Strategies to Increase Group Cohesion

Upon completion of your Organizational Assessment, you will identify areas requiring your attention. This paper will assist you with strategies to increase Group Cohesion.

How Group Cohesion is measured on the DEOCS:

1. My work group is united in trying to reach its goals for performance.
2. We all take responsibility for the performance of the workgroup.
3. If members of our work group have problems in the workplace, everyone wants to help them so we can get back on task.

Strategies

Address relationship conflict (*conflict that occurs due to personality clashes or emotionally charged interactions and results in damage to employee relationships*) quickly to promote Group Cohesion while encouraging discussion of job task conflict (*disagreement about how to complete a task*).

- Encourage discussion among members who disagree on how to best complete tasks.
- Approach task conflict between members to find alternative methods that improve work quality.
- Encourage open dialogue to members who display relationship conflict in order to improve cohesion.
- Higher ranking unit members may benefit more from task conflict and seeking alternative solutions than lower level members.

Include group members in developing and enforcing goals and norms to increase cohesion.

- Create realistic goals as a team with clear outcomes and timelines.
- Facilitate the creation of team goals to increase long term cohesion and group effectiveness.
- Demonstrate your commitment to establish a climate that promotes helping behaviors by taking an active role with work tasks.
- Display ethical leadership with honesty, transparency, and empathy to show members they are valued.
- Have team building events to increase cohesion.

Share information with unit members to increase trust and cohesion among members.

- Inform members about workplace events and upcoming tasks to increase trust and communication.
- Encourage the flow of information between members to strengthen relationships and increase cohesion.

Hold a strong stance against abusive behaviors in a unit.

- Discourage inappropriate behaviors to increase the ability to function in an effective manner and improve trust in leadership.
- Discourage hazing and bullying behaviors by providing a means to anonymously report incidents.

Additional Resources:

Choi, J. N., & Sy, T. (2010). Group-level organizational citizenship behavior: Effects of demographic faultlines and conflict in small work groups. *Journal of Organizational behavior*, *31*(7), 1032-1054.

De Wit, F. R., Greer, L. L., & Jehn, K. A. (2012). The paradox of intragroup conflict: a meta-analysis.

Mesmer-Magnus, J. R., & DeChurch, L. A. (2009). Information sharing and team performance: a meta-analysis.

Senécal, J., Loughead, T. M., & Bloom, G. A. (2008). A season-long team-building intervention: Examining the effect of team goal setting on cohesion. *Journal of Sport and Exercise Psychology*, *30*(2), 186-199.

Army: Resiliency Army Directive CSF2
Marine Corps: 17, SECNAVINST 5350.16A, MCO 5351.1
Navy: 17, SECNAVINST 5350.16A, SECNAVINST 1610.2A
Air Force: *AIR FORCE POLICY DIRECTIVE 52-2, AIR FORCE POLICY DIRECTIVE 36-29*
Coast Guard: COMDTINST M1020.6I