

Cheat Sheet Module 11

Summary

Communication within Teams

Teams are fundamental to achieving organizational goals. While groups may share information around a common interest, teams are actively engaged in achieving specific outcomes together. In the workplace, different types of teams, such as cross-functional, task force, and virtual teams, serve various purposes, from addressing immediate problems to implementing long-term strategies across geographical divides. Each type of team harnesses the strengths of its members from different functional backgrounds to foster innovative solutions and effective decision-making. However, challenges such as leadership issues and social cohesion can affect their functionality.

Team dynamics are influenced by factors like communication, leadership, and a clear sense of shared goals. Effective teams often experience positive conflict which can lead to innovative ideas and solutions, whereas negative dynamics like groupthink and social loafing can hinder performance. Managing team conflict and fostering an environment of trust and open communication is essential for maintaining productivity and morale. Leaders play a pivotal role in guiding teams by setting clear goals, encouraging healthy conflict, and ensuring that all team members are engaged and accountable.

Collaboration Strategies

Technology has revolutionized the way we communicate in groups. Synchronous tools allow real-time collaboration without physical presence, connecting individuals across various locations. However, asynchronous methods like emails and discussion forums can slow down the feedback process and extend the time needed to achieve group goals. Technologies such as video conferencing and collaborative writing tools have enriched the interaction by allowing real-time edits, sharing, and visual communication, which are essential for effective group collaboration and meeting management.

Workplace Best Practices

Professionalism encompasses understanding diverse work environments, demonstrating effective work habits, and acting in the community and workplace's interest. It's important to research cultural norms when interacting with international colleagues. Different levels of dress—business professional, business casual, and smart casual—are defined to help navigate

workplace expectations. Effective communication involves matching conversation volume to the context, maintaining eye contact, and being aware of cultural differences in body language such as handshakes and eye contact. For instance, mimicking body language during conversations can reflect attentiveness and respect, while respecting personal space can prevent discomfort. Demonstrating dependability through punctuality, meeting expectations, and managing time efficiently are also vital for career advancement.

Key Terms

affective gesture

movement or posture that communicate a person's feelings without words

collaborative writing

projects where written works are created by multiple people together rather than individually

collective efficacy

the team's belief that its members are capable of organizing and working together to reach its goals

cross-functional team

a team that pulls its members from across the different functional areas of an organization

free-rider effect

when one or more team members do not put in their share of the work, assuming others will cover their shortfall

group

people formed around a common interest or purpose with the goal of sharing information, but there is no collective accountability

groupthink

a psychological phenomenon where members of a group prioritize consensus and harmony over critical thinking and independent judgment, often leading to flawed decision-making or conformity to the group's ideas, even if they are not optimal

illustrative gesture

helps you convey meaning when you speak

opposing agendas

conflicting or divergent sets of goals

project team

similar to a task force but often ongoing and covers a wider range of tasks

self-managed team

team comprised of employees that is responsible and accountable for all or most aspects of generating a product or delivering a service

social cohesion

the degree of harmony, unity, and solidarity within a group, characterized by shared values, norms, and mutual support among its members, leading to a sense of belonging and collective well-being

social loafing

the tendency for individuals to exert less effort when working collectively in a group compared to when working alone

sucker effect

when other team members reduce their effort in response to the free rider's behavior

task force

a team, usually of experts or specialists, formed to analyze, investigate, or solve a specific problem

team

a collaborative group of individuals working together towards a common goal, with interdependent roles and shared accountability for outcomes

team dynamics

the behavioral relationships between members of a team that influence how effectively the team works together

virtual team

groups of individuals working together with a common purpose but in different locations