CHAPTER 8

Group Cohesion
Session Outline

- Defining Cohesion
- Carron’s Conceptual Model of Cohesion
- Measuring Cohesion
- The Cohesion-Performance Relationship

(continued)
Session Outline

- Other Correlates of Cohesion
- Enhancing Team Cohesion
  - Exercise settings
  - Sport settings
  - Leader or coach strategies
  - Group member strategies
Defining Cohesion

“A dynamic process reflected in the tendency for a group to stick together and remain united in the pursuit of its goals and objectives.”

(Carron, 1982)
Defining Cohesion

Task cohesion
The degree to which group members work together to achieve common goals and objectives.

Social cohesion
The interpersonal attractions among group members.
Carron’s Conceptual Model of Cohesion

- **Environmental factors**
  - Contractual responsibility
  - Organizational orientation

- **Personal factors**
  - Individual orientation
  - Satisfaction
  - Individual differences

- **Leadership factors**
  - Leadership behavior
  - Leadership style
  - Coach-athlete personalities

- **Team factors**
  - Group task
  - Desire for group success
  - Group orientation
  - Group productivity norm
  - Team ability
  - Team stability

- **Cohesion**
  - Task cohesion
  - Social cohesion

- **Group outcomes**
  - Team stability
  - Absolute performance effectiveness
  - Relative performance effectiveness

- **Individual outcomes**
  - Behavioral consequences
  - Absolute performance effectiveness
  - Relative performance effectiveness
  - Satisfaction
Measuring Cohesion

Questionnaires (e.g., Group Environment Questionnaire) focus on how attractive the group is to the individual members and how the members perceive the group.

- Group integration—task subscale
- Group integration—social subscale
- Individual attraction to group—task subscale
- Individual attraction to group—social subscale
Individual Attractions to the group - Task: Individual team member's feelings about her personal involvement with the group task, productivity, and goals and objectives.

Individual Attractions to the group - Social: Individual team member's feelings about her personal involvement, acceptance and social interaction with the group.

Group Integration-Task: Individual team member's feelings about the similarity, closeness and bonding within the team as a whole around the group's task.

Group Integration-Social: Individual team member's feelings about the similarity, closeness and bonding within the team as a whole around the group as a social unit.
GEQ Conceptual Model
The Cohesion–Performance Relationship

Types of measures

- Positive cohesion-performance relationship with task cohesion measures.
- No cohesion-performance relationship with social cohesion measures.
Task Demands and the Cohesion–Performance Relationship

Coacting teams
- Archery
- Bowling
- Golf
- Riflery
- Skiing
- Wrestling

Mixed coacting-interacting
- American football
- Baseball/softball
- Rowing
- Track events
- Swimming (relays)

Interacting teams
- Basketball
- Field hockey
- Ice hockey
- Soccer
- Volleyball

Degree of task cohesion required
Low
Moderate
High
The Cohesion–Performance Relationship

Task demands

- Coacting teams (e.g., bowling): No cohesion-performance relationship.
- Interacting teams (e.g., volleyball): Cohesion increases performance.
The Cohesion–Performance Relationship

Circular relationship

- Increased cohesion leads to greater performance and brings teams together, which leads to still more increased cohesion.

- Still, the performance to cohesion relationship appears stronger than the cohesion to performance relationship.
Increased cohesion is related to increased satisfaction.

The more cohesive a group is, the greater its pressure to conform to the attitudes and behaviors of the group.
There is a positive relationship between the social support an individual receives and her or his evaluation of group cohesion.
Other Correlates of Cohesion

Stability

Teams higher in cohesion can better resist disruption; teams staying together longer tend to be more cohesive.
Enhancing Cohesion

**Exercise Setting**

- Exercise classes with high feelings of group cohesion have fewer dropouts and late arrivals than do classes low in cohesion.
Creating an Effective Team Climate

- **Social support**: Mutual respect and support enhances team climate.

- **Proximity**: Closer contact promotes team interaction.

- **Distinctiveness**: The more distinctive the group feels, the better the climate.

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Creating an Effective Team Climate

- **Fairness**: Fairness—or a lack of it—can bring a group closer together.

- **Similarity**: Greater similarity = closer climate.
Sample Strategies Suggested to Enhance Group Cohesiveness

*Increase distinctiveness by*

- having a group name.
- wearing a group T-shirt.
- handing out neon shoelaces.
- making posters for class.

*(See Table 8.1 on page 179 of text)*
Principles Underlying the Team-Building Program in a Sport Setting

Coaches used several underlying principles to develop team-building programs, including leadership, distinctiveness, and sacrifices.

(See Table 8.2 on page 180 of text)
Guidelines for Building Team Cohesion

**Leader-Coach Strategies**

- Communicate effectively.
- Explain individual roles in team success.
- Develop pride within subunits.
- Set challenging team goals.

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Guidelines for Building Team Cohesion

**Leader-Coach Strategies**

- Encourage team identity.
- Discourage formation of social cliques.
- Avoid excessive turnover.

(continued)
Guidelines for Building Team Cohesion

**Leader-Coach Strategies**

- Conduct periodic team meetings.
- Know the team climate.
- Know something personal about each group member.
Guidelines for Building Team Cohesion

Group Member Strategies

- Get to know members of the group.
- Help group members whenever possible.
- Give group members positive reinforcement.

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Guidelines for Building Team Cohesion

Group Member Strategies

- Be responsible.
- Communicate honestly and openly with coach or leader.
- Resolve conflicts immediately.
- Give 100% effort at all times.
Overcoming Barriers: Working in groups of 3 design strategies for overcoming these barriers

- A clash of personalities in the group
- A breakdown in communication between group members
- One or more members struggling for power
- Frequent turnover of group members