanston, Ill.: Row, Peterson & Co., 1953), p. 4.

[10] Knowles, Group Dynamics, pp. 22-31.

[11] Robert Helmreich, Roger Bakeman and Larry Scherwitz, "The Study of Small Groups," Annual Review of Psychology 24 (1973): 350.

[12] Ibid.

[13] James H. Davis, Patrick R. Laughlin and Samuel S. Komorita, "The Social Psychology of Small Groups: Cooperative and Mixed-Motive Interaction," Annual Review of Psychology 27 (1976): 524-525.

[14] Knowles, Group Dynamics, pp. 73-77.

[15] Ibid., pp. 76-77.

CHAPTER II

THE DYNAMICS IN THE LIFE CYCLE OF A GROUP

All groups are unique entities unto themselves but they also share

some attributes common to all others. This section looks at those

common characteristics and how they emerge in the group being studied;

the nature of the task oriented work group, which was the structure of the

group being observed; and the phases of maturity in work group develop-

ment.

Common Characteristics of Groups

Small groups have been the target of intensive study in recent years

and researchers have found that there are several characteristics held

common by all groups. In A Guide to Effective Management, Leslie This

wrote that while all groups, particularly those which have on-going life,

have common characteristics each characteristic will vary from one end

of the continuum to the other:

> On most of the characteristics, a group can be judged as being
> mature, immature, or at some point between these extremes. It
> therefore follows that every group has its own personality and is
> unique. No two groups are ever the same. Indeed, considering
> the external inputs that occur between group meetings, no group
> convening today is the same group it was the last time it met.[1]

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The common group characteristics mentioned by This are discussed on the following pages.

1. Group Background. Groups are comprised of persons from different backgrounds which make up the group's personality. These backgrounds may either enrich or block a group's ability to achieve its goals. Quoted from Leslie This are the factors affecting the group's functioning.

1. Whether or not all the members come from the same work organization
2. The sex make-up of the group
3. Whether or not all the members are from the same part of the country
4. Whether or not the members have worked together before
5. The degree of similarity of the members' economic and title status
6. The members' previous experience in meetings and groups
7. The extent of the members' age differential
8. The degree of similarity of the members' job tenure.[2]

Of these eight factors, two had an affect on the group being studied. Once several members of the group (four of the nine members) had worked together for several years, knew each other well and came into the group with a greater than usual level of confidence in their role. They did not form a clique or a subgroup and actually accelerated the group's functioning because they assisted the chairman of the committee in orienting the group to the program, were quick to identify problems for study and required fewer team building functions by the staff.

The other factor affecting the group in a rather serious way, at first, was the Chairman's lack of previous group experience. While he was an expert in the field of transportation planning, he was not

experienced as a leader of a voluntary committee, nor did he clearly understand the volunteer role. During the December, January and February meetings particularly, the Chairman did not encourage group participation, was unable to "control" group discussion or keep it focused on the task at hand, and was not adept at drawing the group into decision-making at the appropriate time. This caused the group to move more slowly than if it experienced hands, but of greater consequence was the superficial level of involvement the group was operating on because the Chairman was not encouraging input. This could have resulted in loss of interest by members of the group and a drop-out problem. The staff worker attempted to encourage group involvement by assuming a participatory gate-keeping role in the later meetings (see section on Team Building for a further discussion of gate-keeping), in an effort to encourage everyone to participate in discussion to a greater degree. This staff role did increase input and produced an equalizing force.

2. Group Participation. Groups will develop a participation pattern which involves the volume and direction of communications. How much does the leader talk? Who talks how much? Who talks after whom? Who is silent? Do only "status people" talk? To whom are questions addressed? These communication patterns may or may not be the most effective pattern.[3]

While there were definitely persons on the committee who were active talkers, the staff worker never was able to discern established communication patterns. Both the committee Chairman and the Chairman

of Volunteers talked a great deal but they had an inclination to talk to the group as a whole, rarely singling out any one person. The Chairman's lack of directed communication was accepted by the group most likely because it provided a comfortable situation for the members not to be singled out, and because what he had to say usually contained information needed by all members of the group. It was, however, more of a "lecturette" situation with the Chairman providing the dialogue--a, "This is what we have to do and this is how I see that we do it" situation. The group did not challenge the Chairman directly on this style of leadership, but since his leadership capabilities grew as the group matured, and since the staff worker assumed a gate-keeper's role to encourage participation, the group may not have felt the need to challenge him.

During discussions, when one person was dubbed by the group as an "authority" on a subject, a pattern was established whereby the conversation was directed to that person by others on the committee. This pattern was evident during the January 17 meeting when the zone structure for decentralized service was discussed. Since the key volunteer working with the current transportation program was a member of the committee, the group directed the majority of their questions to her in order to seek data, opinion, and issue clarification. This occurred in other similar instances as leadership roles changed in the group.

The two silent members on the committee were the only persons who were brought onto the committee from outside of the organization. They

were participants who held the lowest ranking on the influence and

prestige scale (see Table I in the section on Establishing Credentials)

and were the ones who participated minimally in credential establishment

activity. One was a client being served by the organization's current

transportation service and the other was an adult student there for the

purpose of testing the Nominal Group Technique* of program planning.

The client may have felt overwhelmed by the group since she appears to

be a very shy person, and greater effort should have been made by the

Chairman and the staff to involve her. In the other instance of non-

participation, the graduate student wishing to test the Nominal Group

Process may have had the implementation of her study foremost in her

mind and may not really have been interested in total involvement.

3. Group Communication Patterns. Groups are affected by the

quality of verbal and nonverbal communication. Are issues being

identified or are people talking around the issue? Are there semantic

problems? Are people trying to impress one another with their vocabulary

and concepts? What is the nonverbal level communicating--facial

expressions, posture, fidgeting?[4]

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*The Nominal Group technique is a special purpose program
planning technique useful for situations where individual judgments must
be tapped and combined to arrive at decisions which cannot be calculated
by one person. They are problem-solving or idea-generating strategies,
not techniques for routine meetings, coordination, bargaining or negotia-
tions. The Nominal Group technique involves creative decision making--
judgmental decision making, and the central element is lack of agreement
or incomplete knowledge concerning the nature of the problem and com-
ponents which must be included in a successful solution. The Technique

The quality of communication generally remained high in the group

being studied. Certainly, during the first meeting the real issues were

identified and no technical jargon was bandied about. In spite of the

fact that two of the members were professional transportation planners,

they did not use jargon or technical vocabularies in an attempt to impress

others. Also, even though a ranking of committee members had been

created in the minds of the committee, no one person held such high

status that he was always addressed first as a regular pattern. The

committee Chairman was often addressed first because of his job as the

leader and also because of his dominance during the discussions taking

place at the first few meetings. (The staff worker has noticed that other

small groups of inter-agency volunteers of seven to nine members, often

do not establish strong identifiable communication patterns. Possible

reasons might be related to 1. the limited size of the group; 2. the fact

that many of the members know each other from working together

previously and have broken down status barriers; and 3. the basic

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is highly structured because of the process it follows:
  -silent generation of ideas in writing
  -round-robin feedback from group members to record each idea in
   a terse phrase on a flip chart
  -discussion of each recorded idea for clarification and evaluation
  -individual voting on priority ideas with the group decision making
   mathematically derived through rank ordering or rating.
Andre L. Delbeq, Andrew H. Van Ven and David H. Gustafson, Group
Techniques for Program Planning: A Guide to Nominal and Delphi Process
(Illinois: Scott, Foresman & Co., 1976), pp. 9-50.

philosophy of volunteer involvement which conveys to participants a feeling of equal worth.) No nonverbal communication patterns were observed in the group being studied except occasional isolated nonverbal feedback indicating fatigue or momentary loss of attention.

4. Group Cohesion. Groups are affected by their attractiveness to their members. Cohesion can range from almost total absence to so much that it becomes sticky and exclusive. One interesting thing about cohesion: it may not be present until there is an external threat.[5]

The group studied did not achieve a high degree of cohesion. While members were friendly and cordial during the meetings, or on a chance encounter outside of the meeting, the members did not maintain social contacts with each other outside of the group. This is not unusual in a task oriented work group whose prime interest and purpose is to reach a goal through task completion. It appeared to the staff worker that the members considered their first responsibility to be work and attended the meetings more out of a sense of obligation and commitment than because of a great desire to see each other again. This is not to imply, however, that no cohesion existed. One example of group cohesion was noted by the staff worker at the committee meeting held just after an interim report, which contained recommendations and supporting data on which the committee had worked hard, was presented to the organization's Executive Committee. The report was accepted by the Executive Committee, but no action was taken on the recommendations. Over the course of two months, the committee members became

anxious, then upset, and finally angry as time passed without word of Executive Committee action. Anxiety and hopeful anticipation was expressed by members of the committee at the first meeting held after the report presentation. The members wanted to know what the reaction was, when the recommendations were to be implemented, the Executive Committee's reaction to the direction their planning was taking, and other questions that sought approval of their work. At the next meeting the same basic questions were raised again, but with no answer. The lack of information regarding the approval of their recommendations caused the group to turn to the staff worker and ask if she could find out what was happening. At the third meeting after the presentation, the Executive Director attended the meeting on another matter and several members present came closer to demonstrating confrontation at this time than any other time in the group's existence. They asked the same questions as they had previously, but with a forcefulness that implied "what's your excuse for not doing what we recommended." (The staff worker was aware of the level of anger and frustration of the group because several members of the committee had discussed their feelings on other occasions and as a result, the staff worker may be interpreting the anger more on its covert level than on overt demonstration.) The Executive Director listened to what the group had to say and promised that he would encourage the Executive Committee to take action at its next meeting--which they did. His willingness to listen to the group and his assurances that he would do what he could to obtain action

lessened the tension that had built over the situation.

5. Group Atmosphere. Groups have a climate which can range from cold to warm, hostile to accepting or relaxed to stiff and formal.[6]

The Transportation Committee's atmosphere was informal and friendly by nature of the personalities of the members, and also by deliberate design on the part of the Chairman and the staff worker. Climate setting is dealt with in greater detail in the section on Team Building.

6. Subgroupings. Groups are affected by such matters as seating arrangements, friends, function, woman-man, issues, likes and dislikes, etc. In the past subgroupings were considered dysfunctional but now they are recognized as an effective way for a large group to get its job done.[7]

Subgroups were on the lowest end of the continuum as a characteristic of this group. The committee was too small to break into subgroups for the purpose of work and did not break into other subgroups for any other reason. As the group matured to the phase when subgroups might form, the members of the committee had begun to participate more fully than in the beginning, and were too interested and involved in the total work of the committee to form subgroups. The focus of interest was on what the group was doing as a whole, so individual members did not feel the need to seek out subgroup structures to meet their needs.

7. Group Standards and/or Norms. Groups need a guide for their members as to what is appropriate conduct and behavior. Group

standards operate on two levels--explicit and implicit. Explicit

standards or norms are behavioral guides which are made public, such

as policies, procedures and rules. Implicit norms are norms simply

adopted by the group, often unconsciously, and may be desirable or

undesirable.[8]

One explicit norm of the group studied involved the organization's

policies and procedures that anticipated and expected volunteer involve-

ment in all phases of the organization's activity. This standard or norm

made it acceptable for the volunteers to participate in the decision making

process--to discuss, disagree and vote. It also made it unacceptable

for the staff to enter into participation, on a member level, and to dis-

cuss, disagree or vote. The standards for volunteer and staff participa-

tion were explicit in defining the volunteer and staff roles.

Implicit norms were adopted by the group in a number of areas but

all seemed to reinforce an atmosphere of informality. Members left the

meeting as they wished to pour a cup of coffee, came in late or left

early if necessary, stretched if tired, etc.--all activities which were

accepted by the group without ever being discussed.

8. Public and Private Goals. Groups have a public goal which is

usually one that is stated in writing and is often shared with the group

prior to the first meeting. Often, however, a group will spend much time

working on a vague goal, coming up with good, but nongoal-directed

work. Another aspect of goals is the private goal, or hidden agenda,

that members bring to the meeting. Members with a hidden agenda will

often judge the effectiveness of the group in terms of how well it met

their private goals.[9]

As groups work on public goals in the early stages of their

development, they will expend a great deal of energy in trying to create

a definition held common by all.[10] This initial crisis often involves the

nongoal-directed activity mentioned above, but is necessary to the pro-

cess of crystallizing a goal and achieving unity of direction. This group

characteristic was found in the group being studied and is discussed in

detail later in this section.

Private goals or hidden agendas are always present but because

they are hidden, and usually remain so, it is difficult to cite examples

of their presence on the committee being studied. There were two

instances, however, of hidden agendas of which the staff worker was

definitely aware. One was the staff worker's own hidden agenda in

respect to the analytical role she played. The group was aware of the

public role of staff support, but was unaware of the staff worker's

private role as an analytical observer of the group process. The other

hidden agenda was held by the member of the committee who was a

graduate student. Her hidden agenda was to test the effectiveness of

the Nominal Group Process on a planning group and to write a research

paper on the results for her MBA degree. The staff worker was aware of

her hidden agenda, but again, the committee was not.

9. Group Member/Group Leader Behavior. Groups are affected by

whether the group leader completely controls the group, whether the

group controls the leader, or whether there is a sharing of group leader-ship.[11]

No leadership behavior pattern was firmly established until quite late in the group's life cycle, but instead all combinations existed, at one time or another, during the first few meetings. These first meetings were mostly dominated by the Chairman, who because of his self-defined leadership role, sought information, initiated and carried discussion, and gave opinions. During part of one of these meetings however, when a new member was introduced into the group, an egalitarian relationship developed when both the Chairman and the members assumed a leadership responsibility to see that the new member was oriented. As the Chairman gained experience in his job, however, he gained greater experience in "controlling" the group when necessary and allowing the group to "control" him when appropriate.

10. Decision Making Process. Groups have a decision making process whereby decisions are made by either the group, the leader, or jointly. Does the group identify in advance what process will be followed for making decisions?[12]

Consensus was the decision making style of the group studied and is another example of an implicit standard or norm. This method of decision making was never discussed by the group, or the Chairman, but it was the unspoken understanding that it would be improper for the Chairman to be the sole maker of decisions. It would be proper, however, for the committee to make decisions with the leader and since informality

was the style of operation, consensus was an acceptable and appropriate means of decision making in the committee. It was also the decision-making style used in other committees in the organization and was a familiar and accepted decision making process to most of the members.

11. Toleration of Individual Differences. Groups will tolerate little deviations from norms during their early stages of maturity, but as the group matures they will find they can work together quite effectively and still tolerate great extremes in dress, personalities, violations in norms, values and biases.[13]

Toleration of individual differences as a group characteristic was almost unobservable in the study group because there were no extremes in the above mentioned areas. The only observable deviation from an implicit norm was by the Chairman of Volunteers who because of her great need for recognition exhibited behavior that was disruptive, but which was tolerated by the group even in its earliest stage. This toleration may have been due to the fact that the Chairman of Volunteers was well known to most of the committee members prior to the first meeting, has assumed an early leadership role in the committee's formation, and held some prestige in the larger organization by virtue of her volunteer position.

12. Ability to Handle Conflict. Groups will usually develop a single, repetitive response to conflict from one of the four response patterns quoted below from This.

Fight. Unfortunately this often leads to cliques; the subgroup or clique will remain constant and fight with other subgroups over

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every issue that emerges.

Flight. The group cannot tolerate conflict and will flee from it. The group will move to another, less threatening topic; someone will tell a joke and the issue is dropped; the group will take a break, adjourn or adopt a compromise that all know is not workable.

Deny. The group will deny that there is any conflict and therefore silence the dissenters, for to do otherwise would be to threaten the group's cohesion. This response can be identified in such comments as "Come on now, we're all one big happy family. Right?"; "Remember, we're all partners in this fine old organization. I love you all."; and "We're really a great bunch, huh? We may have our little old differences, but we really stick together."

Cope. The issue is brought to the surface and identified, data are obtained, and the group resolves the issue before moving on to the next item on the agenda. [14]

Cope seems to be the most desirable and honest method of dealing with conflict, but it has been my observation that it is the one method of dealing with conflict least often used in volunteer groups. To cope requires that conflict be recognized, be openly acknowledged and dealt with by the group. This is often difficult for many persons to do, unless motivated by anger. As Penland notes, in highly structured groups conflict is usually politely ignored since avoiding hostile verbal exchange is part of our social ethic. [15]

Although no real conflict emerged in the study group, it is most likely that if it had, the group would have chosen the flight or deny response. The milder forms of conflict and confrontation that the group did experience are discussed in more detail in the section on Team Building.

13. Ability of the Group to Identify and Use its Resources. Groups find that in our culture it is not considered polite to reveal one's

strengths and capabilities, and group members need to be encouraged
to reveal the skills, knowledge, experience and capabilities they have
and can share.[16]

The members of the study group followed the implicit norm of
remaining modest, so skills and experience were discovered only when
an issue was raised that drew on an individual's expertise in that given
area. This was particularly evident when the group discussed the
management philosophy of the program, and one member emerged with a
great deal of management experience, much to the surprise of the rest of
the group. Rather than designing a management system based on "pooled
ignorance" the committee found it had some real expertise on the subject
from an unsuspected source.

14. Structure Adequate to the Purpose of the Job. Groups find that
too often structure precedes function. A group is often set up with a full
complement of officers and then the group tries to force its tasks and
organization into this predetermined structure.[17]

The structure of the committee being studied was predetermined
because of an implicit norm that made this action acceptable. This norm
was based on the fact that all committees in the organization worked in
the same way, therefore, the structure was never questioned. The
structure was a simple one with a leader and a recorder, it came to
decisions through consensus, and was a task oriented work group.

Even though work groups share all of the above common character-
istics, they also have characteristics unique unto themselves that affect

the way in which members participate, both as individuals and collectively

as a group. The next portion of this chapter is devoted to looking at the

nature of work groups in greater depth.

The Nature of the Task Oriented Work Group

There are many types of groups and all are formed to serve a

specific purpose. Five types of groups noted by Penland and discussed

below to briefly outline the differences other groups have from a task or

work group.

A discussion group. A group whose task is to understand, interpret
or analyze a matter of common interest, a group that is generally
loose in structure and less directive in leadership than a task group,
less inclined to control time and movement, and more inclined to merge
ideas and to elicit full and free participation.

A natural group. A group which has a vaguely defined purpose, one
that grows up informally out of some human experience (such as a
neighborhood coalition for the preservation of parkland, or other
purpose that causes people to band together in an effort to achieve a
common goal).

A process group. A group designed around enhancing the process by
which people live in relationship with other people. Their basic
learning tool is the very experience that is created from within the
group itself, as in an encounter group.

A training group. A training group differs from a task group on the
one hand and from a process group on the other hand, even though it
has the elements of both. It resembles a work group in that the
learning goals are specific, and a process group in that the process
is open and there is an expectation for personal and interpersonal
growth.

A work group. A group of people who come together to accomplish a
task or a specific set of tasks.[18]

The group studied was a task oriented work group, so it is

necessary to take a look in detail at what a work group is and how it

differs from other groups.

In defining the elements found in a work group, Penland states in his Group Dynamics and Individual Development that they are structured and always under the pressure of time.

> The work group comes together to accomplish a specific task. In most situations, the task group is a highly structured, procedure-directed, product-oriented, leader dependent operation that places a high value on a rational and scientific approach to a problem. The group's primary concern is with reality, and its methods are empirical, organized, sophisticated. The activities of a task group are structured carefully.

> An outstanding characteristic of the work group is its view of time. Time is always seen as having a limit, as if it were pressing the group to move onward. It is as though time were the one commodity that is always in danger of becoming unavailable. A task group feels a constant question--not only about what was done at a meeting, but about how productively the group's time was spent. The work group tends, therefore, to minimize personal growth in the interest of group movement and to view its success in terms of task accomplishment in the shortest possible time. [19]

The activities of task groups are structured and structure is comfortable. We like knowing what is expected of us. Unstructured groups experience great anxiety, and the natural movement of the group is to make order out of chaos, to avoid emotional confrontations, and to move toward an established goal. An unstructured group will try to structure itself and the strivings for order, and the pressure to regain it, is very strong. Task groups hardly need worry that they will be overwhelmed by "emotionalism" and "sensitivity." [20]

The group being studied met the criteria of a task oriented work group as defined by Penland. The group was product-oriented and came together for the purpose of planning an effective program for the delivery

of transportation services to the elderly and handicapped; was procedure-directed and structured because of the explicit and implicit norms that determined how it would work; was leader-dependent on both the chairman and the staff worker; and placed more importance on task accomplishment than on personal needs and development.

The group felt a high level of satisfaction as the result of the first meeting which was highly productive in terms of identifying 35 points of concern (this listing is found in the November 15 analytical report of the Appendix), to be discussed by the committee during its task identification process. This met the product-oriented needs of the group and they felt they had accomplished a great deal of work. The group enthusiasm was high as the members came into the second meeting, but because the group reverted to a discussion group pattern, to meet a new member's needs, the criteria (mentioned above) necessary to a task oriented work group were lost. As a result, the three hour meeting accomplished very little, in spite of the staff worker's attempts to remind the group that items on the agenda had not been dealt with by them. One particularly important item needing attention was the development of a transportation policy statement on which future program decisions would be based. The group attempted to deal with the issue (late in the meeting when everyone was becoming fatigued), but continued to get side-tracked and was unable to agree on the basic philosophy of the statement or the wording. In an effort to get the job done, the staff worker suggested that she and the committee's secretary take the ideas recorded in the minutes and

develop a finished statement for the approval of the committee at its

next meeting. The committee readily agreed and confirmed Dyer's point

that, "Groups are not used to establishing their own goals and procedures

and when they can't agree on them it is easier to rely on an authority to

tell them what to do and how to do it."[21] In this case, the staff worker

assumed a more participatory role than had been taken up to that point

and the group was very willing to accept the facilitative leadership pro-

vided. The group demonstrated on several occasions that it could not

accomplish tasks in an orderly manner without leadership from someone

to assist them. When leadership was not forthcoming from the Chairman,

the committee reverted into a non-directed discussion group that was not

able to follow its own agenda, or move ahead in an orderly and systematic

manner. This demonstrated that while a group is product-oriented and

procedure-directed, it is still dependent upon adequate leadership.

As previously stated, another outstanding characteristic of the work

group is its view of time, the tendency to minimize personal growth in the

interest of group movement, and to view success in terms of task

accomplishment in the shortest possible time.[22]

This was demonstrated in one meeting early in the group's life

cycle when the Chairman of Volunteers disrupted the meeting several

times with personal stories unrelated to group discussion. The Chairman

of Volunteers was attempting to gain recognition from the rest of the

group to meet her personal needs, but the group deflected her disruptions

the best they could by moving on with their discussion. After one such

meeting a member commented to the staff worker that nothing was being

accomplished and that she hoped the committee would get something done

at the next meeting. Had the group been personal growth oriented,

rather than task oriented, it would have taken time to help the member

meet her personal needs. As it was, however, the group was task

oriented and anxious over the lack of group productivity and felt a

definite need to move ahead as quickly as possible.

The committee being observed continued to have entire meetings,

or just moments, that were productive or unproductive throughout its

entire life cycle. At first the unproductive meetings were due to lack of

leadership on the part of the Chairman, coupled with the staff worker's

reluctance to usurp the leadership in an effort to get the group moving.

As the Chairman's leadership skills developed, the committee accom-

plished tasks more productively, but began to experience cycles of high

productivity and low productivity that were not always related to the

Chairman's leadership abilities. This caused the staff worker to seek

information on phases and cycles that groups go through in their

development, and the next segment of this section deals with those

phases and cycles a work group experiences.

Phases of Maturity in Work Group Development

All work groups will go through three basic phases in their life

cycle. First they search for an identity that is held common by all

of the members, and from there they work toward unity. After unity is

achieved a group is ready to move into its productive stage of group

movement. In order to utilize the positive forces inherent in each

phase, a group leader must be aware of them and be able to use them

to move the group on to its next phase.

Group Identity

Work groups form for the purpose of identifying and carrying out

tasks that can be accomplished to meet specific goals. In order to do

this however, certain basic group and individual needs must be met

before the group can effectively move toward accomplishment.

The first step or phase that a group encounters is the need to know

one another through safe conventional behavior.[23] This is carried out in

a fairly quiet way by members of the group as they informally talk with

each other, joke nervously, tell about themselves, ask about others,

etc. This is called establishing credentials and is discussed in detail

in another section of this paper. Briefly, however, the process of

establishing credentials allows the group not only to get to know one

another, which promotes a relaxed atmosphere, but also assists each

member to assess the priority order of influence in the group. This

"pecking order" will have an effect on the group during its entire life,

and while it is fluid in that positions of influence will change,

basically, it will remain the same.

During the first phase of involvement according to Zaleanik, the

group's members still have preconceived ideas about the group and its

job based on their own past experiences. No two members of the group

will have identical images of the group, and one of the initial crises in group development involves the process of achieving an identity common in the minds of all of the group members. As a result, in the early stages of its development a group will expend much energy to create a definition of the situation held common by all.[24] Also in this phase, the discussion of issues has little interest to anyone and the group will struggle to get organized. The old saying of, "Someday we've got to get organized," was probably uttered by a committee member suffering through this stage of group development. It does serve the important function of working through problems related to inclusion needs, and also allows individuals to begin establishment of their credentials as they work to define the situation.

This was demonstrated in the study group's second meeting rather than in the first, most likely because the first meeting was so highly structured with the task identification process used that there was no opportunity to deal with the basic initial crisis issue. Throughout the second meeting, however, the committee had great difficulty in remaining focused on the task at hand and it was a typical example of the man who jumped on his horse and rode off in all directions.

In spite of the clearly defined tasks identified at the first meeting, the group members ignored the work they had just done and at the second meeting began to rediscuss the entire spectrum of needs and problems that had been previously identified. In a sense, the group rejected its previous meeting's work and started over again.

This most likely occurred because the committee members were unable to relate their own past experiences and preconceived ideas about the group, and its needs, during the highly structured first meeting. The structure did not allow for extraneous dialogue and the group postponed the initial crisis essential to conceiving a common group identity. This points out the danger Zaleanik notes, inherent in overly rapid definition and over delineation of tasks, especially where group tasks demand creativity.[25]

The group identity phase may be brief or extended depending on the size of the group, the complexity of the group goal, the skills of the leader and the extent of the pressures of time. This phase does not abruptly end at the onset of the next one, but gradually moves into the next level, sometimes rather quickly and at other times in an erratic pattern. The group may move toward unity, then suddenly revert back to the identity phase to redefine or reinforce common definitions. The two steps forward and one step back concept is a good one to keep in mind when dealing with group development phases.

Group Unity

Group unity is an unspoken expression of group movement toward goals that are generally, by now, acceptable to all members. Groups move toward a spirit of unity and it is the natural movement of a group to seek a state in which it has an ego and a momentum of its own. In spite of disruptions that might occur, the group keeps straining toward

that comfortable productive state. According to Zaleanik, this is a warm-up period when the group begins to practice pursuing issues with the implicit understanding that no one will get hurt.[26] This warm-up is the point in the group's life cycle where participants get ready to really work. They test their ideas on the group to determine group reaction, to ascertain where other members of the group stand on an issue, and to test their own influence and assess the influence of others.

The warm-up activity in the group being studied took several meetings for the group to deal with and was partially dependent on the success of the team building activities in the areas of climate setting, establishment of expectations and maintenance functions. Team building is important to the warm-up phase because group members must feel quite safe as they "risk" the testing of their ideas. The climate of acceptance and security was present in the study group and was especially evident during the December 6 meeting when the committee attempted to write a transportation policy for the organization. They "practiced" pursuing issues by suggesting a number of items to be included, but were cautious not to be hurt by suggesting ideas that might be construed by others to be a stupid suggestion.

The staff worker feels that one of the reasons why (in addition to weak leaders) the group was unable to come to an agreement on the policy was due to the fact that the committee was still in its warm-up phase with the need to test ideas and attitudes. The implicit group under-standing was that everyone was to have a chance to express his ideas,

and that all ideas would be accepted as valuable. In addition, it was implicitly understood that to reject ideas would be counterproductive to team building efforts; therefore, judgments on suggestions were not readily made by members of the committee. In this instance, the group was reluctant to make judgments and, thus, was not able to screen out the least useful suggestions because it was not mature enough in its level of mutual trust.

This may be another reason why the group readily agreed to let the Committee Secretary and the staff worker write the policy--it saved the group from having to pass judgment on other's proposed suggestions.

The group moved rather quickly into its next level of maturity, but again moved forward and backward in the various levels during all of its meetings.

Group Movement

During this next level of maturity in the life cycle of a group, the group is ready to really work. Feedback is now direct, members engage in helping one another, masks are dropped and communication becomes more valid. In addition, insights and ideas emerge spontaneously and are tested immediately.[27]

According to Penland, the group now qualifies as a mature group and is able to make decisions by design, not be default, and recognizes its own responsibility for its own actions.[28]

The group being studied began to move into its third level of

maturity at the January 17 meeting, and the movement was particularly evident during a controversial discussion regarding new management concepts. During the discussion, the group was very careful to be sure that they understood the intent of what was being said and persisted until they were sure that they understood all of the implications. Feedback was direct and testing was immediate through the use of questions and statements of approval or disapproval and was done without fear of rebuff. This level of maturity was achieved because the inclusion needs of the individuals in the group had been met at the earlier levels, which is essential for group movement to take place. Groups that linger at the earlier levels of development for an extended period of time become frustrated from lack of meaningful accomplishment and begin to lose member interest. Some groups seem to just never get off the ground and the inability to move from one level of maturity to the next prevents them from experiencing the maturity necessary for achievement.

Even though a group has reached its third level of maturity there is no guarantee that it will be immune to moments of nonproductive activity. According to Penland, every group has cycles of productivity-- flow-highs, flow-lows and level places. Movement and activity will take hold of the group and it will surge ahead only to give way to inertia and apathy. Movement will begin again, and then inertia will once again immobilize the process. The group will become anxious, then comfortable depending on which flow pattern the group is experiencing.[29]

The control of this flow pattern is one function of group structure.

When operational procedures play an important role in the group process, it is possible to control highs by calling a meeting to order, to moderate lows by moving to the next item on the agenda, to deal with anxiety by changing the subject, to flee from apathy by adjourning the meeting.[30] It is at this level that leadership skills are of the utmost importance, and the role the leader assumes in the group process has the greatest impact on group productivity.

The Transportation Committee meeting on February 28 is a good example of a group flow-low pattern. The meeting was extremely unproductive in regard to additional tasks or goals achieved. The group primarily discussed and rediscussed the Executive Committee's reaction to their interim report, and seemed to enjoy hearing over and over how impressed the Executive Committee was with the report and with the Transportation Committee's progress. It was a meeting of enjoying one's "glory," while at the same time raising questions as to "what's next"? The Chairman acknowledged the meeting's lack of productivity, noted that nothing new was accomplished, and indicated that at the next meeting the committee must reassess its progress in order to determine what new steps should be taken. At the same time, however, the Chairman appeared to feel uncomfortable enough about the lack of accomplishments that he felt the need to rationalize to the group that, "We needed to do this."

The meeting was unstructured in the sense that no tasks were laid out and none were completed, and therefore, the group experienced

anxiety and a need to move toward established goals. Since the group

had responsibility for its own direction and since task groups expect

and demand firm, task-accomplishing procedures to follow, the

committee appeared to be uncomfortable with an unproductive or flow-low

meeting, even though they enjoyed discussing their success. One mem-

ber commented after the meeting, and two the following day, on the lack

of accomplishment at the meeting.

The control of the flow pattern is a major function of a chairman,

as the key facilitator within the structure, and can be controlled when

operational procedures such as: an agenda with short-term and long-

range tasks, strong leadership by the chairman, use of decision making

procedures, etc. play an important role in the group process. If too

many consecutive group meetings are immobilized with flow-lows,

interest begins to wane and members of the group begin dropping off of

the committee. This can be a very critical time in the life cycle of the

group, and much depends on the skill of the chairman to get things

moving again so that the group's need for productivity is met. The staff

worker has observed other committees in the organization that have

dissolved because neither the staff nor the chairman of the committee

were able to move the group off of a flow-low, nor did they recognize it

as such.

The flow-low in this meeting of the Transportation Committee may

possibly have been the result of the group having focused solely on the

task of completing the interim report, so that specific goals and objectives

beyond that point had not been developed by the group. Along this line, Drucker points out that a team, or work group, needs a clear and sharply defined objective and requires a continuing mission in which the specific tasks change frequently.[31] The staff worker feels that these sharply defined objectives need to be present on a short-term basis in each committee meeting, as well as on a long-range basis, to allow for rewards of accomplishment to be present at each meeting. In other words, each agenda should be planned to include some short term and long range tasks, in order to provide the satisfaction of having immediate rewards, as well as the satisfaction of working toward the total goal. If accomplishment is judged in terms of completed tasks, then each meeting must provide an opportunity to complete some, and by doing so will avoid flow-low patterns.

This meeting lacked those essential elements mentioned earlier and therefore, did not move ahead. It is not to be said, however, that occasional pauses for review and self-praise are not beneficial to the health and general productivity of the group. The self-praise in this case, was a maintenance function provided by the group, for the benefit of the group, and is an interesting departure from the regular forms of individual maintenance functions.

In all levels of development, it is important to remember that groups do not operate in a vacuum and that the speed and ease in which the maturation process takes place will depend on many factors. Every group will differ in the way it matures. Some will need a great deal of

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time to establish credentials and to overcome the initial crisis, while

another may need to participate in extensive team building activities

while the group goes through the second level of development. Yet

another group may find that it has reached the third level of maturity,

then a new member enters the group and starts the process all over again.

Finally, to sum it up in This' words, "No group convening today is the

same group as it was the last time it met."[32]

FOOTNOTES

[1]Leslie E. This, <u>A Guide to Effective Management: Practical Applications from Behavioral Science</u> (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1974), p. 47.

[2]Ibid., p. 48.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid., p. 49.

[5]Ibid.

[6]Ibid.

[7]Ibid., p. 50.

[8]Ibid.

[9]Ibid., p. 51.

[10]Abraham Zaleanik and David Moment, <u>The Dynamics of Interpersonal Behavior</u> (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1964), p. 26.

[11]This, <u>Effective Management</u>, p. 52.

[12]Ibid.

[13]Ibid., p. 53.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Patrick R. Penland and Sara Fine, <u>Group Dynamics and Individual Development</u> (New York: Marcel Dekker, 1974), p. 51.

[16]This, <u>Effective Management</u>, p. 54.

[17]Ibid., p. 53.

[18]Penland, <u>Group Dynamics</u>, pp. 35-38.

[19]Ibid., p. 34.

[20]Ibid.

[21]William G. Dyer, _The Sensitive Manipulator_ (Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1972), pp. 51-52.

[22]Penland, _Group Dynamics_, p. 34.

[23]Zaleanik, _Interpersonal Behavior_, p. 148.

[24]Ibid., pp. 24-26.

[25]Ibid., p. 63.

[26]Ibid., p. 26.

[27]Ibid., p. 148.

[28]Penland, _Group Dynamics_, p. 26.

[29]Ibid., p. 52.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Peter F. Drucker, _Management_ (New York: Harper and Row, 1974), p. 566.

[32]This, _Effective Management_, p. 47.

CHAPTER III

MAINTENANCE FUNCTIONS NECESSARY TO

GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Credential establishment and team building are two essential

functions necessary to the development and productivity of a work group.

The first is oriented toward meeting individual needs and the latter

toward meeting group needs, but both affect the quality of group achieve-

ment, and individual identity and satisfaction.

This chapter is devoted to looking at these two functions and

analyzing their emergence and affect on the group.

Credential Establishment

Credential establishment means the ordering in the minds of the

group, the expertise, interests, influence and prestige each person

carries into the group and is the first function to take place in the life

cycle of any group or team.

The first phase of credential establishment is the concern of each

member of the group to be included--to be accepted by the others in the

group. Shaw asserts that every interpersonal relation follows the same

course of development, namely, development begins with a concern for

inclusion needs.[1] Penland elaborates on them by writing that as soon as a group is formed, the inclusion phase begins. When people are confronted with one another, they are concerned with being in or out of the group. They are concerned with their place in the group, and are confronted with several basic issues. The issues of concern are: 1) identity--who am I in this group, where do I fit in, what kinds of behavior are acceptable; 2) goals and needs--what do I want from the group, what do I have to offer; and 3) power, control and influence--who will I dominate, how much power will I have, who will control what we do?[2] After these inclusion need questions are assessed by the individual, he begins credential establishment in order to meet his need to be included and accepted, and to attempt to project to the group the perceptions he has of himself in regard to his identity, role and power in the group.

While this is normally the first step in a group's life cycle, the process was somewhat hindered in the group being studied because of the tightly structured nature of the first meeting. The members of the group sought to establish credentials before the actual meeting started, but time was limited and once the meeting began, it was so tightly structured that it was difficult for credentials to be completely established, even though the members may have desired to do so. The first meeting of the committee was spent trying to define its tasks through the use of the Nominal Group Process as a task identification tool for creative planning, thereby causing some difficulties discussed later in

this Chapter. While the technique assured different processed for each phase of creativity, balanced participation among members and was useful at the first meeting to encourage total group involvement, it did not encourage credential establishment nor allow for a thorough exploration of the common definitions needed to overcome the group's initial crisis.

The greatest part of the first meeting of the Transportation Committee was taken up with the Nominal Group Process in an attempt to identify all of the tasks needing to be addressed by the group during its first few months. This intense and highly structured meeting eliminated the opportunity for individuals to test the group for the answers to the three inclusion issues because they actually had no opportunity for dialogue beyond responses directed toward the Nominal Group technique. This resulted in a highly productive meeting in terms of task identification (far beyond other planning processes), but delayed the normal first phase of group identity and full credential establishment in the group process until the loosely structured second meeting of the Committee. For this reason, the Nominal Group process is not good to use during the group's identity phase of development, but is a highly effective tool for creative planning. It would most likely be best used after the group has had ample opportunity to establish credentials and experience its "initial crisis," as discussed in the previous chapter. Providing ample time for an extended discussion during the first meeting in order to conceptualize the job at hand will most likely allow for a better opportunity to more fully establish credentials and to counter the

initial crisis phase of a group.

The fact that the committee did experience struggles to get
organized and move toward accomplishment at its second meeting
indicates that the need to allow the credential establishment and group
identity process to be fully developed is essential before the group is
able to be productive. It may be delayed, but cannot be avoided, as
was evidenced in the group's second meeting.

Cueing to Affect Individual Status

Primary attributes

Individuals establish credentials through the use of visible and
verbal cues. Each person has primary attributes which are the visible
status factors over which the individual has no control. The two most
crucial are age and sex. The norm is that younger persons show deference
to older persons, and men take aggressive-action roles while women take
submissive-passive roles.[3] An example of this was evident in the
November 15 meeting of the Transportation Committee, when the women
on the committee assumed the role of listeners during the pre-meeting
credential establishment process. The women committee members so
completely deferred to the male members, at this point in the committee's
development, that they didn't even strive to establish their own creden-
tials with each other. Through this lack of credential establishment,
they in a sense agreed to assume a submissive-passive role, and thereby
let the men assume the leadership and decision making roles. The men

did not necessarily promote the sexist, dominant versus passive roles, but lacked sensitivity to recognize its presence--as did the women.

This situation partially corrected itself, however, early in the first meeting by the staff worker who encouraged each individual to articulate his experience in the organization and his relationship to the transportation program. The staff worker recognized that the men had established credentials with the group, but since the women had not, a balanced discussion which involved every member of the group was unlikely. Therefore, the staff worker suggested a round-robin introduction process, giving the women an opportunity to share their credentials with the group also. As a result, an atmosphere of mutual respect began to be established, not only between the men and the women, but also between the women themselves. This was evident from the way in which the men turned to the women to seek information on the current transportation program, and to seek advice on occasion.

Secondary attributes

Secondary attributes are status factors used as symbols of position and role but are not obvious. The person must present clues so the rest of the group is aware of his education, marital status, religious background, socio-economic class, or occupation. This is done in a variety of ways, including dress, posture and mode of speech. Verbal cues are used extensively in credential establishment as a method of cueing the rest of the group.[4] Secondary attributes were evident a number

of times in the committee being observed. The Chairman of Volunteers

for the organization sat at every meeting doing her needlepoint, talking

but never looking up, which may have said to the group, "I'm important,

I'm here to monitor what you say and do, correct you when necessary,

but I'm not here to do the work." The committee member who said, "When

I served in the state legislature . . . ," was telling the group he was

important and deserved respect. And the committee member who con-

tinually made reference to her summer home, "Eaglesmere," on Long

Island, was establishing her socio-economic influence.

The group observed in this study found it more necessary to

establish their credentials in the areas related to their personal lives

than in the area of technical expertise related to transportation planning.

This was probably the case because the majority of the committee were

volunteers and perceived themselves as having no technical skills.

Therefore, they felt more secure establishing credentials based on their

personal lives. This pattern is probably a normal one for volunteers who

do not have a job elsewhere to use as a secondary attribute cue, and

they may tend to rely on those personal attributes that they perceive will

bring them the greatest amount of status, thereby satisfying their ego

needs.

Managers of volunteers need to be aware of the areas of experience

from which members of the group are attempting to draw status as they

work toward establishing credentials. Most volunteer groups are fairly

diverse, perhaps mixing housewives, retirees and currently employed

persons. The persons without "paying occupations" may possibly feel less secure in their ability to obtain the status accorded (or assumed) by a currently employed member serving on the committee, feeling that their credentials are less impressive. They therefore may either withdraw from the credential establishment process thinking, "Why try, I haven't a chance," or may become aggressive in an attempt to sell their attributes in order to gain status. In either case, the manager of volunteers should be sensitive to the needs he is able to perceive in each member, in an attempt to help each person promote his credentials. This can often be easily accomplished by asking an individual a number of questions that enable him to expound on himself, often revealing impressive facts that will accord him status in the eyes of the group. The aggressive credential establisher also can often be successfully dealt with in the same way because the opportunity is provided for him to "toot his horn" in an accepted way, therefore meeting his ego needs. If his perceived status is not as high as he thinks it ought to be, however, he may continue his aggressive self-promotion and be a disruptive force within the group. This falls into the category of dysfunctional behavior and is discussed in the Chapter on Roles.

In either case, according to Maslow, it is important to take into consideration the place that establishing credentials has in satisfying ego needs, regardless of the subject area in which they fall. Maslow said that ego needs--status, self-respect, self-confidence, worthwhile feeling and recognition--are very necessary needs to satisfy.[5] While

ego satisfaction builds a helping relationship through a feeling of self-

actualization, an important by-product of meeting ego needs is the

establishment of the "pecking order" of influence that is created out of

the process of credential establishment. It is essential for groups,

especially work groups, to create order out of chaos, and to structure

their group before they are able to begin addressing the tasks at hand.[6]

One method of structuring carried out by groups is the status ranking of

group members which while not static, will affect their future influence

on the group.

Group Ranking

As a result of their credentials establishment, the Transportation

Committee ordered its members into a ranking system based on a con-

tinuum from most influential and prestigious, to least influential and

prestigious. (See Table I.) All future decisions were somewhat affected

by the ranking system, although the ranking changed periodically as

leadership roles shifted. (This is discussed more fully in the Chapter on

Roles.) One example of a group decision being influenced by an

individual rated high on the continuum of influence and prestige was the

incident occurring at the March 28 meeting. The committee discussed

the need to develop a recruitment manual for persons recruiting volunteer

drivers through the organization's Speakers Bureau. The committee

member that initially agreed to do the recruitment indicated that he did

not think the manual was a necessary tool. Since he was acknowledged

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TABLE I

PRESTIGE AND INFLUENCE CONTINUUM OF PERSONS
SERVING ON THE TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE
AS OBSERVED BY THE STAFF WORKER

Most prestigious
and influential

Chairman. . .recognized leader of the group. . .professional transportation planner. . .male. . .friend of other transportation planner listed below

Second professional transportation planner. . .male. . .former state legislator. . .prepared initial study of current transportation program. . .initiator of ideas

Volunteer currently running existing transportation program for the agency. . .had facts relating to current program. . .aware of existing problems. . .assertive discussant in a very nice way. . .female

Former Director of Volunteers. . .provided staff support to the above member when the program was being developed. . .had facts relating to current program and was aware of existing problems. . .assumed a "supportive staff role" on the committee and deferred to her volunteer counterpart when possible during discussion. . .female

Volunteer driver in the current program. . .responsible for all vehicle upkeep and maintenance. . .good at reconciling differences and testing for consensus. . .personable and well liked. . .male

Insurance specialist. . .recently retired from organization's national staff. . .knowledgeable about management systems. . . generally a seeker of information. . .male

Chairman of Volunteers. . .formed committee upon request by Board . . .disruptive by diverting group discussion to focus on herself . . .pipeline to Board. . .female

Graduate student desiring to test Nominal Group Process for a school research paper. . .active involvement in first meeting. . .minimal subsequent participation. . .female

Client using current transportation services. . .very pleasant person . . .shy. . .spoke only when spoken to. . .physically handicapped . . .female

Least prestigious
and influential

by the group, at this meeting, as having influence and prestige in the area of volunteer recruitment, his wishes were supported by the group. The Chairman on the other hand, felt it was a necessary tool for recruiters, and since his ranking on the broad spectrum was higher, the group reversed its support of the one member in favor of the Chairman.

In summing up this section, the establishment of credentials is very necessary as the first function of a group, and while it takes place spontaneously and generally without the group's awareness, those working with groups in a leadership position need to be aware of its presence and the role it plays in the internal affairs of the group. It not only affects the ranking order of the group, and the respect or lack of respect each member accords the others, but also affects the ability of the group to function effectively and efficiently. As noted in this section, the group almost fell apart during its second meeting and one reason (along with lack of leadership by the Chairman and initial crisis) was that there was not ample opportunity to thoroughly establish credentials early in the group's development. Credential establishment is also important to the team building process and is the base upon which the team is built. By not allowing a firm base to be formed the group will likely be disinterested and remain uninvolved because no ego needs will have been met, group cohesion will not have been developed, and therefore, it will be a group that does not work well together in an effort to see that its job is carried out. The productivity of the group can be affected in a negative way by failing to plan for this important

first group function.

Team Building

The basic building blocks of human systems are interdependent groups (or teams) of people that operate within organizations, working at such activities as problem solving, program planning and goal setting.[7] As Trecker points out, "Any progressive development or improvement in our various communities which has not been the result of group thinking or action is hard to find. No matter what phase of modern life we touch we come face to face with the impact of group effort."[8] Because of this trend to work in groups, team building is an essential step to be aware of in the maturation process of a group.

It is the aim of team building to develop a more cohesive, mutually supportive and trusting group that will have high expectations for task accomplishment and will, at the same time, respect individual differences in values, personalities, skills and idiosyncratic behavior. Successful team development nurtures individual potential, and will exist only so long as it satisfies some of the psychological needs of its members.[9]

Cattell notes that need satisfaction is related to the group's existence and consists of three parts, which he calls synergy, effective synergy, and group maintenance synergy. Synergy refers to the total individual energy available to the group. It is the sum total of the group members' interest in the existence and work of the group. A

portion of this energy must be expended in dealing with interpersonal

relations in the group; that is, in dealing with friction and cohesion

within the group. This part of the total energy, or synergy, was called

group maintenance and has priority in the group's expenditure of synergy.

After the maintenance needs of the group have been met, the remaining

synergy (effective synergy) can be used in achieving the outside goals of

the group.[10]

Team building is a group effort and is carried out by the group's

leader, its members and its facilitator (alternately or concurrently). It is

largely an unconscious activity on the part of everyone involved, however,

a good leader should definitely be conscious of the need for team building

and the activities necessary to carry it out. In addition, the leader

should approach team building with deliberate intent, so as to allow a

variety of activities to take place that make each person feel relaxed,

secure, important and having value to the group. This will enable the

group to mature to the point of being able to be productive, and will allow

each person to fully participate in the task accomplishments of the group.

Team building is a process that takes place on an individual and group

basis and clearly benefits the group.

Team building generally takes place in relatively permanent work

groups, such as a committee, comprised of peers.[11] The group being

studied in this culminating project is a good example of such a group,

since it is relatively permanent (in terms of longevity normal to work

groups--that is, it will remain functioning until its task is completed),

was formed as a sub-unit within a larger organization for the purpose of problem solving and program planning, and is comprised of peers. Peer groups as defined by Kinch are made up of persons with similar interests and characteristics. Membership in the peer group is voluntary and the activities engaged in are usually a result of consensus that develops out of group interaction.[12]

The group being studied, as pointed out in the section on Establishing Credentials, came from a diverse personal background and represented varied age groups, socio-economic groups and educational levels. It still met the criteria for being a peer group, however. The members elected to join the group because of their similar interests in the agency and in the field of transportation planning. Their similar characteristics were based around their interest in planning through the group process, their interest in helping a voluntary organization to which they were committed, their willingness to make time available in their busy schedules, their ability to work well with others and their ability to receive satisfaction and meet personal ego needs through the group experience. In other words, their similarities were based on their abilities to work with, and relate to, the group process. Finally, the group was voluntary and received no pay, and activity was based on the consensus process that developed out of group interaction.

Team Building Activities

The activities necessary to team building are climate setting,

establishing expectations, and individual and group maintenance functions.

Climate setting

Climate setting for this group was begun prior to the group's first meeting by the staff member and the committee Chairman. The staff member held a number of individual conferences prior to the first meeting with a number of the committee members, as well as with the Chairman, and attempted to set the climate as being supportive, open, and encouraging of individual input. The Chairman in turn talked with several members of the committee prior to the first meeting, essentially to develop a similar climate of support. The conferences between the staff worker and the Chairman were particularly important because they were designed to reinforce the Chairman's understanding of his own expectations in regard to how he planned to "set the stage"--how formal did he want the group's relationships to remain, what kind of involvement did he wish to encourage, what leadership role did he plan to play, what expectation did he have for group productivity, etc.

Climate setting in the study group was carried out at virtually every meeting in some way. While it was especially critical at the first few meetings, it was also a function that needed constant reinforcement. At the first meeting of the group, the climate was set with deliberate intent by the staff worker, but also by individual members of the committee whose need to be liked by others produced a natural

friendliness that enhanced the team building effort. The deliberate

design included the room arrangement, amenities such as coffee, a warm

welcome upon arrival, and an introduction process that encouraged

people to begin actively talking with each other as soon as they arrived.

Of these, the room arrangement was possibly the most important since

the physical arrangements can stimulate or stifle discussion, and in

turn, productivity. Tables were arranged in a square so members of the

group could face each other, have a table to lean on, (promoting an

environment for secure participation) and have a place provided for

materials.

The staff worker's attempt to set the climate at the first meeting

was intended to develop an informality that would make people feel at

ease and secure enough to participate fully. While this would normally

have been vital to a group relying on individual interaction to achieve

its goals, the highly structured nature of the first meeting of the group

being studied partially eliminated the need for this step by severely

limiting the open discussion process. The staff worker feels, however,

that the climate setting at the first meeting still set the tone for future

meetings and provided a base on which to build.

The climate that is initially set must be continuously reinforced at

every meeting by the group leaders--the Chairman and/or the staff

worker. This is especially true if a controversial issue is to be dis-

cussed, or after controversy and conflict have emerged and have

altered or destroyed the desired climate.

The group being studied never experienced strong conflict or confrontation in its life span. This bears out Penland's theory that there is relatively little conflict in a group that operates under a system that regulates decision-making. Conflicts that do arise are generally over issues at hand, not over the process by which they can be resolved. In a highly structured group, acceptable group behavior will be the group norm and if conflict does arise, it will be dealt with only on a rational and intellectual level. More likely it will be politely ignored because ignoring intense feelings and avoiding personal verbal exchange are part of the social ethic of our culture.[13]

In every group, however, disagreements will arise. A structured group labels disagreements as discussion, debate or dissention and tends to minimize and repress the significance of the process. Discussion tends to be limited to the issue at hand rather than to the values underlying the disagreement.[14]

In an effort to keep an atmosphere of openness and acceptance, climate maintenance is especially important in the team building process during or immediately after conflict has emerged, in order to avoid having these negative forces destroy the climate completely. Therefore, it is essential to know not only what to do to set a positive climate, but what to avoid that might destroy the climate. Conflict needs to be avoided if at all possible unless it can be directed into a developmental experience.

While strong conflict never emerged in the group being studied, gentle confrontation did arise from time to time. One example of gentle

confrontation took place during the January 17 meeting. During this meeting, the group worked to rewrite the volunteer and paid staff job descriptions that, depending on how they were written, would affect the management philosophy of the program. New management concepts were introduced by one of the members and if implemented would significantly change current jobs and structure to a new and more efficient manner. The group was very careful to be sure that they understood what was being said, and what the implications would be on the whole program. While these new ideas were not mutually agreed upon when they were initially presented, an agreement was reached through a process of challenges and confrontations. Eventually, a negotiated common acceptance of the plan was reached.

Even though different management concepts were held by various members of the committee, ideas were challenged and persons were not, thereby not destroying or significantly altering the climate. If anything, the climate of openness was reinforced. This is consistent with Penland's theory that in a highly structured group, if conflict does arise it will be dealt with through an intellectual analysis of the issues at hand, and disagreements will be labeled as discussion, debate or dissension, but not conflict because avoiding conflict is part of our social ethic.[15] When disagreement is viewed by the group participants as discussion and debate, and the group remains on an issue level, disagreement continues to be a positive force.

An example of confrontation avoidance in the group being studied

was evidenced in a situation where the Chairman of Volunteers for the

organization exhibited dysfunctional behavior for the third consecutive

meeting and continued in her role as "the authority" on each point dis-

cussed by the group, and diverted the group with unrelated "war stories."

Two members of the committee commented to the staff worker on the

Chairman of Volunteers' disruptive behavior, but no member of the com-

mittee ever confronted her. This bears out Penland's observation men-

tioned earlier that even though a person violates the group norms of

behavior, the group will often continue to deal with that person on a

rational and intellectual level and politely ignore the dysfunctional

behavior, thus avoiding confrontation and possibly conflict.[16] In this

case, the group's ability to move forward with its business fell victim

to its open climate because the Chairman of Volunteers felt secure

enough to continue her disruptive behavior.

Establishing expectations

Establishing expectations, the second activity necessary to

effective team building, deals with both individuals and the group as a

whole. It is important to team building because everyone comes into a

group with certain beliefs and expectations about his role, the job of

the committee, and how he will relate to others in the group. Dyer

states that role expectations (what one should be, versus what one

actually is) move along most smoothly when there is an agreement on--

and understanding of--group norms, when there is a mutual agreement

on role definitions and role expectations, and when the role performance of one is in agreement with the role expectations of the other.[17] Conflicts can occur when individual members have differing role expectations, and it is necessary for the leader to be aware of this situation and help each member meet his expectation in terms of the group's expectations, or assist him in the adjustment of his expectations.

Also important to remember, according to Dyer, is that it is easier to change one's role expectations than it is to change one's behavior.[18] This is important to team building because in order to pursue a common goal, each individual must work toward its achievement with commonly focused expectations. As role perceptions differ, counter-productive forces can occur, and in effect, block the group's forward momentum in a number of ways. One example pointing out the need for clarification of roles was evidenced in the Chairman of Volunteer's perception of her role in relation to the Transportation Committee. Early in the Committee's formation, she assumed a controlling posture and excluded staff and other volunteer leadership from any involvement in the formation of the Committee. She initially appointed a very weak leader as Chairman of the Transportation Committee, which may have been an unrecognized, or recognized desire to maintain control through forced dependence. She called a meeting of only part of the Committee on October 4 and led the group into premature planning, again, presumably in an effort to receive recognition for her leadership role and to exercise control. The staff member conferred with her in an effort to help her define her role

expectations, match them against the expectations of the larger organization (within which the committee was operating), and match them against the time she had available to give as a volunteer. In the end she recognized that her expectations did not conform to those of the organization's in terms of her direct and controlling participation, nor was her time availability sufficient to carry such a large role. She, therefore, released her first appointee from the position of chairman (much to the relief of that person) and appointed another more qualified chairman. She also recognized the large time commitment that would be necessary from her busy schedule if she continued to try to involve herself extensively, and as a result, withdrew her participation to some degree.

This is an example of how it was easier to redefine and adjust one person's expectations than it would have been to try to change her behavior.

Maintenance Functions

Maintenance functions, the third component of team building deals with feelings of group integration and solidarity on the part of the members. Leslie E. This states that members of a group must feel accepted by other members; they must feel that the group is aware of each member's comfort needs and that members are being considerate of one another. To accomplish these ends, a group will find that it needs members (and leaders) who have group maintenance skills. The six most common ones

quoted from This are noted below.

1. Encouraging. Members smile at one another, nod approvingly, pat a member on the back, and otherwise encourage continued participation in the group.

2. Expressing group feelings. This is the ability to sense group feeling and mood and to express this so the group can deal with it, e.g. "I sense we're all tired and need a break."

3. Harmonizing. This is the skill of attempting to reconcile disagreements--to "pour oil on troubled waters."

4. Compromising. When two ideas are in conflict, someone may show how the two ideas can be changed a bit to be acceptable to both parties.

5. Gate-keeping. This is the skill of sensing when others are not getting the opportunity to participate because of more aggressive, verbal members. When one member has the floor, another member keeps the gate open so a more quiet member can participate-- "We haven't heard from Sybil yet."

6. Setting standards. Shall the group work at a shallow depth; will it level; face "gut" issues?[19]

Maintenance functions also involve visiting, joke telling, exchange of personal experiences and all other activity that makes a person feel important and unique as an individual.

Groups meet for a particular purpose, but they cannot work indefinitely on a task without some maintenance. Groups often grow tired, angry, frustrated, apathetic or tense while working on a tas. To relieve these feelings, which are often ignored in an effort to get its work done, it is necessary for the group to counter these negative forces through the use of maintenance functions.[20]

In participative, well-functioning groups, members are able to recognize when the group is becoming frustrated, angry, apathetic or

tense and will devise strategies to supply maintenance as required.

Dyer points out that if maintenance needs are neglected, work becomes

ineffective and, therefore, it is not a waste of time for groups to take

time off to apply group maintenance and remain in a state of good health.[21]

All of the above functions meet individual needs and are oriented

toward the functioning of the group as a group, and toward strengthening

and perpetuating the group, but if withheld, may affect the productivity

of the group as a whole.

While group maintenance was initially closely related to, and

overlapped, the credential establishment phase, it was also a continuous

process in the life cycle of the group and was deliberately applied by

staff prior to the first meeting, and during the first few meetings.*

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*Prior to the first meeting the staff worker met with the Chairman of Volunteers to discuss the Chairman of Volunteers' role expectations. Part of the staff worker's plan was also to apply maintenance in an effort to strengthen the communications link between the staff worker and the Chairman of Volunteers, to develop confidence and trust, and to develop a climate of support. This was carried out by conferring several times at length with the Chairman of Volunteers, and through these discussions the staff worker conveyed an interest in her as a person, recognized her job pressures and acknowledged her "founding" role in regard to the Transportation Committee. A good rapport was established at that time, and enabled the Chairman of Volunteers to risk re-examination of her previous actions and to develop a more mutually trusting relationship between the staff worker and her. This relationship did not survive at the same level of trust throughout the life of the committee, however, because maintenance was not continued with deliberate intent by the staff worker after the leadership roles changed. The new chairman received the greater part of the staff worker's time as the committee got underway, and the Chairman of Volunteers' need, to again be recognized as "the founder and the expert" on the committee, may have caused her disruptive behavior. If the staff worker had continued to attempt to meet her ego needs through frequent conferences, applying continuous reinforcement maintenance, her disrup-

Maintenance functions appeared spontaneously and unconsciously from time to time by various members of the group, but were equally effective in their end result. During the January 17 meeting, when the group was working on the management philosophy and the climate was tense, members of the committee alternately left the room for a few minutes to get coffee and returned ready to resume their participation because they were able to break away from the tense atmosphere just long enough to feel a sense of relief. In another instance when a particularly controversial issue was resolved, the group cheered spontaneously in unison, thereby breaking the tension and in a sense telling each other that they pulled together to resolve an issue and that they were still friends. These are both examples of very simple, yet effective, maintenance functions.

The ability and expertise by which a group carries out its assigned tasks is largely dependent on how well individual and group needs are met during the team building phase. All groups will go through the need for team building in their life cycles and it is essential that individual and group needs be identified as they emerge so that negative forces such as dysfunctional behavior, lack of sensitivity, conflict, or domination are not allowed to block progress of the group.

In spite of the fact that maintenance was provided by every group

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tive behavior may have been prevented. This is an error that the staff worker will be aware of when working with groups in the future.

participant, to a varying degree, negative forces were still occasionally evident. The example cited earlier in regard to the staff worker's neglected maintenance on an ongoing basis with the Chairman of Volunteers, demonstrated how negative forces can re-emerge in future meetings if needs are not continuously met. These forces can, if strong enough, affect the group's integration and harmony and thereby delay the group's ability to pull together as a team and move into its final phase of maturity. For instance, a negative force that blocked group involvement and impeded group progress was evidenced during the first few meetings of the Committee when the Chairman dominated discussion and did not solicit individual participation. In this instance, a stronger gate-keeping role on the part of the staff worker, or a member of the group, may have helped to encourage greater participation. Because the Chairman was still an "unknown quantity" during those early meetings, the staff worker was reluctant to be overly participative at that time. While the staff worker did some gate-keeping, it was not sufficient to obtain total group involvement.

In order to move the group to its next phase of maturation and productivity, team building efforts must be intensified during the beginning of a group's life cycle, but do continue throughout the entire lifetime of the group, waxing and waning as the occasion demands.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Marvin E. Shaw and Philip R. Costanzo, Theories of Social Psychology (New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1974), p. 262.

[2]Patrick R. Penland and Sara Fine, Group Dynamics and Individual Development (New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1974), p. 28.

[3]Abraham Zaleanik and David Moment, The Dynamics of Interpersonal Behavior (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1964), p. 50.

[4]Ibid.

[5]William G. Dyer, The Sensitive Manipulator (Utah: Brigham Young University Press, 1972), pp. 135-136.

[6]Penland and Fine, Group Dynamics, p. 46.

[7]Anthony J. Reilly and John E. Jones, "Team-Building," The 1974 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators (San Diego: University Press, 1974), p. 227.

[8]Harleigh B. Trecker and Audrey R. Trecker, How to Work With Groups (New York: Women's Press, 1952), pp. 10-11.

[9]Reilly and Jones, "Team-Building," p. 227.

[10]Shaw, Social Psychology, p. 305.

[11]Reilly and Jones, "Team-Building," p. 227.

[12]John W. Kinch, Social Psychology (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., 1973), pp. 102-103.

[13]Penland and Fine, Group Dynamics, pp. 51-55.

[14]Ibid., pp. 66-70.

[15]Ibid., pp. 51-70.

[16]Ibid.

[17]Dyer, Sensitive Manipulator, p. 79.

[18]Ibid., p. 85.

[19]Leslie E. This, <u>A Guide to Effective Management: Practical Applications from Behavioral Science</u> (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., 1974), p. 44.

[20]Dyer, <u>Sensitive Manipulator</u>, p. 57.

[21]Ibid., pp. 57-58.

CHAPTER IV

INDIVIDUAL ROLES IN A WORK GROUP

All work groups will find that they tend to be most fully served when there are roles that must be assumed to accomplish the tasks to handle the tasks or problems which confront their members. Several have been identified by Leslie This in his book, <u>A Guide to Effective Management: Practical Applications from Behavioral Science</u>, which are common to all work groups and are commonly brought toward on behalf either at various stages throughout the group's life cycle, on the subtle factor, the social climate, or on individuals in the group. These identified common roles:

1. Initiating. Suggests ideas, proposes tasks, defines problems, suggests solutions, etc.

2. Information or opinion seeking. Requests facts and information, ideas, suggestions, and feelings.

3. Information or opinion giving. A person who is information always will naturally supply the information whether facts, feelings. It is interesting that in most groups, there seems to be always required to volunteer the information one feels will meet the issues to...

4. Clarifying or elaborating. One or more persons in the group will see that ideas which are presented be made clear enough.

5. Summarizing. Frequently, during the group discussion, and particularly toward the end of the session, one or more persons

CHAPTER IV

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All work groups will find that they work on the task level, and at

this level there are roles that must be assumed in order for the groups to

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<u>Management, Practical Applications from Behavioral Science</u>, that are

common to all work groups and are assumed, independently or concurrently

at various times throughout the group's life cycle, by the group leader,

the staff worker, or by individuals in the group. These roles are quoted

below.

1. <u>Initiating</u>. Someone must initiate ideas, information, solutions, etc.

2. <u>Information or opinion-seeking</u>. Someone must ask for facts, ideas, suggestions, and feelings.

3. <u>Information or opinion-giving</u>. If anyone asks for information, others will normally supply information or give their opinion. It is interesting that in most groups, three times more people respond to requests for information than will ask for information.

4. <u>Clarifying or elaborating</u>. One or more persons in the group will ask that some ideas presented be made more clear.

5. <u>Summarizing</u>. Periodically, during the group discussion and particularly toward the end of the meeting, one or more persons

will attempt to summarize what the group had discussed and where they are at that moment.

6. Consensus-testing. One or more persons will test to see if the group is ready to make a total group decision or agreement.[1]

Who assumes these leadership roles will depend on: 1) the leadership strengths of the person in charge (in this case the volunteer Chairman of the Transportation Committee) and his self-perceived role as the leader; 2) the staff role assumed and the skills the staff worker brings to the group; and 3) the previous group experience individual members bring to the group and their inclinations to assume any of the six roles. Some persons are naturally inclined to "grease the wheels" of group process and will assume one or more of the six roles unconsciously, while others are experienced in working through the group process and will assume the facilitating roles consciously and with deliberate intent. While it is desirable to have the right person assume the right role at the right time, it doesn't always happen that way, therefore, it is necessary to look at: who should be assuming what role in a group; when should it be assumed; and how the carrying out of that role can facilitate or retard group process. Since these roles shift between leadership, staff and committee members they appear at the beginning of this section to serve as a guide and as a reminder that they are interchangeable roles and part of every individual's responsibility to the group.

This Chapter will deal with the group leader's role, the staff role, which is by and large a partnership role with the volunteer group leader,

and positive and negative roles assumed by members of a task oriented work group.

Volunteer Leadership Roles

According to Leslie This, prior to 1900 we were influenced by the notion that "Leaders were born, not made," and that leadership was largely a function of family position. He says that a democracy such as ours finds it difficult to accept this concept and believes that "leaders can be made or developed."[2] If this is true then we need to examine what distinguishes an effective leader from an ineffective leader, and look at the effect leadership skills can have on a group.

In 1939 pioneers in the study of group dynamics, Lewin, Lippit and White, conducted studies on leadership styles using four comparable groups of ten-year old boys. The groups were subjected to three styles of leadership--autocratic, democratic and "laissez faire," and were observed in regard to their response to these styles of leadership. These styles are still used today and each has its own merits and weaknesses depending on the situation. According to Shaw:

Members of groups with nondirective leaders react more positively to the group than do members of groups led by directive leaders. The evidence concerning productivity is inconsistent; however, it appears that either the directive-led groups are usually more productive than the nondirective-led groups or there is no difference in productivity.

Laboratory studies have indicated one other interesting aspect of autocratic versus democratic leadership: It is apparently much easier to be a good autocratic leader than a good democratic leader. For example, in the study by M.E. Shaw (1955) both the most and least effective groups had democratic leaders; there was relatively little variance among autocratic groups. It is easy to issue orders, but

difficult to utilize effectively the abilities of group members. If a leader doubts his ability to be an effective democratic leader, then he probably is well advised to play the autocratic role.[3]

There are many types of leaders and many leadership styles which are on a continuum of participatory management and group participation. Robert T. Tannenbaum outlined seven points of this continuum in his article "How to Choose a Leadership Pattern," Harvard Business Review.

He uses the title Manager, which I have changed to leader in each point to better relate the title to the group being analyzed. The seven leadership patterns are:

1. The leader (chairman) makes a decision and announces it to the group.
2. The leader sells a decision that was premade.
3. The leader presents ideas and invites questions.
4. The leader presents a tentative decision.
5. The leader presents a problem and gets suggestions.
6. The leader defines limits and asks the group to make a decision.
7. The leader permits subordinates to function within limits defined by the leader.[4]

Penland notes that someone has to assume the leadership function, regardless of whether that function is the direct, specified responsibility of an appointed leader or a floating, changing position that shifts among group members. Someone has to negotiate differences, encourage participation, etc.[5] He defines the leader's function as one who "walks amongst" the group to make it wise in the ways of self-direction. A group is an independent organism and the leader is simply a member with a special role to play. That role is a very important one and its function is to grease the mechanism so that it runs more smoothly. He concludes

by saying that the way to measure successful leadership is not by what the leader is doing but what the group is doing.[6]

"What the group is doing" is dependent on the level of self-direction (self-involvement) found in the group. In order to achieve this self-direction the group must have first resolved its initial crisis and have come to a common understanding of the definition of the task at hand. After this step in the group's development has taken place, the leader is able to lead the group into defining its goals and objectives. The self-directed activity is stimulated by the leader if he assumes a facilitator-enabler role, rather than a dominator role. Self-direction is a goal that is slowly worked toward as the group matures, rather than an instantaneous happening, and is dependent on the leader's willingness to encourage self-directed activity even when the group's goals differ from his own goals. This is why it is especially important to have defined group goals during the initial crisis phase of group development. If the goals are accepted, and well understood, the paths to get there may vary, but the final goal will usually be the one previously agreed upon by all members of the group, including the leader.

Penland continues to say that there are no rules of leadership; the effective leader is aware of what is happening, aware of what is happening below the level of what is happening, and aware of what the group can potentially achieve. His function, then, is to facilitate the group's movement from where it is to where it can potentially go.[7]

This awareness requires that the leader develop a level of

sensitivity that enables him to recognize individual needs of the group's members, counter productive undercurrents in the group, and hidden agendas (that don't always remain really hidden), in order to analyze the effect these forces will have on the group's ability to reach its goals. This skill requires that the leader be aware of the necessity to analyze the covert, as well as the overt, movements in a group and requires that the leader be "in touch" with his group as often as necessary, individually as well as en masse. This is an important function if a leader is to remain aware of what is happening below the level of overt activity and is necessary if a leader is to facilitate the group's movement toward its goal.

The Chairman of the committee being studied went through three phases of change as a leader. The first phase was largely based on levels one and two of Tannenbaum's leadership pattern continuum mentioned earlier; in the second phase the Chairman displayed more of an effort to seek opinions of others and to encourage group involvement; and the third phase the Chairman displayed a mature leadership role and not only encouraged group involvement, but also delegated responsibility to others. These phases are analyzed in more detail below.

Phase one. During phase one the Chairman primarily assumed the initiator, and information and opinion giver roles outlined by This on page one of this Chapter. These roles are important, but need to be in balance with the other six roles outlined. To assume one or two roles and ignore the rest will eliminate effective leadership. While the six

roles are considered to be both assumed and assigned roles, a chairman

needs to be aware that they are his primary responsibility, are assigned

to him and will be assumed by others only as their skills and inclinations

allow. He therefore needs to be aware of these roles and use them as a

guide for his leadership behavior.

During the first meeting of the committee, the Chairman called the

meeting to order and immediately launched into program planning

activities that did not encourage or allow necessary credential establish-

ment activities to fully take place. He also ignored two agenda items

(discussion of the committee's structure and its role) and proceeded on

to item three--strategies for attacking the job at hand. The staff worker

feels that these omissions were not deliberate on the part of the Chairman,

but merely pointed out his lack of experience in leading a group comprised

of volunteers in an organization such as the one in which he was working.

Failure to encourage credential establishment was most likely due

to the fact that the Chairman was unaware of its existence as a natural

process of the group . . . and of its necessity. Therefore, the blocking

of the process was not due to deliberate intent, but due to lack of aware-

ness and understanding of the process. While both the staff worker and

the Chairman planned the first agenda together, the failure to address the

two items (that the staff worker felt were important), was probably

because of the Chairman had assigned a low priority to them even though

he had agreed they should be placed on the agenda. He did not recognize

the importance of full committee understanding and its effect on future

participation and involvement.

Argyris points out that the more a leader controls, the more the group members are subordinated and dependent, and the less their needs are fulfilled. This in turn can cause disinterest, unfavorable adjustment and turnover.[8] One such method of control, and manipulation, is to limit information flowing to the group forcing dependency and subordination. This was not the deliberate intent of the Chairman, but would have eventually had the same effect if it had continued as a normal leadership pattern. In an effort to compensate for the Chairman's failure to involve the group at the first meeting, the staff worker assumed the role of initiator, information seeker, summarizer and consensus-tester. In this case the staff worker assumed the task level roles. This outlined in an effort to facilitate group involvement.

During the task identification process the leadership role was shifted to the graduate student while she implemented the Nominal Group process. This process by-passed the Chairman as the leader and involved the group in task identification and priority establishment. The Chairman, however, ignored the priorities set and attempted to readjust them to meet his ideas of what they should be. In this instance, he tried to sell the group on a decision he had already made regarding what he identified the priorities to be and fell into number two on Tannenbaum's continuum. The committee was effective in keeping their chosen priorities as set, and the staff worker attempted to reinforce the concept of honoring the committee's ranking everytime the Chairman tried to bypass it. The staff worker did

this by reminding the committee and the Chairman of the priorities they had set and asked if they thought the item being discussed had greater priority than the one they had originally set. In some cases it did, but that decision was then made with intent and not by default.

During the second meeting the Chairman lost control of the group as the members attempted to orient a new member of the group. The committee became an egalitarian group with no evident leadership. The group not only attempted to orient the new member, but also began problem identification all over again, while the new member attempted to solve them then and there. The Chairman did not perceive the confusion or the disjointed discussion and did not try to pull the group back on target. The staff worker intervened half way through the meeting to call the group's attention to the fact that the meeting was half over and they had not achieved the objectives they had planned, as reflected on the agenda. Since agendas were always set by the entire group at the end of its meeting, the agenda for this meeting contained specific items the group had hoped to accomplish. By choosing to continue their discussion with the new member, without the Chairman's intervention in an effort to move them back to their agenda, the group assumed five of This' task roles: initiator, information seeker, information giver, clarifier, and summarizer. The staff worker assumed the role of consensus tester in an effort to move the group back to the agenda so as to accomplish the tasks the group had set out for itself. In looking back on this situation, the staff worker realizes that it was probably just as

important for the new member to overcome the initial crisis (coming to a common understanding of the issues) as it initially was for the group. The group merely responded to the member's "need to know." This situation would most likely repeat itself with the introduction of any new member entering a group that had already passed its initial crisis phase. The staff worker feels, however, that the Chairman should have assumed a stronger leadership role in directing the discussion in order to avoid the immediate random attempts of the new member to solve all of the problems as they were mentioned by the group. While agendas are just plans for a meeting, the staff worker feels that they should be used unless an unforeseen element is introduced that necessitates the altering of that plan. Certainly, a new member needs to be oriented to gain a common understanding of the issues along with the group, but at the rate new members are usually introduced into ongoing committees in a voluntary association, the staff worker feels that the entire use of a three hour meeting to achieve this understanding, every time a new member enters the scene, is not always in the best interest of the task oriented work group, since their need for productivity is strong. A better solution, perhaps, is to meet with a new member prior to his first meeting to attempt to enable him to reach a common understanding of the group's goals ahead of time.

Phase two. During the third meeting of the Transportation Committee the Chairman began to show evidence that his leadership skills were changing from number two on Tannenbaum's continuum (the leader sells a

decision that was premade), to numbers three and four (the leader

presents a tentative decision and the leader presents a problem and gets

suggestions). At this meeting the Chairman assumed the role of idea

initiator and information seeker to a far greater degree than that of the

information and opinion giver pattern evident in previous meetings. He

also did much more consensus-testing. Because of his role change, the

Chairman encouraged much more information giving on the part of the

group. The group did not assume any additional roles to a significant

degree, however, so the staff worker attempted to fill the remaining

roles of clarification seeker and summarizer. This was a facilitative role

intended to encourage the group to seek additional information (by

stimulating the group information givers) and to summarize discussion in

preparation for consensus-testing by the Chairman.

During the third meeting the Chairman had not fully moved into

phase two of group involvement, but demonstrated that he did take into

account their feelings and ideas when he wrote the committee's interim

report for the organization's Executive Committee. The excellence of the

report reflected a combination of strengths found in the make-up of the

committee that seemed to counteract any weaknesses in leadership

skills by the chairman. The three elements influencing the report were:

1) the Chairman who was experienced in the broad picture of transportation

planning, but who lacked skills to assist the committee to function

effectively as a group; 2) a committee comprised of persons who were

experienced in operating the organization's current transportation program,

but who were generally myopic in their ability to look at the broad picture; and 3) the staff worker who assumed the role of group facilitator and process intervener when necessary, to keep the committee moving toward accomplishment. These attributes seemed to blend strengths to overcome individual or group weakness in order to get the job done.

The February meeting was very unproductive and remained unstructured because of the lack of effective leadership. The committee had reached a flow-low (a lack of group productivity that affects all groups from time to time), which should have been controlled by the Chairman as one of his major functions. The group rambled on about the interim report and the Executive Committee's response to it, but the Chairman made no attempt to channel the discussion to a conclusion so that the group could move on to the other items on the agenda. The affect that a flow-low can have on a group is discussed more in detail in Chapter I on the "Dynamics in the Life Cycle of a Group."

During this meeting there was much information and opinion giving by all members of the group and some information and opinion seeking, but no one assumed the roles of initiator, clarifier, summarizer or consensus-tester. While these were assigned roles for the leader, neither he nor anyone else on the committee carried them out at this meeting, therefore, the group was unable to move off of its flow-low. This may possibly have been the result of the Chairman meeting his own ego needs through the extended discussion focused on, "How did you handle this," and, "What did you say to the Executive Committee about

that," etc. The discussion was intensively focused on the Chairman and he may have had no desire to move the group off of the subject--him. On the other hand, the Chairman may have been just responding to the group's questions and did not have the group work experience to recognize a flow-low and the need to move on to another subject.

The staff worker discussed the meeting's lack of productivity with the Chairman prior to the next meeting and worked carefully with the Chairman to firm up an agenda that would be productive (if followed) and was carefully planned in terms of the sequence of the items to be discussed, time allocated for discussion and phraseology comfortable to the Chairman.

Phase three. The March meeting planned for above, was very productive. The meeting dealt with tangible task items such as the development of a recruitment plan for drivers, and the identification of the first steps for decentralized dispatching of the organization's seven vehicles. The Chairman did an excellent job of handling the meeting, accepted all of the task roles incumbent in his role, and was definitely in command and control of the meeting at all times--a leadership role that emerged strongly and consistently for the first time at this meeting. The Chairman encouraged participation by seeking information and opinion, clarified, summarized in preparation for consensus-testing, and after the group's consensus successfully concluded discussion on that particular agenda item and moved to the next.

The staff worker is unsure why such strong and positive leadership

waited until this meeting to emerge, but several things may have had an affect on the Chairman's performance. The first was the lack of productivity that affected the group and the Chairman at its previous two meetings. His frustration with the lack of accomplishment was most likely just as strong as the group's, which provided him with a motivation to ensure that the inertia didn't affect one more meeting. Second, the items on the agenda were strongly favored by the Chairman (and not just the committee) as needing to be done, so that he had a personal stake in seeing that they were completed. Third, the March meeting was the first meeting that the staff worker sat at the opposite end of the table from the Chairman, rather than next to him, and it is possible that in the past the Chairman found it too easy to let the staff worker assume the leadership responsibility because of her close proximity to him. The Chairman had always held the erroneous opinion that the staff was the "authority" and really should have the final say on all issues, so that he most likely felt obliged to defer the leadership role to the staff worker.

During this meeting shifting leadership patterns emerged and various members found that the leadership roles shifted to them during a discussion where they were considered to be the "authority" on the subject by the rest of the group. Two examples of this were evident. The first was during the volunteer recruitment discussion when the group acknowledged the member planning to recruit volunteer drivers as the leader in that area. While he was not an "expert" on recruitment or

even experienced as a recruiter, the group recognized him as its leader

and authority when the subject of volunteer driver recruitment was brought

up for discussion. The group directed all questions to him, looked to

him for advice on recruitment and deferred to his judgments on the sub-

ject. This is an interesting, and not too uncommon case where leader-

ship has been conferred by the group and not necessarily earned by the

individual. This can be a bad situation in cases where accurate informa-

tion, experience and expertise are essential. In this case it was not

such a critical situation because while lack of expertise may have been

unproductive, it would not be damaging.

The second example took place during the discussion regarding the

decentralization of the vehicles in various geographic zones about the

county. The committee determined "adequate vehicle maintenance" to be

the biggest problem in the decentralization plan and looked to one of the

newer members, who has been overseeing the maintenance of the organiza-

tion's vehicles, for leadership in this area. In this case, the member

had the expertise and knowledge to earn him the "rights" of the leader

during the discussion of this function. The interesting point in this

leadership conferral was that the group isolated what they thought to be

their biggest problem in a whole set of problems dealing with decentraliza-

tion, and sought a leader who could deal with, or speak to that problem.

It was as if all of the other problems would disappear if that one could

be solved. Therefore, leadership was obtained on the ability to speak

knowledgeably on the one subject that the group felt the greatest inability

with which to deal.

Because of the temporary shifting of leadership roles, the group always returned to the Chairman with broad questions, observations and for backing when in doubt about the validity of their ideas. If measured by Penland's definition of successful leadership noted earlier (leadership is not measured by what the leader is doing, but by what the group is doing) the Chairman measured up well in his ability to encourage discussion, keep it focused and productive. Contrary to previous meetings, the Chairman solicited opinion and discussion consistently throughout the meeting.

During the March meeting the Chairman delegated jobs to others for the first time--recruitment and decentralized vehicle site identification. It appeared that the Chairman was taking a step forward toward Maslow's theory of good leadership which noted that a good leader must be able to give up power to others and permit them to be free, and then actually enjoy this freedom of others which self-actualizes them (the ability to take pleasure in the growth of other people).[9]

The Chairman maintained his strong leadership tendencies again in the April meeting and the same three elements were inherent in this meeting as in the March meeting--the need for progress, the Chairman's personal involvement in wanting the agenda items to be completed, and the physical placement of staff. The Chairman accepted the necessary task level roles (information seeker, initiator, clarifier, etc.) and involved others in all phases of discussion. He also maneuvered the

group well into decision making at the appropriate time (during a discussion which involved the decision to apply for a van from the Urban Mass Transportation Administration, for a fixed-route program for the elderly living in a rather isolated senior citizen apartment complex).

During the May meeting the staff worker turned the staff support role over to the new Transportation Coordinator, a staff position created at the recommendation of the committee. The agenda had already been set by the Chairman and the staff worker prior to the meeting, and the same three elements as in the previous two meetings assured strong leadership from the Chairman, a minimum amount of intervention and facilitative behavior from the staff worker, and an observer's role by the new Transportation Coordinator.

The staff worker withdrew after the May meeting and all staff support was provided by the new Transportation Coordinator. At the June meeting the Transportation Coordinator set the agenda, cleared it with the Chairman by telephone, but then proceeded to usurp the Chairman's role at the meeting by running the entire meeting as if he were the chairman of the committee. If this pattern continues, the Chairman will most likely withdraw and drop off of the committee, as will the members of the committee if they are shut out of the decision making and group involvement process. This situation clearly demonstrates the pitfalls of changing staff support (or any leadership) in the middle of a group's process, unless the new staff person fully understands his staff role in relation to the function of the group. In this case, the Transporta-

tion Coordinator's immediate supervisor should have provided more careful supervision to ensure that the worker understood his role in relation to the Chairman and the committee. As Drucker points out, a leader must establish clarity with respect to everybody's role, including his own.[10] The fact that the Transportation Coordinator had the approval of the Chairman to run the meeting indicated that the Chairman still needed reinforcement in regard to his role expectation of the staff, and continued clarification of his own function as the group's leader.

This occurrence aptly illustrates the need for both the staff member and the volunteer leader to understand their roles in regard to each other. Their relationship should be a peer partnership with unique and shared functions. For either member of the team to fail to understand their relationship can cause uncertainty, suspicion, hostility, lack of involvement, lack of group productivity and a host of other problems. The next section deals more closely with the staff role and the peer partnership concept.

Staff Roles

It has often been said that there are two kinds of authority in a voluntary organization, the authority for planning and carrying out action, which belongs to the volunteers, and the authority of knowledge and skills, which staff brings to a job. It is this broad assumption that develops and maintains an effective volunteer/paid leadership team in a voluntary organization, and it is essential to realize that the team

is a partnership. Professional staff is charged with developing working

partnerships with their volunteer counterparts, a process which involves

patience, understanding and a willingness on both sides to make it

work.[11]

Across the nation there are hundreds of volunteer organizations

whose work is done by these two groups of people, and it is generally

agreed that both groups are essential to the growth and development of a

voluntary organization. It is therefore impossible to look at staff

responsibility without looking, at the same time, at the volunteer

leader's role. Further, there are four basic assumptions according to

Trecker that must be accepted by both parties in order for the partnership

to be effective.

<div align="center">Basic Assumptions Underlying the

Volunteer/Staff Partnership</div>

First assumption

The first assumption is that a chairman and a staff worker work

together to form a leadership team.[12] This management team is a peer-

partner relationship whose effectiveness is based on: the ability of each

to understand the expectations of the other; the early frank discussions

related to the skills, knowledge, resources and styles of leadership

each brings to the partnership; a mutual understanding of each person's

job; and the willingness of both members to acknowledge, resolve, or

manage their personal needs and the needs of the organization.[13]

The peer partner's relationship with the Chairman of the Trans-
portation Committee took several meetings to develop because of his
staff role perceptions. He felt that staff was the "authority" and was
entitled to make the final decisions affecting the program, while the
committee's role were merely advisory. The staff worker spent much
time interpreting committee, staff and leader roles. During one meeting
when volunteer and staff job descriptions were being developed, in con-
junction with the new proposed structure, the Chairman continually
suggested job responsibilities for the staff that rightfully belonged to the
volunteer. For instance, he suggested that the development of client
and volunteer driver eligibility requirements, and the development of
policy statements relating to priority usage of the organization's
vehicles be assigned to staff, while in practice these functions should
belong to the volunteer planning group. All of these examples relate to
the organization's policies and/or standards for service and are
questions which require volunteer action.

The Chairman's understanding of the volunteer and staff roles
increased with experience, but still needed additional interpretation
from the staff worker in order to reinforce his understanding of the peer
nature of the relationship.

The other elements in the first assumption were evident but were
certainly subject to growth on the part of both the Chairman and the staff
worker. One particular area open for growth was the style of leadership.
Both the Chairman's and the staff worker's leadership styles changed--

the Chairman's, as he grew in leadership skills, and the staff worker's,

as new participatory and facilitating roles were experimented with in

order to promote the Chairman's leadership growth. This is discussed

more thoroughly in the part of this Chapter dealing with volunteer leader-

ship roles.

Mutual respect was an additional and necessary element in

evidence that assisted in the creation of a workable leadership team.

Second assumption

The second assumption is that the staff worker and the volunteer

have specific responsibilities, as well as common or shared ones.[14] To

a great extent there is an overlapping of responsibilities, and it is

therefore an essential first step to agree on how the job will be

organized and managed. If there is not a clear understanding of mutual

roles according to O'Connell, the staff may be relegated into one of two

extremes in determining staff roles. The first identifies the staff as a

professional--an expert who acts in primarily an advisory capacity. The

second extreme identifies the staff as a person to carry out clerical

details.[15] The clerical identity a staff person may carry is often

assigned because of the lack of understanding the committee chairman

has in regard to what he thinks a staff person's job is. In many other

cases the responsibility may rest with the staff worker's own inadequate

knowledge of his role in the organization.

Neither the Chairman nor the group conveyed any strong precon-

ceived ideas of what the staff role should be, so the staff worker was

free to establish her own role without having to overcome any blocking

behavior. The staff worker initially assumed an advisory role,

supplying information on the organization, the way it operated, the

volunteer and staff functions, and the job of the committee as set up by

the organization's Board of Directors. A facilitating role was soon

added to the advisory role in an attempt to keep the group moving forward

in its task accomplishment, and then a participatory role was added to

the other two, in an attempt to move the committee off of a low productivity

cycle. Then as the Chairman demonstrated a surge forward in his leader-

ship skills, the staff worker reverted back to primarily an advisory role

and was facilitative only when it was necessary to help the group move

ahead. This role is discussed more in depth in the next portion of this

Chapter which discusses volunteer leadership roles.

Joint functions

In general, there are four key functions that are performed jointly

by a chairman and a staff worker in a volunteer organization.

1. Planning the work of the unit.

2. Organizing the work and personnel into manageable units.

3. Supervising the work of the unit.

4. Evaluating the results of the work and the efforts of the

personnel in accomplishing the work assigned.[16]

The planning of the work of the unit was definitely a joint activity

and was carried out in conferences with the chairman. During these conferences, problems and progress were discussed, plans of action agreed upon, and agendas set for future meetings. The Chairman in turn, then worked with the committee to further identify problems, develop plans and define a strategy to accomplish them.

The organization of work and personnel into manageable units was negligible in this group because the bulk of the work was done during the actual committee meetings. The only delegation that took place was in regard to recruitment and decentralized site selection, both of which were discussed more in detail earlier in this section. In both of these instances the Chairman assumed greater responsibility than the staff worker in the organization of the work. This was an implicit agreement because the Chairman had the knowledge and skills to handle this function.

Supervising the work of the committee became more of a staff responsibility on a day-to-day basis, although when a strong volunteer leader is available this function is usually more equally shared. The staff worker assumed responsibility to ensure that committee members followed through on assignments they accepted, to communicate any new information pertinent to the group, and to be sure the meeting notices and minutes were distributed.

Evaluation of work results was carried out jointly by the Chairman and the staff worker mainly in an effort to overcome problems of group process. The staff worker would always analyze the previous meeting

with the Chairman in an attempt to help him see how he could minimize

the problems and ensure greater productivity at the next meeting.

Personnel had not been jointly evaluated at the time the staff worker

turned the committee over to the new Transportation Coordinator because

the time was not yet right for this function.

Individual functions

While the planning, organizing, supervising and evaluating are

joint responsibilities shared by both members of the team, specific

individual functions are also required during these four phases of group

activity.

Planning phase. In the planning phase a committee chairman is

primarily responsible for: managing the decision making process with

his volunteer leadership group; leading the group in reviewing data,

setting priorities, establishing goals and objectives and developing

criteria for measuring progress; and securing approval, if the planning

group does not have final authority.[17] The chairman's skill and ability

to carry out these functions were discussed in more detail in the

volunteer leadership portion of this Chapter.

The staff-partner role involves primary responsibility for: providing

information to assist decision making; recommending resources to assist

the group; and gathering, analyzing, and presenting data.[18]

The staff worker interpreted the organization's perceptions of

acceptable volunteer and staff responsibilities during the discussion of

with the Chairman in an attempt to help him see how he could minimize

the problems and ensure greater productivity at the next meeting.

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information to assist decision making; recommending resources to assist

the group; and gathering, analyzing, and presenting data.[18]

The staff worker interpreted the organization's perceptions of

acceptable volunteer and staff responsibilities during the discussion of

job descriptions, thereby eliminating wrong decisions due to inaccurate

or incomplete information; supplied clarifying data on a number of

occasions in regard to statistics relating to the current transportation

program; supplied additional data often (one example being the time the

committee discussed community transportation needs and the staff

worker supplied data on other agencies serving these needs, the percent

of elderly persons living in the community, etc.); and interpreted the

organization's insurance coverage that affected the committee's policy

statement in terms of volunteer driver eligibility that the committee was

preparing.

In addition to the above responsibilities, Blumenthal states that

the staff worker has a responsibility to assist the committee with which

he is working, to make sound decisions. In carrying out this respon-

sibility it is important for the staff worker to speak out under the following

circumstances:

- when misinformation on an important issue is likely to lead to a
  wrong conclusion;

- when the staff worker has clarifying data;

- when there is a misunderstanding as to what are acceptable work
  practices;

- when additional data is required in order for the committee to make
  a sound decision;

- when clarification is required of volunteer and staff functions;

- when the committee has failed to make adequate adjustment, the
  staff worker makes recommendations;

• when the volunteers are on the verge of making an unsound decision he offers a word of caution;

• when a decision is in conflict with declared policies of the organization.[19]

The staff responsibilities mentioned above are all responsibilities the staff worker assumed from time to time, in her advisory role with the committee. They are an extremely important function of staff and staff should be held accountable for their performance in these areas.

Organizational phase. During the organizational phase a chairman's primary responsibility is to work with his committee to refine priorities, enlist community support, and recruit and coordinate volunteer support. Staff responsibility is to develop methods and procedures for carrying out the program; organize resources and establish the need for carrying out the program; and establish the need for data, the types needed, and a collection system.[20]

The volunteer and staff functions during the organizational phase were interrelated. The Chairman and the committee assumed responsibility for developing methods and procedures for carrying out the program because the committee still had, at this stage of planning, a very broad long range focus with no Transportation Coordinator on the payroll to carry out the development function. In addition, the Chairman and the other professional transportation planner on the committee organized resources and collected a great deal of data because they were knowledge-able about what was needed, where to find it, and how to organize the

findings. The staff worker on the other hand, took a major role in coordinating volunteer support and acted as the catalyst to get the committee to refine priorities.

Supervisory phase. A chairman's role during the supervisory phase is to work with his volunteer committee to monitor progress of the program and to adjust plans when necessary. The staff role is to direct the ongoing work by supervising staff, coordinating tasks and functions assigned, monitoring and controlling resources, and providing continuity of services.[21]

The volunteer and staff roles were again interchangeable during this phase as in the organizational phase. This is a sound way of work even though it disturbs the nice pat roles outlined. The roles, in all of the work phases, are desirable goals to work toward, but like many goals are not immediately achievable. Their accomplishment may be determined by the skills a chairman has, the time he has available to carry out his responsibilities, his willingness to assume his respon- sibilities, and his understanding of the job. On the other hand, it may be desirable to trade various job responsibilities because of some particular skill or area of knowledge one or the other person has (as in the case of the Transportation Committee Chairman who is a professional transportation planner with a wealth of knowledge on the subject). As long as the main philosophy of volunteer authority (as mentioned on page one of this Chapter) is honored, task responsibilities may be swapped based on which partner can best carry out that particular function.

Evaluation phase. During the evaluation phase a chairman should work with the committee to measure the program's effectiveness against the criteria set in the goals and objectives, review data, and adjust future goals if necessary. The staff's responsibility is to provide data useful in measuring effectiveness.[22] This phase had not been carried out at the time the staff worker withdrew from the committee.

Third assumption

The third assumption is that effective communication is of the utmost importance in the working relationships of staff and volunteers as the strive for self-actualization.[23] Maslow states that you must assume that everyone wants to be as completely informed as possible with as many facts and truths as possible--everything relevant to the situation.[24] The volunteer/staff team must be able to talk with each other in order to define role expectation, major concerns of the group and understand both their separate and common responsibilities. It is incumbent on both parties to find, and make time for, the communication process. Good communication is rarely developed when the chairman of the committee breezes into the office for a quick look at the agenda five minutes before the meeting. Good communication is also rarely established when the staff person is not available to sit down with the volunteer to discuss plans, prepare the leader for handling his meeting, and to fully inform him of what has happened to date. Thorough and carefully planned communication is imperative to the development of a self-actualized volunteer.

This is brought about by meaningful involvement--a process highly dependent upon thorough communication.

This is particularly important because being fully informed encourages greater interest and identification with the program. A willingness to work hard to achieve goals is also predicated on how well informed a person is. An informed volunteer is a concerned, active and productive volunteer. The staff worker attempted to implement this involvement philosophy by keeping the Chairman informed of all major happenings, problems, results, etc., but the involvement was never complete because the Chairman never once phoned the staff worker to inquire about any of the above issues. The staff worker always took the initiative and assumed the sole follow-up role on the committee. This is a strong indication that the Chairman's involvement level was not great enough to claim that effective communication took place. The staff worker is not sure that the Chairman will ever allow his involvement to become that deep, possibly because of the pressures and time demands of his job. Again, it is important to strive for the ultimate and desired goal, but also important to be flexible enough to readjust plans if the goal looks unachievable.

Fourth assumption

The fourth assumption is that volunteers and paid staff have much to learn from each other.[25] In many cases a chairman brings high standards of performance and reliability, as well as professional skills

to the volunteer group with whom he works. An example of this is the expertise the two professional transportation planners brought to the group. In a case such as this, the staff may acquire a great deal of technical knowledge on the related subject, while the volunteer learns about the organization and its goals, related data in kindred fields, and the use of volunteers in the group process.

Certainly, the above assumption was true in the Transportation Committee. The Chairman brought a great deal of knowledge regarding the planning of transportation systems to the committee. He exposed resources unknown to the staff worker prior to the committee formation and brought skill in organizing data in a meaningful manner. On the other hand, the staff worker feels that the Chairman has learned leadership skills and gained knowledge of the group process.

In addition to the four assumptions stated above, Brian O'Connel discusses twelve functions that staff can perform to make volunteers more responsible and active.

1. Set your goals in terms of increased volunteer involvement and commitment.

2. Provide all possible assistance to volunteers to help them understand problems in their field and the role and work of the organization. Volunteers won't give fully of themselves if they're not kept well informed.

3. Provide excellent staff service to your volunteer leader.

4. Provide the best possible service to others with whom you are responsible for working.

5. Help identify the points of view and talent needed, and to the extent necessary, help in the recruitment of such people.

6. Know what is already available in your area in the way of facilities and programs.

7. Be certain your organization runs a competent information and referral system.

8. Put priority on planning.

9. Stay loose or at least stay flexible.

10. Recognize your role as a communications link in the organization.

11. Keep the dream alive! Don't let yourself be so concerned with the problems that you fail to recognize the fact that volunteers look to you to keep the goals in sight.

12. Provide all possible credit, thanks and satisfactions for volunteer activity.[26]

The staff role in a voluntary organization is simple in concept, but not necessarily in execution. It is, to bring about the maximum volunteer dedication, involvement, responsibility, impact and satisfaction. As Norman Cousins, Editor of the Saturday Review, once wrote about Albert Schweitzer, "He is one of the two or three greatest men to walk this earth in the past fifty years. It is not so much what he has done for others, but what others have done because of him and the power of his example." In voluntary organizations today, staff must be judged on the basis of not what they have done, but what others have done because of them.

This section looked at those functions that are unique to one member of the leadership team and those that are shared and/or interchangeable. It points out the desired division of responsibility and the way it was

actually divided in the committee being studied. The next segment of this section deals with the roles group members assume which can facilitate or impede group progress.

Member Roles

Group members operate on overt and covert levels at the same time. A member's overt behavior may be that of a "good" group member, listening to others, contributing suggestions, or accepting part of the work load. Yet on the covert level, he may be concerned with how others view him, how he might present himself more favorably, whether the leader approves of his remarks, and who else in the group supports him with smiles or nods. He is largely concerned with whether his position in the group at the moment makes him feel comfortable or anxious.[27]

Individual roles result from the satisfaction of each participant's particular needs rather than the group's needs, and their purpose is to fulfill some indidivdual goal that is not relevant either to the group task or to the functioning of the group as a group.[28]

Many stereotyped roles have been identified and all group members exhibit some of them at different times. Six of them were mentioned at the beginning of the Chapter (initiating, information seeking or giving, clarifying, summarizing and consensus-testing) and are roles that are commonly assumed by group members, as well as, the group leader and the staff. These are generally positive roles that assist the group in achieving their work, but in spite of their assisting nature, negative

roles and dysfunctional behavior can counteract their effectiveness.

This section will look at the affect these forces have on the group.

Positive Member Roles

No single member of the group being studied assumed a strong

facilitative role, so it was often carried out by the staff worker, but

just about every member of the group did assume one or more of This'

task roles at one time or another.

There were few initiators in the group and the only two that the

staff worker identified as having established a pattern were the profes-

sional transportation planner and the member responsible for vehicle

maintenance. The transportation planner was on the "most likely"

initiator list because of his previous experience in the field, and

because of his wealth of ideas and knowledge of what would and would

not work in the planning process. In addition, he was a personal friend

of the committee Chairman, so he did not have covert concerns to deal

with in regard to how the Chairman accepted his participation. Also,

since he had been placed toward the top of the prestige and influence

ranking, and had a great deal of self assurance and security, he was not

reluctant to initiate his ideas.

The second initiator was primarily a solutions initiator. Ideas were

generated by others, while he initiated solutions and carried out

consensus-testing.

The two members worked well as a team because the transportation

planner initiated creative ideas to meet a need and the other member initiated solutions to implement those ideas. One illustration of this unplanned team work took place during the discussion concerning the problem of "dead-heading." Many miles were put on the organization's vehicles as they picked up clients 15 to 20 miles away from where the vehicles were based. The committee grappled with this problem to try to cut down on the number of miles traveled without a client in the vehicle, and the transportation planner suggested physical decentralization of the vehicles at sites throughout the community. There were many related problems that accompanied this idea, such as protection from vandalism and theft, availability of keys on a 24-hour basis, easy access, etc. The solutions initiator always seemed to overcome suggested problems with ideas that were solution oriented, such as: suggested placement of the vehicles at police or fire substations for security, availability of keys on a 24-hour basis, good control, etc. He has an enthusiastic personality by nature and the group was easily convinced to adopt his suggestions. In addition, the transportation planner felt reinforced in his security as an idea initiator because of the willingness of the group to accept his ideas. This relationship established a creative problem solving team that was self perpetuating.

Only one member of the group emerged as a consistent information seeker. This was the member who joined the group after the first few meetings and was the retired national staff member. He sought facts, ideas and suggestions but rarely feelings, which also seemed to be the

case with others who sought information from time to time. The staff

worker does not recall any member ever asking, "How do you feel about

this idea." This pattern does seem to fit into the work group pattern,

however, of being "accomplishment oriented" and not "Personal feelings"

oriented. The information seeker was one of the two members of the

committee that had not had a previous knowledge of the organization's

transportation program, and may have assumed this role out of a need for

information rather than an inclination to help the group gather the

knowledge they needed to make a decision. The other member new to

the program was the student whose hidden agenda was researching the

Nominal Group process and she remained primarily a responder to

other's direct questions.

The committee Chairman and the transportation planner were largely

information and opinion givers, again because of their expertise in the

field. Other members assumed this role on occasion, as leadership roles

shifted to them during a specific point in a meeting. In these cases they

were considered to be "the authority" on the subject being discussed

and were able, because of their immediate but temporary status, to give

opinion and information that was accepted by the group. Information and

opinion givers must hold a high ranking on the prestige and influence

scale in order for the group to be willing to accept what they say. Those

persons who do not rank high on the scale, at that point in time, will be

discounted by the group. If they persist, as the Chairman of Volunteers

did, their behavior becomes dysfunctional and is a blocking force. This

behavior is discussed more fully later in this portion of the section.

The clarifying and elaborating role was assumed primarily by four of the committee members--the committee chairman, which is a natural function for a group leader, plus the three members most closely related to the organization's current transportation program. The committee relied heavily on these three members to answer questions, and to elaborate on problems or issues because of the information they held on the subject. In this case, however, leadership roles did not shift to them even though they were considered "the authority" on the subjects being discussed. This was most likely true because they were dealing with past facts and not future ideas for action. They were assuming the role of respondents for the purpose of clarification, not initiators of ideas with past experience to use as a base.

None of the members assumed the role of summarizer so if the Chairman did not assume this role, the staff worker did. This was important because it capsulized committee progress, pointed out areas needing additional work, emphasized gaps in problem identification and reinforced individual assignments to be completed by the next meeting. Since summarizing is generally a leadership role, the committee most likely relied on the Chairman to carry it out. The Chairman did not always assume this role in the early stages of his leadership develop-ment, so the staff worker would summarize in his stead. As he gained experience, however, he began to summarize not only at the end of a meeting, but also summarized particularly exhausting discussions and

issues prior to consensus-testing.

Consensus-testing was usually carried out by one of two people. The Chairman, as he gained leadership experience, assumed the consensus-testing role, as did the member of the committee mentioned in the paragraph on initiating roles. Both of these persons carried out this function only after several meetings had passed and the omission of this function in the earlier meeting partly caused the low productivity levels in the second and third meetings of the committee. Because the Chairman was unable to keep a discussion focused and directed toward the decision making process, the committee rarely concluded an issue with a feeling of consensus. They felt that the issue was left hanging, which in turn produced frustration because of lack of achievement--an important element in a work group. Consensus-testing is therefore an important step to final decision making and a key element in a work group.

One additional role noted by the staff worker, but not pointed out in other literature, is the non-responder role. Non-responders are persons who participate in a group, but who do not contribute to its work in either a positive or negative way--they merely fill a seat. One such example of a non-responder on the committee being studied was the client who was a recipient of the organization's transportation service for the handicapped. She rarely, if ever, participated in the discussion, responded to direct questions only in a vague way and appeared perfectly content with that role. She never missed a meeting and seemed to be very

interested in making sure that the date of the next meeting was immediately put on her calendar. Evidently, her personal needs and expectations were being met (possibly a social outlet need), so that she continued to attend the meetings.

Shaw states that each member in a group has an associated role which consists of the behaviors expected of the occupant of that position. In addition to the expected role there is a perceived role and an enacted role. The perceived role is the set of behaviors that the occupant of the position believes he should enact and this may or may not correspond to the expected role, since the latter depends upon the perceptions of others. The enacted role is the set of behaviors an occupant actually carries out. Again the enacted role may be different from the expected role and/or the perceived role. To the extent that there are differences among these different aspects of role, the probability of group dysfunction is increased.[29]

Dysfunctional behavior is usually always present to some degree in all groups, so it is helpful to review these negative forces since they can have an adverse or blocking affect on the group.

Negative Member Roles

As mentioned earlier, every member of a group comes in with his own set of personal goals and personal needs which must be met. Penland points out that when they are not met a disturbing dynamic is sometimes caused. Each member has his personal goals ranked in some

kind of hierarchy of significance for himself. A group goal may clash

with a member goal; but if that member holds that goal in a relatively low

order of hierarachial significance he will be able to accommodate the

group. For example, sometimes as the group process involves its

members, an individual restructures his goals so that they change

position on his value scale, or sometimes he is able to affect the group

so that it shifts its goals around to accommodate him.[30]

When neither of these accommodations are made, the "disturbing

dynamic" takes hold. The member who finds his personal goals are not

compatible with the group's goals will behave in such a way as to thwart

the group's goal achievement with all kinds of negative and blocking

behavior.[31]

Dysfunctional behavior tends to obstruct team development and

group progress so it is important to be familiar with the commonly

observed dysfunctional behaviors quoted from Reilly and Jones.

Saboteur. This is a person who engages in behaviors designed to
destroy or significantly impair the progress made by the team.
Examples: "Got cha" behavior; "Wait until J.B. sees what you're
up to," "Yes, but. . . .," and "This will never work."

Sniper. A person who takes cheap shots at group members (whether
they are present or not) by throwing verbal or nonverbal "barbs" is
likely to lessen the productivity of the group. For example, the
"sniper" might say, "When we were talking about plant expansion,
old J.B. (who always ignores such issues) made several points,
all of which were roundly refuted."

Assistant Trainer. This is a team member who wants to demonstrate
his awareness of group process by making interventions in order to
"make points" with the consultant. He may make procedural
suggestions to the point of being obnoxious. One of his favorite
interventions is, "Don't tell me what you think, tell me how you feel!"

Denier. This person plays the "Who, me?" game. When con-
fronted, he backs off immediately. He may also ask many ques-
tions to mask his statements or points of view, and he generally
refuses to take a strong stand on a problem.

Quiet Member. Members may be quiet for innumerable reasons.
It has been remarked about silence: "It is never misquoted, but
it is often misinterpreted."

Anxious Member. He may engage in such counter-productive
behaviors as smoothing over conflict, avoiding confrontation,
doodling, "red-crossing" other members, and protecting the
leader.

Dominator. Some team members simply take up too much air time.
By talking too much, they control the group through their verbosity.

Side-Tracker. This person siphons off the group's energy by
bringing up new concerns ("deflecting") rather than staying with
the problem being worked. Under his influence, groups can
rapidly generate an enormous list of superfluous issues and con-
cerns and become oblivious to the problem at hand. The game he
plays is generally something like, "Oh, yeah, and another thing..."

Hand-Clasper. Legitimacy and safety can be borrowed by agreeing
with other people. For example, this person says, "I go along
with Tom when he says..."

Polarizer. A person who points out differences among team members,
rather than helping them see sameness in the ownership of group
problems, can prevent the development of group cohesion. He is a
person likely to have a predisposition toward seeing mutually
exclusive points of view.

Attention-Seeker. This behavior is designed to cover the group
member's anxiety by excessive joking, horsing around, and drawing
attention to himself. He may do this very subtly by using the
personal pronoun "I" often. He may also be a person who describes
many of his own experiences in an attempt to look good to other
group members.

Clown. This person engages in disruptive behavior of a loud,
boisterous type. He may set a tone of play rather than of problem-
solving.[32]

The group being studied was relatively free of major dysfunctional behavior except for the Chairman of Volunteers who consistently demonstrated several types of dysfunctional behavior. It should be remembered that the Chairman of Volunteers initially perceived herself to be the "founder" of the committee and had a great need for recognition by others. She made sure everyone knew that the committee was her idea and that the Board of Directors had directed her to form the committee. She then assumed a closely controlled leadership role by initially appointing a weak chairman and calling the first meeting without the chairman even being present.

As things progressed, she replaced the weak chairman with the professional transportation planner and withdrew from overt leadership behavior. However, it appeared to the staff worker that her need to be recognized and the need to control were covert goals, and when they were found not to be consistent with the group goals, she reverted to dysfunctional behavior in order to gain recognition and attention.

The January meeting illustrates this observation. The Chairman of Volunteers continued to act as "the authority" on each point discussed and she had an observation, answer or solution to each question raised. This behavior fell into the category of the dominator as noted above. In addition, she side-tracked discussion by diverting the group with her personal anectdotes that focused on her as a person. She commented on how much work she had to do and didn't know how she could do it all (indicating to the group that she was important because she had been

given a great deal of responsibility), discussed her husband and her children that were away in boarding school, discussed trips to her summer home, "Eaglesmere," and other attention-seeking, status building subjects. Her attention seeking and side-tracking behaviors were interrelated in an effort to meet her personal need for recognition and status.

Two members of the committee commented to the staff worker on the Chairman of Volunteer's disruptive behavior, but made no attempt to control it by confronting her, cutting her off, abruptly changing the subject or by using any other device to neutralize her behavior. In fact, no one on the committee outwardly acknowledged her disruptive behavior and continued a "business as usual" approach by working around the disruptions when there was a pause in her verbosity. The only acknowledgement that disruptive behavior existed were the members' comments to the staff worker outside of the meeting. The reasons for this avoidance of conflict or confrontation were previously discussed in Chapter I on "The Dynamics in the Life Cycle of a Group."

The staff worker was interested to see if the group would eventually confront her disruptions (and by doing so, her), but she withdrew from participation soon afterward and said she was too busy to continue. The staff worker feels that this withdrawal actually took place because her personal goals were not being met by the group. The group was most likely more concerned with task accomplishment than they were with meeting her personal needs, so she dropped off of the committee and

used the pressure of other assignments as an excuse.

In conclusion, each group is dependent upon the quality inherent in the three elements that comprise it--the group leader, the staff member and the group's members. The leadership strengths brought to the group are critical to the group's ability to move ahead in the accomplishment of its business by utilizing various leadership skills and techniques; the staff expertise in understanding the group process, the way it functions, its needs, and the various member roles is important to the facilitative role; and the experience and understanding group members have of their expectations, needs and group goals are necessary for a smooth and orderly progress through the business at hand. The staff worker will have to add, however, this desirable three-some rarely ever exists in total balance, and has to be viewed as a goal to work toward, rather than as a norm.

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FOOTNOTES

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[7]Ibid., p. 24.

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[11]American National Red Cross, "Working Together: Management of Volunteer Services," Training Outline, Washington, D.C., 1976, p. 3.

[12]Harleigh B. Trecker, "Role of the Professional Worker," p. 1.

[13]American National Red Cross, "Working Together," pp. 2-4.

[14]Harleigh B. Trecker, "Role of the Professional Worker," p. 1.

[15]Brian O'Connell, Effective Leadership in Voluntary Organizations (New York: Association Press, 1976), p. 27.

[16]American National Red Cross, "Working Together," p. 7.

[17]Ibid., pp. 6-7.

[18]Ibid.

[19]Louis H. Blumenthal, How to Work With Your Board and Committees (New York: Association Press, 1958), p. 23.

[20]American National Red Cross, "Working Together," pp. 2-3.

[21]Ibid., p. 2.

[22]Ibid., p. 3.

[23]Harleigh B. Trecker, "Role of the Professional Worker," p. 1.

[24]Abraham H. Maslow, Eupsychian Management, p. 17.

[25]Harleigh B. Trecker, "Role of the Professional Worker," p. 1.

[26]Brian O'Connell, Effective Leadership, pp. 3-33.

[27]Patrick R. Penland and Sara Fine, Group Dynamics, p. 62.

[28]Ibid., p. 28.

[29]Marvin E. Shaw and Philip R. Costanzo, Theories of Social Psychology (New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1974), p. 248.

[30]Patrick R. Penland and Sara Fine, Group Dynamics, p. 54.

[31]Ibid.

[32]Anthony J. Reilly and John E. Jones, "Team-Building," The 1974 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators (San Diego: University Press, 1974), p. 227.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Over the nine month period the group being studied appeared to progress through the classic steps necessary to achieve maturity, as noted by the various scholars studying work groups. It needs to be iterated that the group was a task oriented work group, not a process group, and all analyses made by the staff worker were based on the assumptions found to be characteristic of that type of group.

In summary, the group being studied went immediately into a highly structured first meeting that did not allow members an opportunity to establish credentials with each other. The quality of results of the first meeting was not affected by this in the sense that it was productive in terms of problems and tasks identified, but the second and third meetings suffered because the members had not had an opportunity to meet their own ego needs, nor did they have an opportunity to develop a ranking of the group on the prestige and influence scale. The time needed to accomplish this and to move the group past its initial crisis was postponed until the second and third meetings, thereby causing a delay in the ability of the group to move toward task accomplishment.

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The conclusion drawn here is that initial crisis can be postponed, but not avoided. It is an element in a group's development that must take place and may take several meetings to overcome, depending on the skill of the group's leader to direct the group through the necessary definition of roles (individual and group) in order to reach a corporate identity common in the minds of all of the group members.

The group followed a progression of achievement that was in direct correlation to the Chairman's ability to encourage the assumption of task roles by the members, and to move the group toward consensus and decision making. With the exception of the first meeting, when task productivity was high because of the Nominal Group technique, the committee struggled toward accomplishment as the Chairman aligned his role perceptions with the committee members' perceptions and they worked through the group's initial crisis. During this phase, group productivity was low because the Chairman was unable to move them toward a progression of steps leading to role clarification and decision making. As his leadership style changed, he involved others in opinion-giving and more active participation, and the group moved more quickly toward accomplishment because of the Chairman's ability to keep discussions germane and to conclude them at the appropriate time.

The conclusion drawn is that a group's ability to carry out its responsibilities can be stimulated or adversely affected by the quality of leadership--in this case, the volunteer Chairman's. A skilled chairman can move a group through credential establishment, initial crisis,

conflict, dysfunctional behavior, and low productivity cycles with a minimum of delay if he is knowledgeable about groups and the way in which they function. He can develop strategies to overcome blocks to accomplishment and can keep the work group satisfied with its progress through accomplishment. A group leader needs to know more about his role than just calling the meeting to order and following an agenda. He must be aware of group development phases and the accompanying individual and group needs in order to move the group through the phases with deliberate intent.

In spite of the Chairman's increasing abilities as a leader, the committee still experienced a period of low productivity during the course of several meetings. This flow-low caused anxiety on the part of the members who commented that, "This meeting was a waste of time," and "This meeting sure was unproductive and I hope we do better next time." The anxiety surrounding the lack of productivity stimulated both the Chairman and the group to make a conscious effort to be productive at its next meeting. This element, plus a sudden surge forward in the Chairman's ability to direct discussion toward decision making, moved the group off of its pattern of inertia and put it back into motion.

The group followed a pattern typical of most groups in regard to experiencing a period of inertia. This group malady can be a crippling force if it is not recognized as a block to progress and can result in varying degrees of group malfunction. A group experiencing a mild flow-low may be only partially affected by disorganization and will be able to

pull itself back on track by either the leader or a group member. A pro-

longed flow-low, however, may eventually destroy a group by causing

enough member frustration (because of lack of accomplishment) that

members drop off of the committee. Therefore, it is concluded that a

group's leader must be able to identify work-flow cycles to be able to

successfully deal with them.

The group experienced minimal conflict or confrontation but it did

arise during the group's third phase of maturity. During this phase feed-

back was direct and issues were pursued until they were understood, the

members knew each other fairly well and the group was cohesive in that

they were working well together as a team. Polite conflict and confronta-

tion will normally arise during the mature phase of a group, rather than

in the group's earlier maturation phase because members' individual ego

needs are more secure, they trust others in the group to a greater degree,

and are less afraid of speaking up in opposition to others in the group.

In every instance where confrontation was evident in the group being

studied, it was related to issues and not people, so no one member felt

personally threatened, and thereby did not undermine group solidarity.

The group dealt with the conflict politely and accepted it as discussion,

not conflict or confrontation.

This lack of confrontation in the group being studied bore out

Penland's theory stated earlier that relatively little conflict appears under

a system that regulates decision-making, and in a highly structured group,

conflict will be dealt with on a rational and intellectual level. More

likely, he continues to say, it will be politely ignored because ignoring intense feelings and avoiding personal verbal exchange are part of our social ethic.[1]

This certainly confirms the staff worker's previous experience in working with volunteers in most task oriented work groups.

The group leader and the group's members have important roles to play in a group, and the group's success will depend on their level of understanding of group process, their role in relation to others, and the understanding they have of their specific responsibilities. Since few committees are ever formed with a high level of expertise in all of these areas, one person must be responsible for the growth and development of the group leader and the group members. This person should be the staff member assigned to provide support services to the group.

The staff member has a real responsibility for this growth and development and should be held accountable for his performance in reaching that end. Far too often staff do not understand their role and when this exists, the committee cannot work at its optimum capacity. It often gets its work done, but the time put in and the frustration the group has experienced in accomplishing what it set out to do is hardly a rewarding experience and members may not be back for another assignment. In addition, even if they are available for another committee assignment they have little additional understanding of, or expertise in, working with groups than they did before.

The role of a staff person serving in a voluntary organization is

unique and far different from that of a private corporation because of
the many volunteers responsible for carrying out the organization's work.
While the staff worker in a voluntary agency has the advantage of using
these volunteers who come with varying levels of technical expertise, he
also has the responsibility to utilize their skill to the best advantage
and to adequately orient them in their roles and responsibilities.

The voluntary organization believes that its strength lies with its
volunteers. Indeed, volunteers are responsible for policy making,
standard setting, overall planning and with implementation and evaluation
of programs. Volunteers bring to the organization: a variety of skills
(in some cases highly technical skills, e.g., law, medicine, organiza-
tional consulting, etc.); interest in the organization and a willingness to
work to further its goals; time; manpower; and other individual attributes
that make their volunteer commitment unique and which fall on a con-
tinuum of least contributive to most contributive. It is not at all
uncommon for volunteer groups to mix persons with varying credentials,
so that a housewife with time, but few "employment prestige" credentials
or "technical prestige" credentials will be measured against a member
that possibly has both--or once had both before retirement. If we believe
there is strength in diversity, then each person (regardless of his overt
credentials) has a contribution to make to the group. And, if there is any
underlying conclusion to be drawn in this paper, it is that the staff's job
is to help motivate each volunteer to contribute his maximum assets in
order to provide the most he can to the organization; and to help him work

toward self-actualization in his volunteer role and in doing so, further the work of the organization.

In order to do this the staff person must understand the volunteer roles (leadership, committee participant, board member, direct service, etc.), his own role and areas of responsibility, and have an understanding of the group process. By being able to maximize the strengths each volunteer brings, the staff person need not be a technical expert in the field in which he is assigned. If he is knowledgeable about how to assist and enable volunteers to do their job, and understands the dynamics of work groups enough to facilitate their work, then he is doing his job well. If this is to happen then it is the responsibility of the staff person to have a basic understanding of:

1. the dynamics taking place in groups,

2. group process unique to task oriented work groups,

3. work cycles and how they affect group productivity, and most importantly,

4. individual roles (volunteer, staff and member) and how they may affect the group's efforts to accomplish their tasks.

It requires a combination of talents and skills to make a successful work group--a skilled leader, a willing group with which to work, and a staff member who is aware of the needs and strengths of them both and is skilled in the enabling process.

The staff person and the volunteer leader (the chairman) are a leadership team and what people do because of them, not what they do

themselves, is an essential criterion for attaining success. If others are motivated to participate and become involved, skillful leadership is in evidence. If the participation and involvement contribute to the accomplishment of the group's goals, then the leadership is also productive. Involvement plus productivity equals a successful group experience and a healthy dynamic in any volunteer organization.

FOOTNOTES

[1]Patrick R. Penland and Sara Fine, <u>Group Dynamics and Individual Development</u> (New York: Marcel Dekker, Inc., 1974), p. 51.

APPENDIX OF

SOURCE DOCUMENTS

DIRECTORY OF PERSONS INVOLVED

Ch   Chairman of the Transportation Committee and a
transportation planner by profession

COV   Chairman of Volunteers. The primary volunteer
position in the American Red Cross. Responsible
for the recruitment and placement of all volunteers
in the Chapter

DOV   Director of Volunteers. New staff person, and the
staff counterpart of the Chairman of Volunteers.

ExDOV Ex-Director of Volunteers. Retired staff member
who has had experience with county-wide transpor-
tation planning.

ED   Executive Director. The principal paid staff
member in the Chapter.

GS   Graduate student who is working on her MBA at George
Mason University.

SW   Staff worker. The Lindenwood 4 student who is
providing staff support to the Transportation
Committee.

NOTE: Because of the sensitive nature of the analytical reports,
and since they are often written in the office, the staff worker
felt that it was better to code the individuals.

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GROUP ANALYSIS

October 4, 1976

The COV called a meeting of several people to discuss the trans-
portation program proposed by the Chapter Board of Directors.
The SW was not notified of the meeting until minutes before, and
had no idea that the COV had intended to call people together.
The SW was still operating on the periphery of the planning and
had not yet been included in the COV's mind as having a role in
the planning. No agenda had been set.

At the SW's last conference with the COV it was agreed that she
would phone the graduate student from George Mason University,
to set up a conference to discuss the GS role on the committee.
This plan was changed and somehow ended up as a partial committee
meeting.

The COV chaired the meeting, was very verbal, but did not cut off
others when they desired to speak. The COV immediately led the
group into task identification and the whole group was prone to
far too much detail for initial planning. (Note: The tendency
for members to seek definitions of the situation quickly leads
them to use group purpose to create structures that may be psycho-
logically comfortable, but of negative value in the work of the
group. We find, therefore, a tendency to detail tasks beyond the
limits we consider functional. Although group purpose as a means
for defining the situation is readily available we need to recog-
nize the danger inherent in overly rapid definitions and over
delineation of tasks, especially where group tasks demand creative
solutions. The Dynamics of Interpersonal Behavior, pgs. 62-63.)

Member roles:

The ExDOV assumed the role of information gatherer, in order to
obtain an overall perspective and to define role expectations.

GS tried to assess the program as to its depth and complexity
so as to determine her participation on the committee in terms of
her MBA requirements.

SW participated by asking questions that, hopefully, would lead
the group into areas they had not considered, and also assisted
the group in keeping the undefined purpose of the meeting in per-
spective. The group did agree, at the SW's suggestion, that the
identified tasks be used as a springboard for discussion at the
first full meeting of the committee.

Potential problems:

The COV's lack of understanding of the staff role in relation to
herself and the committee; over participation by the COV in discus-
sion, so that she tended to manipulate the group by stating her

ideas on a subject first, thereby, encouraging others to adopt her ideas without thought; possible reluctance by COV to turn over the leadership role to the new chairman; possible difficulty in establishing a staff role with the chairman and the committee if the COV fails to delegate control and leadership.

Staff plan:

SW discussed with the COV the importance of recruiting a chairman and arranging a meeting with him/her prior to the next committee meeting. (The SW feels that it is necessary to give the chairman an opportunity to develop an understanding of the job, have an opportunity to identify potential members, discuss current operations and plan the agenda of the first meeting). The COV indicated that she would set up the meeting when a chairman was recruited.

SW is inclined to believe that the sooner a chairman is appointed the better, so that no additional interim planning will take place without permanent leadership and a full committee.

The SW met with the COV to discuss the progress she had made in
appointing a chairman to the Transportation Committee (Ch.). The
COV reported that she had tentatively appointed a volunteer chair-
man, (one who is overworked and not particularly suited for the
role.) The COV indicated that the appointment was "loose" in the
sense that the volunteer really didn't want the job, but would
take it to please her. The problem of "unappointing" this volun-
teer as the chairman lay more with the COV's unwillingness to do
it, than with the volunteer's willingness to be removed from the
position. There seemed to be no "loss of face" involved for
either the volunteer or the COV.

Meanwhile, there were two recruitment inquiries being made in
regards to the position of chairman. One inquiry was being made
by the Executive Director to a previous volunteer (a professional
transportation planner) who had prepared an analysis of the Chap-
ter's current transportation program. He indicated that while
he could not serve as chairman, he would serve on the committee.
He then recommended another professional transportation planner
as a potential chairman. This recommendation will be followed
up by the COV. The COV was aware of both of these individuals
when she made her appointment.

PROBLEM: The COV's reluctance to appoint a qualified person as
Chairman, even though there is qualified personnel available.

ANALYSIS: The SW is unable to analyze the COV's reluctance at
this point. (Reason is identified as discussion progressed.)

STAFF PLAN: By discussing the qualities the chairman should have,
and will need, to carry out the job, the SW hopes to assist the
COV in realizing that her initial appointment was a poor choice.
Then, by examining the qualifications of the currently appointed
person, in light of the above discussion, determine if she is
really qualified.

The discussion progressed well and the COV was positive and not
defensive in her responses. The SW felt, however, that some
block existed.

PROBLEM: The COV was saying one thing, but the SW felt that she
really was not saying what she felt (noncongruent behavior.)

Disruptions occur in a relationship when there is non-
congruent behavior.

The greater the congruence of experience, awareness
and communication on the part of one individual, the

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more mutually accurate understanding of the communication; improved psychological adjustment and functioning in both parties; mutual satisfaction in the relationship.[1]

ANALYSIS: Although the COV verbally acknowledged that the initial choice was not good, there was a feeling by the SW that the COV wanted to dominate the program, even after a chairman was appointed. Therefore, she preferred a weak chairman so that she could encourage dependence, control the direction of the committee's work and remain in charge.

> Central in the performance of any leader is the manner and method he uses to respond to the needs of others. Forced dependency is selfishness on the part of the leader and may be crippling to subordinates. How to use authority to help others grow is the major challenge of every person in a position of authority.[2]

STAFF PLAN: Continued discussion to explore the COV's self-perceived role with the committee, in an attempt to bring additional information to the surface that would enable the SW to gain additional insight into how to deal with the problem.

> It is easier to change ones role expectations than to change another's behavior.[3]

PROBLEM: Unclear staff and volunteer roles in working with the committee.

ANALYSIS: In the course of discussion the SW identified a lack of role identification on the part of the COV, plus a conflicting role expectation on the part of the SW.

> Role expectations...what one should be and what one actually is. Generally human interactions move along most smoothly if the following exist:
> 1. if the parties interacting have a high level of agreement on norms and personal preferences,
> 2. if the parties involved agree as to the role definitions and role expectations of each other,
> 3. if the role performance of one is in agreement with the role expectation of the other, and positive sanctions are the end result of interaction.[4]

STAFF ROLE: The SW made an effort to understand the COV's role definitions and expectations, by asking the COV how she saw her future participation with the committee.

> Involvement principle is that people work most productively and happily when involved in establishing their own goals and procedures (roles).[5]

The discussion revealed that she felt the transportation committee was "her baby" because it was her idea to start it, (not really so.) Through discussion, the COV revealed the difficulty she was having in releasing the responsibility to develop and carry out the program. A power struggle could very well have developed between the SW and the COV at this point if the SW had tried to remove the COV from her desired committee involvement. Power struggles result when each person tries to be somebody. The solution is to act creatively so that each persons be-ing enriches the relationship.[6]

There is a danger of manipulation when an effort is made to meet the SW's needs rather than the volunteer's needs.

PROBLEM: The COV's need to remain an integral part of the process, maintain identity with the committee and receive feedback.

ANALYSIS: The need to be kept informed and maintain the feeling of involvement is necessary as ego maintenance for the COV, in order for her to have a feeling of importance and receive recognition for her "founding role."

> Persons have needs that must be met. If they can't be satisfied then adjustments must be made. Maslow, in his "A Theory of Human Motivation," says ego needs are self-respect, self-confidence, worthwhile feeling, recognition, status, and respect of others. Self fulfillment needs are at the pinnacle and persons need to achieve their full potential. Too often the interest is getting the job done, concentration on the task and not taking into account needs of the person. In building a helping relationship it is especially important to take into account the social ego and self-actualizing needs of the other.[7]

STAFF ROLE: The SW initiated dialogue whereby the COV verbalized her feelings, identified her role and made concrete plans for her own involvement. Motivation is greater when people are allowed to set their own goals and objectives and are involved in decision making. Feedback is essential to motivation.[8]

As an addition to the above role clarification, the SW interpreted her own role to the COV, and discussed plans for the development of the chairman, particularly in relation to the initial steps to be taken. Such as: orientation of the Ch in regards to the American Red Cross, its way of work and structure; the role of the committee in carrying out the assignment made by the Board of Directors; discussion of strategies to get the job done; job descriptions; and the agenda planning for the first meeting. SW asked COV for input, but none was forthcoming in this conference. (SW followed-up this request for input again in a later meeting on 10/26.)

RESULTS: The COV agreed to re-evaluate the appointment she had made and will discuss with the volunteer, the possibility of serving on the committee as a participant, rather than, as the chairman.

COV identified her own role more clearly, in relation to the committee, the chairman, and the SW.

A feeling of understanding and trust was established between the COV and the SW.

Plans were made to ensure that the COV will be kept informed of the committee's progress and involved, (to the extent that she will be used as a resource and will present the committee's re-commendations to the Board of Directors for final action).

CONCLUDING OBSERVATIONS: The SW identified in herself, too great a tendency to utilize manipulative techniques in an effort to have her own ideas accepted. The SW is working on modifying this tendency.

The SW is making greater efforts to provide individual and group maintenance functions. SW's past way of work has been to get in-do business-get out.

> Most groups meet for a particular purpose. But, people cannot work indefinitely on a task without some maintenance. People get tired, angry, frus-trated, apathetic, tense, etc., while working on a problem. These feelings often are ignored in an effort to get the group to make a decision, but if the feeling level is neglected, work becomes inef-fective. It is not a waste of time for groups to take time to ensure that misunderstandings are cleared, to relieve tensions, visit and relax. These are maintenance functions which keep groups in a state of good health.[9]

Maintenance functions in the form of discussion and interest in the COV's job pressures and her role in "founding" the committee, established a rapport that enabled her to risk the re-examination of her actions, and developed a more mutually trusting relation-ship between the SW and the COV.

FOOTNOTES

1. William G. Dyer, The Sensitive Manipulator, pp. 10-11.

2. Ibid., p. 41.

3. Ibid., p. 85.

4. Ibid., p. 79.

5. Ibid., p. 51.

6. William V. Pietsch, Human Be-ing, p. 43.

7. Dyer, op cit., pp. 135-6.

8. Ibid., p. 97.

9. Ibid., p. 57.

INDIVIDUAL CONFERENCE

October 26, 1976

The SW found a note on her desk dated 10/22-4:00 p.m., informing her that the COV had released the first appointee from her role as Ch. of the committee (much to the appointees great relief it was later reported). The note indicated that the COV had phoned the volunteer (mentioned in the Oct. 22 conference report), and he had agreed to serve as Ch. The COV had asked him to meet with us and a meeting was set for 10/28.

The SW met with the COV the following Monday to congratulate her on her skillful work, and discussed the agenda for the meeting on 10/28. The SW had appraised the COV of her plan for the development of the Ch. at their 10/22 conference, and reviewed it with her again at this meeting. (See goals and objectives for the first trimester). It was agreed that the COV would present the ARC orientation, organizational structure, and the assignment made by the Board of Directors. The COV would also assume the leadership role in this meeting which would acknowledge, nonverbally, her position in the structure and reinforce her need for involvement and recognition.

The SW will strive to arrange one additional meeting with the Ch. before the first meeting in order to develop an understanding of role expectations; discuss the total transportation program for the Chapter; discuss the need for broad and long range planning; begin to develop a working relationship; and carry out the necessary tasks in planning for the first meeting.

The COV and SW seem to be on the same "wave-length" now, as a result of the 10/22 conference, and the SW does not feel any covert resistance on the part of the COV.

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October 28, 1976

Those present:

    ED
    COV
    Ch
    SW

The purpose of the meeting was for everyone to meet the new
Ch, to provide him with basic information about the program,
and to give him an opportunity to ask questions.

The COV assumed leadership in a very loosely structured form,
which seemed acceptable in this situation. She and the ED gave
an update on where the Chapter currently is with its transpor-
tation service and discussed problems faced by the Chapter in
providing the service. A report prepared by a volunteer pro-
fessional in July 1976, was referred to and will be provided
to the committee for study, prior to the first meeting.

The bulk of the meeting was spent discussing various elements
of the transportation program and the Ch immediately grasped
problems, strengths, Chapter goals, etc. (The Ch is employed
by Alan M. Voorhees Associates, which is a transportation plan-
ning firm. The Ch is experienced in this field and holds an
M. S. in Urban Development). The Ch grouped the committee work
into 3 areas: American Red Cross statement of policy on trans-
portation, a workable plan to implement the policy, and funding.

The committee members that had already been recruited were dis-
cussed and the Ch was asked what additional persons should be
added. Currently, there is: a client (social work background),
the transportation scheduling chairman (the one who was "un-
appointed"), the Ex-director of Volunteers, another professional
transportation planner (who prepared the July analytical report),
and an MBA student from George Mason University who is doing a
nominal group technique study on the committee for her Master's
requirements.

Additional persons to be added to the committee, will be a re-
presentative from the American Automobile Association, and Adm.
Edward Lynch, who is a volunteer working with the Red Cross trans-
portation program at National Headquarters. The COV asked the
Ch for additional suggestions, but the Ch indicated that he was
new to the community and did not know of anyone that would add
to the committee's expertise. He did offer, however, assistance
from his firm as needed by the committee.

The SW introduced the idea of having a job description for the
Ch and for the committee (so role expectations would be clear).

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The Ch didn't respond very positively to the idea, indicating he didn't think they were very necessary. The SW pointed out that although it probably seemed a very academic exercise to him because of his expertise, the committee members were coming from very diverse backgrounds and with various levels of familiarity with the ARC way of work. The Ch then agreed, but asked the SW to prepare his job description and send it to him for response. He agreed to write the committee's job description.

The SW asked the Ch how he saw the agenda for the first meeting and after some discussion, the agenda was set. It will be mailed to the committee members prior to the first meeting, and will contain the Ch's memo, agenda, committee roster and a copy of the July transportation analysis for the Chapter. (See attached).*

The SW then spent some time developing rapport and providing maintenance functions.

Potential Problems: 1. SW found that the Ch's professional experience in transportation planning enabled him to immediately grasp the nature of the program, but he has not had any prior volunteer experience on a level similar to this current volunteer assignment. This may cause him frustration in working slowly with a committee, when he could sit down and write a program for the Chapter quickly by himself. The Ch's experience in his field may tend to make him impatient with the slow movement of a committee. He knows "exactly" what needs to be done, but may not know how to get concepts across to the committee without dictating or manipulating. 2. His expertise may put him intellectually too far ahead of the rest of the committee. 3. Little thought seems to be given by the Ch to the necessity for defining techniques for planning, methods of getting the group acquainted (maintenance functions), etc.

Staff role: Primarily raising questions, such as those relating to the job descriptions, to stimulate thinking in regards to issues not necessarily thought of by the Ch prior to our meeting.

* In transportation file. In accommodating for my culminating project

TELEPHONE CONFERENCE

October 29, 1976

SW phoned the MBA student to ascertain if she needed any additional information in order to set up her project on nominal group planning. She said she would like to use the planning tool at the committee's first meeting. She had spoken to the COV about it some time ago, and had gotten her approval. The SW suggested that the MBA call the Ch and discuss it with him, pointing out rather specifically what steps are involved and what the hoped for result would be.

MBA called the Ch, then phoned the SW back to report that he was in agreement and "actually seemed relieved" to have someone propose a way to approach the "brain storming" session. The SW and the student discussed materials needed for the session and the SW agreed to have them set up and available.

MBA requested that the committee not be told that she was doing her MBA research project using them.

Staff role: Coordinator and enabler. Assisted the student in realizying who she should seek approval from and communicate with, thus strengthening her knowledge of the volunteer committee structure.

The first meeting of the Transportation Committee was held with the full group in attendance. Included were the COV and the DOV, who are ex officio members of the committee.

The Ch called the meeting to order and was prepared to immediately launch into the program planning portion of the meeting without any preliminary maintenance functions. The SW suggested to the Ch that everyone introduce themselves and give a little of their background. The purpose of the suggestion was to allow the total group to appreciate the wealth of expertise and experience present. This was important because a major concern for management of volunteer services is the identification of skills and potentials represented by each member of the group.[1] It is important that not only staff, but fellow committee members recognize skills and potentials in their midst, so that the potential can be utilized to the best advantage.

Two of the men on the committee are professional transportation planners and very articulate on the subject of transportation planning. They had established their credentials with the group prior to the start of the meeting. Their status factors being their professions and their sex. According to Zaleanik,[2] of the primary attributes (which are visible status factors over which the individual has no control) age and sex are the most crucial. He states, men take the aggressive-active roles and women assume the submissive-passive roles. The women bore this theory out by assuming the role of pre-meeting listeners, and did not take the opportunity to establish their credentials with each other. By allowing and encouraging everyone to articulate their experience, the potential of each person was established, and the status of the women on the committee was enhanced. It was hoped by the SW that by allowing the women to make known their expertise on the subject, an atmosphere of mutual respect would more likely be created--not only between the men and the women, but also between the women themselves.

In addition, it is important to take into consideration the place that establishing credentials has in satisfying ego needs, recognition and a sense of self worth. According to Maslow,[3] ego needs: status, self-respect, self-confidence, worthwhile feeling, recognition, status and respect of others are very necessary to satisfy. Too often the interest is in getting the job done, concentration on the task, and not taking into account the needs of the person. In building a helping relationship it is especially important to take into account the social ego and self-actualizing needs of others.

The next two agenda items (discussion of the committee's structure and its role) were ignored by the Ch and he proceeded onto item three--strategies for attacking the job at hand. The SW interpreted this oversight to the possibility that the Ch had personally assigned a low priority to the issues. In addition, his lack of experience in working with a committee may have made him unaware of the

need to follow the agenda. (The committee's role was addressed later in the meeting in response to a question).

The nominal group technique was introduced by the GS and the question presented to the committee was, "What are the major problems which this transportation committee should study for development of policy statements."

The Technique was well presented by the GS and well received as a planning tool by the committee. Thirty five items were identified (Appendix A) by the group and the top ten priorities were set (Appendix B).

The nominal grouping process was a good team building technique. Every member of the committee was equally involved in the planning and all suggestions were of equal importance because of the process design. This assured everyone of equal status within the group, provided immediate rewards for the group through validation of thoughts, ideas and feelings, and rewards in the form of 35 identifiable problems. It also provided a conflict free planning process, thereby allowing the first phase of group cohesiveness (team building) to develop.

Zaleanik[4] states that one of the initial crises in group development involves the process of achieving an identity common in the minds of all group members. In the early stages of its development, a group expends much energy in creating a definition of the situation held common by all. Once the definition is held by all, group identity has crystallized and it acts as a condition governing group behavior. This provides routine and predictibility for the group and reduces ambiguity and anxiety, thereby, freeing members for attention to group work.

By using the nominal group process, the initial crises of achieving an identity was either overcome by the intensive focus on problem identification, or merely delayed until a future meeting. It did not emerge at this meeting possibly because the definition of the situation was clarified in the problem identification process.

Committee interaction was good, there were no isolates during the course of the discussion. All members participated equally with the exception of the GS, who because of her leadership role with the nominal group process was the focal point during the use of that technique. The other exception was the Ch, who because of his leadership position assumed a task role that included seeking information, initiating, seeking and giving opinion.

There was no group conflict or confrontation during any part of the meeting; non-verbal feedback was that of interest and involvement; the group easily reached a consensus using the nominal group process, which, while time consuming, was very productive in regards to the quantity and quality of problems identified.

In analyzing the success of the technique, the SW feels that while it was

very effective in the quantity and quality of items identified, the GS lost control of the group while she recorded and computed the 35 ranked results identified by the committee. She lost control a second time while she recorded and computed the top ten priorities. It is the SW's feeling that the process would have been better used if the recording and computation had taken place directly on the flip chart, involving the committee with each step, rather than being physically away from the rest of the group.

The committee used the time during the first priority computation process to break for coffee, but remained convened during the second ranking session. It was during this period that the Ch began to guide the committee toward actions that completely ignored the priorities and decisions just made by the group.

The SW suggested that the group wait until the results of the ranking were ready. The Ch agreed, but continued to pursue modified re-ranking activities until the ten priorities were announced and the discussion refocused.

The SW feels that this potential pitfall could have been avoided if the group had been directly involved in the recording and computation process. "Idle" time becomes an uncomfortable element for some people to deal with and they feel a need to occupy it by creating business. In this case, the need to occupy time with something productive almost turned out to be counter productive.

The members of the group were asked by the Ch to submit a program goal statement to the SW within one week. The SW will then mail a composite of all statements to the committee prior to the next meeting. The members were asked to study all of the suggestions and be prepared to draft a final statement at the next committee meeting.

Potential Problems: 1. The possible manipulation of priorities (determined by the committee in the nominal group process) by the Ch, to make them conform with his ideas of how the committee should proceed. With 35 problems identified in the nominal group process, great confusion may result if the Ch does not carefully guide the committee in the addressing of their chosen priorities. The group could end up going in all directions at once, thereby, being ineffective and non-productive.

2. The possible dominance of the committee by the two professional transportation planners and the COV.

3. The inability of the COV to remain ex officio and withdraw from committee participation. Since group purpose is one means for an individual to attain personal goals important to him, he collaborates with a group to meet his own personal needs.[5] This may be the case with the COV, since she is so closely identified with the origins of the committee, and her sense of self esteem is related to the success or failure of the committee and it carries out its task.

Staff role: SW assisted the Ch and the committee to stay focused on the task at hand. SW maintained the role of enabler and advisor.

Staff plan: Assist the Ch with the development of leadership skills as related to leading discussion. The Ch has a tendency to introduce a subject, identify his thoughts and pronounce his judgments, before soliciting the opinions of the members of the committee. This has a tendency to cause the committee to think superficially, to rubber stamp his thoughts and, in general, to be less creative with possible solutions to problems.

The SW is unsure, at this time, how to deal with the development of the Ch along this line.

The SW also finds it necessary to work with the Ch to reinforce the desirability of following an agenda for the meeting. The agenda for the next meeting was set by the committee and the SW plans to reinforce its use by having a typed copy for each member, and by reviewing it with the Ch prior to the meeting.

APPENDIX A

Transportation Committee
Problem Identification

1. Statement of goal
2. Maximum service for given budget and time
3. Legal aspects of program
4. Funding
5. Big of little (scope of program)
6. Guidelines for drivers
7. Determine priority of service
8. In-house or contract service
9. Coordination with other agencies
10. Scheduling of runs
11. Staffing-volunteer and paid
12. Ramifications of outside funding
13. Future prospects
14. Inform public-P.R.
15. Eligibility of riders and destinations
16. Determine unmet needs
17. Vehicle maintenance
18. Program management
19. Geographic area of service
20. Recruiting and training volunteers
21. Special needs
22. Evaluation of policies
23. Memo for passengers
24. Incentives for drivers
25. Data needs
26. Equipment
27. Location of cars
28. Insurance
29. Standards of service
30. Capital investment policies
31. Ways to avoid abuse of service
32. Program stays in Office of Volunteers?
33. Location of transportation office in Chapter House
34. Car lending policy
35. In-house use of vehicles

APPENDIX B

Rankings of Identified Problems

Ranking One:

1. Statement of goal
2. Maximaum service for given budget and time
3. Legal aspects of program
4. Funding
5. Determine priority of service
6. Coordination with other agencies
7. Guidelines for drivers
(8. Scheduling of runs
(9. Eligibility of riders and destinations
10. Ramifications of outside funding

Ranking Two:

1. Statement of goal
2. Maximum service for given budget and volunteer time
    A. Determine priority of service
    B. Eligibility of riders and destinations
    C. Coordination with other agencies
3. Legal aspects of the program
4. Funding and ramifications thereof
5. Operations
6. Guidelines

FOOTNOTES

1. "Working Together: Management of Volunteer Services," p. A9.

2. Abraham Zaleanik, et al, The Dynamics of Interpersonal Behavior, p. 50.

3. William G. Dyer, The Sensitive Manipulator, pp. 135-6.

4. Zaleanik, op. cit., p. 25.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

December 6, 1976

The total committee was in attendance, plus one additional new member. The new member is a recent retiree from the Red Cross national staff, and was with the insurance department at national headquarters.

The Ch called the meeting to order and introduced the first item on the agenda as the task of developing a transportation goal for the Chapter. The discussion went well for the first few minutes and the committee remained focused on the task at hand. However, because the new member on the committee had not been oriented prior to the meeting, he had many questions to ask that the rest of the group had already explored at their first meeting. The discussion at this point, became the typical case of the man who jumped on his horse and rode off in all directions. The Ch did not perceive the confusion or the disjointed discussion and did not try to pull the group back on target. The committee was, in a sense, operating as an egalitarian group, in a peer relationship with the Ch. This usually induces good group interaction but may not be too fruitful.[1]

One reason for the scattergun approach by the committee at this meeting, may be related to the first step in a team's life cycle. The first step was identified in the analysis of the November 15 meeting (page 2) which noted that the initial crises in group development involves the process of achieving an identity common in the minds of all group members. In the early stages of development, a group expends much energy in creating a definition of the situation held common by all. Once the definition is held by all, group identity has crystallized and it acts as a condition governing group behavior. This provides routine and predictibility for the group and reduces ambiguity and anxiety, thereby freeing members for attention to the group's work.[2]

The analysis noted that this process was either overcome by the intensive focus on problem identification through the use of the Nominal Group Process, or merely delayed until a future meeting. The SW now feels that the initial crises was postponed until this meeting because the group moved from a very structured and controlled first meeting (eliminating the opportunity for initial crisis), to a loosely structured group-discussion format in the second meeting. Therefore, the time consuming first step in group development was not eliminated, but postponed until the process allowed it to emerge.

Zaleanik says there are different levels of work in problem solving groups.[3] The first three levels are "getting ready" levels. The first, getting to know one another through safe conventional behavior. The second level, practice at pursuing issues with the understanding that no one will get hurt . . . getting

ready for action. The third level, getting ready to really work, but nothing new has yet emerged. Feedback is now direct, members engage in helping one another, masks are dropped and communication becomes more valid, ideas and insights emerge spontaneously and are tested immediately. The committee seems to be at level two, having worked to achieve a common identity. The challenge will be to ensure that the committee moves into phase three as soon as possible--hopefully, at the next meeting.

At this time, the SW pointed out to the group that the meeting was half over and that no progress had been made on writing the policy statement. It was also pointed out that it was their decision whether or not to proceed along the same course of broad spectrum discussion, or to directly address the task of writing the statement. They chose to proceed along the lines of the first suggestion, rationalizing that the new member needed to be brought up to date on the issues and problems. This points out the desirability of initially forming a full team in order to maintain continuity--without intro-ducing new members along the way. To do so, causes interruptions in the team process as is evidenced in this situation.

The new member was very vocal, asked many questions and offered a great deal of "have you tried" comments. By trying to solve every issue as it arouse, rather than attempting to assess the issues and problems, his behavior pattern bore out Delbecq's statement that people are solution oriented and tend to seek solutions before the problem is understood.[4] The underlying cause of this behavior pattern was probably a combination of a need to be appraised of the problems and the need to establish credentials.

Interaction throughout the meeting took place primarily between the new committee member, the COV and the Ch. Very little input was provided by two members, and marginal input was provided by the remaining members. In spite of the domination by the three persons mentioned, the SW observed no negative nonverbal communication from any member of the committee. Therefore, there were no observable blocks to verbal communication.[5]

When the committee finally addressed itself to the task of the priority state-ment (minutes before the meeting was to end), the group attempted to pull together the statement but continued to get side tracked. The committee was unable to agree on the basic philosophy of the statement or the wording, and was far too tired to be willing to struggle with the writing of a pollished statement. The SW suggested that she and the committee secretary take the ideas recorded by the secretary, and develop a finished statement for the approval of the committee at its next meeting. The committee readily agreed. Generally, this is not a desirable method to use, as noted by Dyer. He writes that the involvement principle is that people work most productively and happily when involved in establishing their own goals and procedures.

On the other hand, people are not used to doing this and can't agree on procedures. Thus, it's often easier to rely on authority who will tell them what to do and how to do it. When groups constantly turn to an authority to do work for them, dependency is reinforced, people are not involved and interest wanes.[6]

Even though this method was not ideal, the SW felt that in this case the group's involvement in the discussion for an extended period of time denoted good participation, and that the technique was suggested to counter-balance the Ch's inability to pull the discussion together to produce the end product.

Problems identified: Inability of the committee to stay focused on the task at hand, and the inability of the Ch to assist them in doing so.

The inability of the Ch to assist the committee in the resolution of problems in a systematic manner.

The continued domination of the COV, who has a tendency to be the spokesman on every issue raised.

The failure of the Ch to solicit the discussion and thoughts of all of the committee members in order to obtain their thinking and spread the involvement. This was identified as a problem in the November 15 analysis and continues as an area of concern.

Failure of the Ch and the committee to use the priority ranking they established at the first meeting.

Staff plan: Discuss with the Ch the problems identified in this analysis and seek solutions to them. By doing this, the SW hopes to make the Ch aware of his role and its affect on the performance of the committee.

The SW plans to take a more active role at the next meeting to assist the Ch in maintaining control over the discussion and the direction it takes. As noted by Reilly and Jones,[7] the consultant (staff) role is to respond to the group and to intervene in the group's life in such a way as to facilitate its problem-solving capability. It is the responsibility of the consultant (staff) to develop the process awareness by which the team (committee) can take a meaningful look at itself, its functions, its methods of working and its goals for change.

If the Ch agrees, the SW will use the process intervention technique of discussing with the committee the fact that the group is attending to several problems simultaneously, rather than sticking to one problem at a time.[8]

The SW will also suggest to the committee that they be reminded every time they stray from the subject. Often, committees will make an effort not to get side tracked if they are aware of the necessity to remain focused. It is hoped that by making the Ch and committee constantly aware of the need to stay on the subject, they both will do a better job of doing so.

The SW will suggest to the Ch that the priorities be reviewed before planning the next agenda so as to reinforce the need to use the listing. The same process can be used by the Ch with the committee, to keep them aware of the need to proceed in an orderly manner.

The SW will also suggest that as issues are raised, they be translated into a problem statement so as to define the component parts of the problem that needs solving. This reverts back to a more structured technique of decision making, which hopefully will be more effective in producing results.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Abraham Zaleanik, et al., <u>The Dynamics of Interpersonal Behavior</u>, p. 63.

[2] Ibid., pp. 25-26.

[3] Ibid., p. 148.

[4] Andre L. Delbecq, et al., <u>Group Techniques for Program Planning--a guide to nominal group and delphi process</u>, p. 22.

[5] William G. Dyer, <u>The Sensitive Manipulator</u>, p. 36.

[6] Ibid., pp. 51-52.

[7] Anthony J. Reilly, et al., "Team Building," p. 228.

[8] Ibid., p. 236.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Patrick R. Penland, Group Dynamics and Individual Development, p. 21.

[2] Anthony J. Reilly, "Team Building," The 1974 Annual Handbook for Group Facilitators, p. 235.

[3] Penland, op. cit., p. 34.

[4] Ibid., p. 51.

[5] Abraham Zaleanik, The Dynamics of Interpersonal Behavior, p. 148.

[6] Penland, op. cit., p. 25.

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In view of the group's inability to stay focused on the agenda and on one subject at a time during the previous meeting, the SW discussed the problem with the Ch by telephone prior to the meeting. He agreed that the problem should be discussed at the next committee meeting and asked the SW to do so. During the course of discussion the group agreed that discussion should be kept germane and was favorably disposed to have the SW assume a "process intervention role," to assist them in staying on the subject. Also, they asked the SW to note the time elapsed and remind them of the time remaining for the meeting. Two members expressed the feeling that nothing had been accomplished at the last meeting and were anxious to "get on with the business."

Since the Ch was conscious about the need to stick to the agenda, he made an extra effort to do so. He also did a much better job of involving the total group in discussion than at previous meetings, and was much more conscious about soliciting opinions and ideas from the group. The SW assumed a much more participatory role during this meeting and focused on being a facilitator to keep the discussion moving. This role seems to have worked well with the Ch--who is strong in his field of expertise, but weak in the role of Ch. The primary technique used by the SW was to ask questions that stimulated thinking, in an

effort to move the group into problem solving and decision making.

The SW is changing her previous perceptions of the Ch's role (from being primarily a facilitator, to a more participatory member of the group). According to Penland,[1] a group is an independent organism and a "leader" is simply a member of the group with a special role to play. That role, however, is a very important one. Its function is to grease the mechanism so that it runs more smoothly. He says, the way to measure successful leadership is not by what the leader is doing, but by what the group is doing. Using that definition, the SW feels the Ch's leadership still needs strengthening because he is "doing" more than he is challenging the group to "do." While the Ch is aware of what is happening in regards to accomplishing tasks, he is not aware of "what is happening below the level of what is happening," nor is he particularly concerned with what the group can potentially achieve if challenged.

The SW found that the agenda, while covered, was not discussed in a 1-2-3 order. During the course of the meeting, however, every item was discussed and appropriate decisions made. This seemed to be an acceptable way of work for this group since one agenda item often relates to another closely enough that the total must be discussed before the component parts can be agreed upon.

The COV continued to exhibit dysfunctional behavior by continuing her role as "the authority" on each point discussed and by diverting the group with unrelated "war stories." She falls into dysfunctional behavior

categories outlined by Reilly and Jones:[2]

1.   The Dominator: by talking too much the Dominator controls the group through verbosity.

2.   The Side-Tracker: this person siphons off the group's energy by bringing up new concerns (deflecting) rather than staying with the problem being worked. Under the Side-Tracker's influence the group can rapidly generate an enormous list of superfluous issues and concerns. (See previous meeting notes for examples of this.)

3.   The Attention-Seeker: this behavior is designed to draw attention to himself. The Attention-Seeker may use "I" often. He may also be a person who describes many of his own experiences in an attempt to look good to other group members.

Two members of the committee have commented to the SW on the COV's disruptive behavior. The SW plans to let the COV continue her disruptions in order to see if the group will attempt to compensate for the disruptions by working around them, or will directly confront them (and her) in order to move more rapidly toward task completion.

So far, the SW has observed no conflict and no other blocking behavior, except as noted above. According to Penland,[3] a committee that is structured as a work group is product-oriented. It minimizes personal growth, in the interest of group movement, and views its successes in terms of accomplishment in the shortest possible time. This, therefore, stresses the need for people to work cooperatively and to accomplish, rather than to meet personal needs of the members. However, any member causing undo conflict or blocking would most likely be dealt with by the group because the work group is basically determined to get

its work done, and fears that the loss of order would mean giving up, or delaying accomplishment of the task. If the blocker is dealt with, it will usually be on a rational and intellectual level. More than likely, the behavior would be politely ignored, because ignoring intense feelings and avoiding personal verbal exchange are part of the social ethic of our culture.[4]

The committee, on the whole, seems to be moving into level three of group problem solving outlined by Zaleanik.[5] Feedback is becoming direct, though polite, confrontation is apparent when members disagree on a solution or plan, and new ideas are tested immediately without fear. The group also is beginning to show signs of being a mature group, as defined by Penland,[6] in that the members understand each other or they persist until they do; and they make no evaluation of a contribution until they are certain they know what it means. Penland states further that as a group grows and develops, members sharpen their message-sending mechanisms and their message-receiving apparatus. This seemed apparent as the group worked on rewriting the volunteer and paid staff job descriptions. New management concepts were introduced by the newest member, and if implemented, would significantly change current jobs and structure to a new and more efficient manner. The group was very careful to be sure that they understood what was being said, and what the implications would be on the whole program. While the new

ideas were not mutually agreed upon when they were initially presented,
an agreement was reached through a process of challenges and confronta-
tions. Eventually, a negotiated common acceptance of the original or
modified plan was reached by consensus.

Decisions were also being made by design and not by default, with
careful planning going into decisions. An example of this is the thorough-
ness with which the group investigated and discussed the origin/destination
map of last year's trips, in order to decide whether or not to establish
zones by which decentralized service could be provided. Another example,
is the care and thoroughness exhibited in developing job descriptions in
conjunction with a structure and flow chart, in order to ascertain that the
process would function well and be fully staffed by volunteers and paid
personnel.

The results of the committee's work to date, was presented to the
Chapter's Executive Committee as an interim report. The SW attended the
meeting as staff support to the Ch and found his report incorporated the
ideas, concerns and decisions of the committee, and were presented in a
highly professional manner. The excellance of the report was due to the
fact that the Ch is a transportation planner by profession, and his skill
in pulling together the committee's plans was far greater than if a non-
professional had prepared and presented it. The report was the result of
the bringing together of three elements: 1) a Ch who is experienced in the
field of transportation planning, but who lacks skills to assist the com-

mittee to function as a group; 2) a committee that is comprised of persons

who are experienced in operating the Chapter's current transportation pro-

gram, but who are generally myopic in their ability to look at the broad

picture for the future; and the SW who has broadened her role perceptions

so that stepping in as a group facilitator and process intervener, when

necessary to keep the committee moving, is no longer an unacceptable

staff role.

The result to date, as evidenced by the interim report, seems to

be a blending of strengths to overcome individual and group weaknesses

in order to get the job done.

TRANSPORTATION COMMITTEE

February 28, 1977

The Transportation Committee meeting February 28, was extremely unproductive in regards to additional tasks or goals achieved. The group primarily discussed and rediscussed the Executive Committee's reaction to their interim report (presented February 9), and seemingly enjoyed hearing over and over how impressed the Executive Committee was with their report and progress. It was clearly a meeting of enjoying one's "glory," while at the same time raising questions as to "what's next?" The Chairman acknowledged the lack of productivity of the meeting, noted that nothing new was accomplished, and indicated that at the next meeting the committee must reassess its progress in order to determine what steps should be taken next. At the same time, however, the chairman felt uncomfortable enough about the lack of accomplishments that he felt the need to rationalize to the group that, "We needed to do this."

Because the meeting was unstructured in the sense that no tasks were laid out, and none were completed, the group experienced anxiety and a need to move toward established goals. Since the group has responsibility for its own direction and since task groups expect and demand firm, task-accomplishing procedures to follow, the committee appeared to be uncomfortable with an unproductive meeting, even though they enjoyed discussing their success. One member commented after the meeting, and two the following day, on the lack of accomplishment at the meeting.

According to Penland[1] it is natural for groups to have flow-highs, flow-lows and level places. Eventually, movement and activity will take hold of the group, give way to inertia, and then movement will begin again. This cycle of inertia, immobilizing the process and movement repeating itself, takes place over and over in the life-time of the group. This meeting was definitely a flow-low meeting.

The control of the flow pattern is a major function of the Chairman, as the key facilitator within the structure, and can be controlled when operational procedures (an agenda with short-term and long-range tasks, strong leadership by the Chairman, use of decision making procedures, etc.) play an important role in the group process. If too many consecutive group meetings are immobilized with flow-lows, interest begins to wane and members of the group begin dropping off of the committee. This can be a very critical time in the life cycle of the group, and much depends on the skill of the Chairman to get things moving again so that the group's need for productivity is met. The SW has observed other committees in the organization dissolve because neither the staff nor the chairman were able to move the group off of a flow-low, nor did they recognize it as such.

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One such committee was the agency's Youth Committee that maintained a consistent flow-low from the day it was organized until the day it died. The SW feels that the status was maintained because, though the group was structured as a work group, it was never able to define its tasks. No goals or objectives were identified and the members left one by one because their need for accomplishment was never met. The lack of immediate reward (completed tasks), made the frustration too great for committee members to cope with, so they stopped coming. Far too many committees suffer from unidentified flow-lows causing them to be ineffective, unproductive and committees in name only. Even if the consistent flow-low is identified, the chairman or staff often don't have the skill to move it to a flow-high and the end result is the same.

The productivity lag in the Transportation Committee may possibly be the result of the group having focused solely on the task of completing the interim report, so that specific goals and objectives beyond that point had not been developed by the group. Along this line, Drucker[2] points out that a team or work group (the configuration of this committee) needs clear and sharply defined objectives. The SW feels that these sharply defined objectives need to be present on a short term basis in each committee meeting, as well as on a long range basis, to allow for rewards of accomplishment to be present at each meeting. In other words, each agenda should be planned to include some short term and long range tasks, in order to provide the satisfaction of having immediate rewards, as well as, the satisfaction of working toward the total goal. If accomplishment is judged in terms of completed tasks, then each meeting must provide an opportunity to complete some.

This meeting lacked those essential elements mentioned above and, therefore, did not move ahead. It is not to be said, however, that occasional pauses for review and self-praise are not beneficial to the health and general productivity of the group. The self-praise in this case, was a maintenance function provided by the group, for the benefit of the group, and is an interesting departure from the regular forms of individual maintenance functions.

March 28, 1977

The next meeting, held on March 28, dealt with tangible task items such as the development of a recruitment plan for volunteer drivers, and the identification of the first steps for decentralized dispatching of the Chapter's five (soon to be seven) vehicles. The chairman did an excellent job of handling the meeting and was definitely in command and control of the meeting at all times--a leadership role that emerged strongly and consistently for the first time at this meeting. The committee did exhibit shifting leadership patterns, however, as discussed in

Drucker's book Management.[3] Various members found that the leadership shifted to them during a particular phase of discussion and decision making when they were considered to be the "authority" on a subject by the rest of the group. Two examples of this were evident. The first was during the volunteer recruitment discussion when committee members turned to the individual planning to recruit volunteer drivers through a series of speeches at retired citizens groups. The committee member being a recent retiree himself, decided he would take on this project, and while he is not an "expert" on recruitment or even experienced as a recruiter, the group recognized him as its leader and authority when the subject of volunteer driver recruitment was brought up for discussion. The group directed all questions to him, looked to him for advice on recruitment and deferred to his judgments on the subject. This is an interesting, and not too uncommon case where leadership has been conferred by the group and not necessarily earned by the individual. This is a bad situation in cases where accurate information, experience and expertise are essential. In this case it is not such a critical situation because while lack of expertise may be unproductive, it is not damaging.

The second example took place during the discussion regarding the decentralization of the vehicles in various geographic zones about the county. The committee determined "adequate vehicle maintenance" to be the biggest problem in the decentralization plan and looked to one of the new members, who has been overseeing the maintenance of the Chapter's five vehicles, for leadership in this area. In this case, the member had the expertise and knowledge to earn him the "rights" of the leader during the discussion of this function. The interesting point in this leadership conferral is that the group isolated what they thought to be their biggest problem in a whole set of problems dealing with decentralization, and sought a leader who could deal with, or speak to, that problem. It was as if all of the other problems would disappear if that one could be solved. Therefore, leadership was obtained on the ability to speak knowledgeably on the one subject that the group felt the greatest inability with which to deal.

In spite of the temporarily shifting of leadership, the group always returned to the chairman with broad questions, observations and for backing when in doubt about the validity of their ideas. If measured by Penland's[4] definition of successful leadership (as mentioned in the January 17 narrative)--leadership is not measured by what the leader is doing, but by what the group is doing--the chairman measured up well in his ability to encourage discussion, keep it focused and productive. Contrary to previous meetings, the chairman solicited opinion and discussion consistently throughout the meeting.

This was the first meeting that the SW sat at the opposite end of the table from the chairman rather than next to him, and it is possible that in the past the chairman found it too easy to defer questions to the SW because of her close

proximity. By being as far away as possible from the chairman, it may have caused him to assume the leadership role because the group's call for leadership was clearly focused on him. The SW plans to sit far from the chairman again at the next meeting to see if he will again assume the total leadership role. This may be a leadership strengthening tactic of which the SW has been previously unaware. The SW was prepared to again assume a process intervention and facilitator role, but was not required to do so because the chairman was able to keep the meeting moving well. Because of increased involvement in discussion by the group, the SW also assumed a less participatory role than in the previous meeting.

The committee meeting moved smoothly and without disruption, in spite of the fact that two new members were in attendance for the first time. Both currently are involved in the Chapter's transportation program and know most of the other committee members well enough that credential establishment did not need to take place. In addition, the COV was not in attendance and her absence assisted the committee in addressing its business in a logical order without disruption. The COV may be withdrawing from committee activity, as originally planned, and the SW regrets (for the sake of this analytical assignment) that she will not participate in the committee meetings in the future.

FOOTNOTES

[1] Patrick R. Penland, <u>Group Dynamics and Individual Development</u>, p. 52.

[2] Peter R. Drucker, <u>Management . . . Tasks, Responsibilities, Practices</u>, p. 564.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Penland, op. cit., p. 24.

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