Group Performance and Cohesion

Group performance is perceived through Steiners Model of productivity, which is as follows:

Actual Productivity = Potential Productivity - Losses Due to Faulty Processes

Actual productivity refers to the final product of a sporting action by a team collectively e.g. The score a diving pair is given from the judges of their performance or how successful a corner kick routine goes for a football team. Potential productivity is the maximum capability of a person or team to achieve the task. In basic terms this is "the perfect performance", e.g. A formula 1 driver completes a qualifying lap with absolute zero mistakes from the driver or car; this lap will be impossible to be bettered. Faulty processes are categorized two different factors, Co-ordinational and Motivational losses. Co-ordinational losses can be described as the "Ringlemann effect". It is known as the Ringlemann effect because he was the first person to state that these losses occur more in teams of increasing numbers. Therefore a tennis doubles pair will be more likely to be closer to their potential productivity than a large team such as a full rugby squad. This is because the larger amount of people there are, the more communication is needed between the individuals. The research into this study was based on tug of war; a group of people were tested individually for their "pulling ability", then all theses scores were added together. So with the entire group pulling the rope at the same time one might think that they would achieve the same results as the collective individual performances, however this proved to be false as the score was lower then that of the collective one, proving that there were further losses once communication and "co-ordination" between the performers was introduced. Motivational losses are also referred to as social loafing. Social loafing is when an individual, who is part of a team, suffers from a lack of motivation or effort input during a period of play or even a whole match. This subsequent loss in motivation causes limitations for overall group performance and can inhibit group cohesion. An example of this would be if a midfielder in footballer was not making enough effort to retreat to his own defensive area, because they assumed someone else would do their duties for them. The idea behind defining these losses is so we can identify why a team isn't working at maximum efficiency and why dysfunctional behaviour happens within a team. The identification and then elimination of these faulty processes aid in the formation of group cohesion.

Group Cohesion is the way in which a group of people work together to achieve a common goal for the benefit of all those involved, sticking together as a collective unit throughout the process. There are two forms of cohesion; task cohesion and social cohesion. Despite the fact that both types of cohesion are important, the nature of the game or activity determines which type of cohesion will further aid the interaction levels in a group to achieve the common goal. Task cohesion is most relevant in interactionist sports such as football, where performers have high levels of communication with team mates to achieve the common goal of the entire team, e.g. Rooney and Ronaldo's fast paced counter attack vs. Arsenal in 2008, the move was perfect due to excellent individual performance and very good communication between the two players. Normally this type of cohesion is formed in training routines through *Practice.* This successful display of communication shows that a good task cohesion will result in the minimisation of faulty processes, leading to an increase in the actual productivity of the group performance. Social cohesion is most relevant in co-active sports like Team GB. Social cohesion involves the formation of personal relationships within the group to provide the individual with support. Cohesion like this is important in sporting events such as the Olympics, because even though every performer is competing individually for rewards, everybody involved in that training and living environment is there to give support to their fellow competitors and friends. Social cohesion is usually formed through shared interests (i.e. the sport) and goals for the future, ad spending large amounts of time together through training.

There are four factors that affect team cohesion. These four factors are: Situational factors, Individual factors, Leadership factors and, Team factors. Situational factors are the specific elements of the environment that the team is conducting its operations in. For example, the amount of time at the dispense of the coach the form these relationship, i.e. if the coach has little time it is likely that the cohesion formed will be very limited; or the size of the group, for the larger it is, the more difficult it is to form cohesion. Individual factors illustrate team members characteristics, i.e. the persons motivation level and personal experiences, i.e. whether they are likely to endure social loafing when play becomes difficult or increase effort input. Leadership factors involve the style of leadership preferred by the group. Leadership styles are determined by the task and position and status of the leader by other group members, for instance a leader such as Steven Gerrard can communicate between those who haven't developed sufficient relationships yet within the team. However should the leader lack respect, such was the case in the French national team at this years world cup, where players didn't respect the actions and decisions of coach Raymond Domenech, dysfunctional behaviour breaks out and minimises team cohesion causing poor performances on the pitch. Team factors refers to a teams past successes or failures as a unit, for instance a team who has experienced many successes in their campaigns may find themselves having better social cohesion, as the combined victory can bring people closer, and obviously task cohesion was inevitably present for they would most likely have not succeeded without it. Opposed to this, continual defeats may lead to accusations and the formation of sub-groups of those blaming each other which in turn impedes the formation of team cohesion.

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