

## The Small Group Socialization Process

Chapter 2



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## Individuals Join Groups for Three Reasons

1. Attraction Theory
2. Interpersonal Communication Motives
3. Lack of Volition



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### 1. Attraction Theory



1. Individuals are attracted to the group's activities
2. Individuals are attracted to the group's goals
3. Individuals are attracted to the prestige associated with membership in the group
4. Individuals are attracted to group members

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## 2. Interpersonal Communication Motives



People often initiate and maintain interactions in order to satisfy their interpersonal needs.



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## Six Interpersonal Communication Motives



### 1. Inclusion

Communicate with others to have a sense of belonging

### 2. Affection

Communicate with others to feel liked and to like others

### 3. Control

Communicate with others to have the power to manipulate the environment

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## Six Interpersonal Communication Motives



### 4. Escape

Communicate with others to avoid other activities or stressful situations

### 5. Pleasure

Communicate with others to have fun

### 6. Relaxation

Communicate with others to unwind and lower anxiety

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### 3. Lack of Volition



Some people join groups because they have no choice

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### Small Group Socialization

Three Approaches to Defining Socialization



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### Definitions of Socialization



1. When newcomers become part of the group's patterns of activities
2. As a reciprocal process that affects both individual members and the group as a whole
3. As a two-way process of influence and change whereby group members use verbal and nonverbal messages to create a new and unique group culture

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## Model of Small Group Socialization

Five Phases



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## Model of Small Group Socialization



The five phases illustrate how communication functions to influence socialization processes.

- \*Antecedent phase
- \*Anticipatory phase
- \*Encounter phase
- \*Assimilation phase
- \*Exit phase

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## Model of Small Group Socialization



### Antecedent phase

Members will be influenced by each other's beliefs, attitudes, communicative and personality traits, age, sex, and race

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### Model of Small Group Socialization



#### Anticipatory phase

Represents the pre-expectations individuals form about group membership

Also considers that existing groups have expectations about new group members

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### Model of Small Group Socialization



#### Encounter phase

Group members come together for the first time

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### Model of Small Group Socialization



#### Assimilation phase

Members accept the established group culture and begin to identify with the group and its members

“We-ness” or “group-ness” occurs

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## Model of Small Group Socialization



### Exit phase

The end of the group task, or when individuals leave the group

Affects how the group and the individual members confront life without that group experience

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## Outcomes of Socialization

Cohesion, Consensus,  
Communication Satisfaction,  
& Loneliness



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## Outcomes of Socialization



Describe how members and the group as a whole feel about how they cooperated and succeeded in completing goals.



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## Outcomes of Socialization



### Cohesion

A member reaching an acceptable level of desire to stay in the group.



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## Outcomes of Socialization



### Consensus

All group members agreeing with and committing to the group's decision



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## Outcomes of Socialization



### Communication Satisfaction

Describes members who walk away from group meetings or from the group feeling positively fulfilled from the experience

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## Outcomes of Socialization



### Loneliness

Feeling of powerlessness some members have from not being able or allowed to participate in the group's process

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## Socialization Guidelines



Ideas for the successful socialization of members to help ensure success, from the perspective of both the new member and the group.

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## Socialization Guidelines



### Individual level: New member should:

1. Embrace the values, norms, and behaviors established in the group
2. Acquire the skills and knowledge needed to assume appropriate roles
3. Learn what is and what is not important
4. Move from a non-performing member to a contributing member

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## Socialization Guidelines



Group level: Group members should:

1. Recruit individuals who will fit in and contribute to the attainment of group goals
2. Initiate new members in formal orientation sessions or individually in work groups
3. Include the new group member in group activities
4. Engage in a mentoring relationship with the new member

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## A Final Note



One downside to socialization is that for optimal socialization to occur, trust must be established among group members.

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