Effects of Orientation Instructions on Orientation Behavior and Product Quality in Small Group Discussions

Sallye Harper Moody

University of Central Florida

This Masters Thesis (Open Access) is brought to you for free and open access by STARS. It has been accepted for inclusion in Retrospective Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of STARS. For more information, please contact STARS@ucf.edu.

STARS Citation
EFFECTS OF ORIENTATION INSTRUCTIONS ON ORIENTATION BEHAVIOR AND PRODUCT QUALITY IN SMALL GROUP DISCUSSIONS

BY

SALLYE HARPER MOODY
B.A., University of Florida, 1967

THESIS

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts: Communication in the Graduate Studies Program of the College of Social Sciences Florida Technological University

Orlando, Florida
1976
Acknowledgements

The research reported in this thesis would not have been possible without the help of many people.

I would especially like to thank Dr. Albert Pryor, my thesis Chairman, for his professionalism and attention to detail, and for the many hours he spent reviewing the material. Without his guidance and assistance in the pilot and final study, this thesis would not have been completed.

My thanks to Dr. K. Phillip Taylor, member of my thesis committee, for directing me to the study of small groups and for suggesting a creative approach in this area.

Dr. Robert Arnold is gratefully acknowledged for serving as a member of my committee and offering encouragement in its completion.

My thanks extend also to Ronald R. Hemphill who assisted me in the actual experiment and for his many helpful suggestions in its implementation.

To Tom Peebles of Computer Science, a grateful thanks for his assistance, advice, and patience.

I would like to thank Margaret Richardson for her time and cooperation in preparing the manuscript.

And finally, my special thanks to my husband, Joseph F. Moody, Jr. for his encouragement, faith, and assistance in every phase of this research.
To Jody, Meredith, and Gator
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LIST OF TABLES</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INTRODUCTION AND RATIONALE</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Related Research</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purpose and Hypotheses</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>METHOD</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subjects</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Materials</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operationalization of Variables</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Variable</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dependent Variables</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Procedure</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESULTS</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Judge Reliability</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tests of Hypotheses</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Test on Quality of Product Data</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data from Questionnaire</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUMMARY AND DISCUSSION</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX A. Instructions to Participants</td>
<td>44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX B. Strong Presentation</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX C. Moderate Presentation</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX D. Weak Presentation</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX E. Solution Sheet</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX F. Post Discussion Questionnaire</td>
<td>49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>APPENDIX</td>
<td>Title</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G.</td>
<td>Instructions for Judges Rating Orientation Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.</td>
<td>Instructions for Judges Evaluating Differences in Orientation Presentations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I.</td>
<td>General Instructions given to Judges in the Final Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J.</td>
<td>Instructions for Judges Rating Orientation Variable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>K.</td>
<td>Instructions for Judges Rating Solution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L.</td>
<td>Quality of Product Scales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>REFERENCES</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Effects of Orientation Instructions on Orientation Behavior</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Effects of Orientation Behavior Presentation</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Effects of Orientation Instructions and Quality of Product on Four Scales</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Results of Three Questions from the Post-Questionnaire</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Introduction and Rationale

In business, science and education, decisions are often made through small group communication. "A small group is defined as any number of persons engaged in interaction with one another in a single face to face meeting or series of meetings" (Hopkins, 1964, p. 15). Formal and informal groups are formed for a variety of functions and purposes. Discussions of this type are a part of our everyday lives. "As society becomes more complex, we find ourselves being a part of more and more kinds of groups and situations with more and more kinds of people" (Debois and Li, 1963, p. 123).

Group dynamics is the scientific study of groups of all natures and types. Contemporary interest began with Lewin in the 1930's. He popularized the term group dynamics, made significant contributions in the theory and research of groups. This beginning was continued by Sherif (1936) who examined social norms of groups. Then Newcomb (1939) extended the study of social norms and the influential processes of groups in a natural setting rather than the laboratory setting. Whyte (1943) observed the political and social group behavior in the Boston slums. Lewin, Lippitt and White (1939) investigated group atmosphere and group leadership. After World War II, new research of groups and group behavior began. Factors and variables contributing to the function of small groups
have been isolated and analyzed (Cartwright and Zander, 1968, p.7-20).

The communication process in small groups functions extensively today in counseling, therapy, politics and community relations, as well as in business and education. Bonner (1959) stated, "The importance of communication, of some mutual agreement among individuals, is obviously essential to group functioning" (p. 95) And in a democratic society, "great premium is placed on wise decisions" (Gulley, 1960, p.2). In all areas of daily business, there is a great interest in improving the productivity of groups and group tasks (Cartwright and Zander, 1968).

In Discussion and Conference, Sattler (1954) reports that group discussions "call for decision-making by the group, and this means some agreement must be reached" (p.6) In addition, Phillips (1966) states that "achieving consensus is the essential purpose of interpersonal communication". Since the time of early studies in group dynamics, many variables have been studied that promote consensus in a group discussion. According to Gulley (1960), three factors are needed to achieve a group goal. These are (a) group orientation, (b) interaction and communication, (c) and leadership (p. 2). Knutson (1970) examined the variable of orientation and its relationship to consensus. He concluded that increased orientation in a discussion of policy yields a greater possibility for reaching consensus. Knutson defined orientation behavior as that behavior which "facilitates achievement of a group's goal by using facts,
making helpful suggestions, or trying to resolve conflict" (p.88).

Orientation behavior is desirable in obtaining group consensus in a decision-making situation, but how does each member know whether or not he is exhibiting a high level of orientation behavior? Previous research does not provide a method for telling group members about orientation and observing the impact of this information on the behavior of group members. Will information and knowledge about orientation facilitate a group reaching its goal? Then, after orientation behavior is observed in a small group discussion, how does this affect the quality of the group's decision? The purpose of this study is to examine the effects of knowledge of orientation behavior on the orientation behavior of small decision-making groups.

Related Research

Bales (1950) devised the Interaction Process Analysis (IPA), an instrument by which observers could classify and examine the behavior of members of a group. The IPA consists of twelve categories, two of which concern the orientation variable—"gives orientation" and "asks for orientation" (p.176). According to Shepherd (1964), Bales' IPA is "useful as a scheme for the analysis of the behavior of members of a group" (p.36). Shepherd states that the IPA is a way to analyze group problems, statements, and behavior of group members (p.29). The study of the orientation variable began with
the IPA and has been examined in several studies. By isolating this variable and its relationship to group process and solution, a group's efficiency can be maximized.

Investigating interaction and consensus in different sized groups, by using Boy Scouts as subjects, Hare (1952) conducted group discussions on camping and survival equipment. He employed some boys as leaders of the groups based on camp counselor's evaluations of leadership qualities. These leaders were given no orientation of the project at hand. The leaders were then divided into various discussion groups ranging from five to twelve members. Hare concluded that as a group increased in size from five to twelve, the amount of consensus decreased. Secondly, individuals in the groups of five tended to change their opinions toward group consensus after a group discussion more than those individuals in groups of twelve. Time allotted for the discussions was twenty minutes. The large groups felt there was too little time to discuss the task. The small groups felt they had enough time for discussion. Hare suggested that five to fifteen minutes is sufficient time for a small task-orientated group to reach consensus. Finally, he found that in the large groups, the individuals did not feel they had much of a chance to participate and were dissatisfied with the discussion. Small groups, however, reached consensus more often than large groups and felt more satisfied with their participation in the discussion. This study clearly demonstrated the relationship of
consensus and group size. Hare concluded that the ideal group size consisted of three to seven group members. In the smaller groups, members felt more satisfied with discussion and felt they had enough time for discussion.

Guetzkow and Gyr (1954) developed a study to isolate those "conditions under which tension or conflict within a conference terminates agreement or consensus among the participants, as contrasted with other conditions under which conflict ends in disagreement" (p. 367). They observed business and government decision-making conferences involving seven hundred people. Group size ranged from five to twenty-five. Consensus was defined as agreement with supportive approval and suggestions. After observing and recording expressions of conflict and agreement, two kinds of conflict emerged. One was a substantive or task conflict, the other an affective or personal-emotional conflict. The experimenters concluded that reaching decisions or solving problems may be promoted or inhibited by certain conditions.

A group in substantive conflict tends to achieve consensus by emphasizing those factors which positively promote consensus. The group in affective conflict tends to achieve consensus by reducing those forces which hinder the achievement of consensus (p. 373).

The conclusion drawn is that consensus can be reached in both types of conflict. But Guetzkow and Gyr do not investigate "those factors which positively promote consensus" (p. 373). A partial answer may be found in their working definition of consensus—agreements
with support, suggestion or solution. This definition of consensus was later adopted by Knutson and others as a partial definition of orientation.

Rieken (1958) examined the effects of talkativeness on the ability to influence group solutions. He concluded that the more an individual talks during a group discussion, the better chance he has of getting his solution adopted by the group. It appears again that individual participation is important in gaining consensus. This finding along with the knowledge of group size increases the knowledge about consensus in group discussions.

Burke (1966) examined the relationship between leader discrepancy and disruptive behavior. He re-defined Bales' measures of problems in a group (communication, evaluation, control, and decision) by labelling them first order (decision) and second order (communication, evaluation, and control) problems. The first order problems established a leader to make decisions. The second order problems involved the discussion and activity related to achieving the goals of the group. The working definition of leader discrepancy was the failure of the leader to achieve the goals. The disruptive behavior was measured in three categories using the Bales IPA variations. These three categories were rate of antagonism, rate of tension, and absenteeism.

Three all-male groups participated in three discussions using different topics for each discussion. There were two leadership
conditions. The directive leadership condition required the leader to actively participate in the discussion. He could give suggestions, opinions, and orient the group. In the second non-directive leadership condition, the leader did not actively participate in the discussion. Burke concluded that the non-directively led groups experienced greater leader discrepancy than the directly led groups.

Although Burke's study did not directly examine orientation, the results showed that certain behaviors exhibited in the directly led groups, such as giving suggestions, making opinions, and orientation, lessened disruption within the group. This is the same kind of behavior exhibited in later studies on orientation. The group leader was instructed on how to manipulate the group discussion. This factor may have inhibited other group members who may have displayed those behaviors. Also, other group members displaying this behavior would not have been observed. If one individual giving suggestions and opinions and orientation in a group discussion can lessen group disruption, what might four or five group members displaying this behavior do to group process?

Gouran (1969) attempted to identify those variables which distinguished consensus groups from non-consensus groups. The dependent variable in the study was the statements made by participants in policy-discussion groups. In addition, he attempted to identify the relationship of those variables to each other.
Consensus was defined as the unanimous agreement of all group members on the group decision.

Statements from three groups were rated on eight variables: clarity, opinionatedness, interest, amount of information, provocativeness, orientation, objectivity, and length. Statements were taken from consensus and non-consensus groups. University of Iowa undergraduates discussed three topics: Iowa's policies on undergraduate women's hours, undergraduates' possession of automobiles, and grading. On each topic, from each of the consensus and non-consensus groups, fifty pairs of consecutive statements were randomly chosen for analysis.

In a two-factor analysis of variance, the scores of the first statements were compared to the scores of the second statements on each of the eight variables. No differences were found in either the clarity or length variables. On the topic of women's hours, statements of the consensus groups were significantly less opinionated, more informative, more provocative, and more objective. This was not found, however, on the other two topics. Interest was found least consistent of all variables. Orientation behavior was significantly greater in consensus groups than non-consensus groups on two topics. Of all variables studies, orientation was found most consistently related to consensus. Gouran concluded the reasons for this uniformity:
The general consistency in the findings on orientation, perhaps can best be explained in terms of Deutsch's notion of "promotive interdependence". If the members of a group are promotively interdependent, no one member can attain his goal unless the others do also. Selecting the one best solution to a problem makes a group promotively interdependent. It seems reasonable, therefore, that groups whose members reach consensus will have made more statements designed to reduce conflict and to provide direction for the discussion than groups whose members fail to reach consensus (Gouran, 1969, p. 391).

In addition, Gouran found significant differences between the statements of females and the statements of males on four of the eight discussion variables. The statements of males were more informative, less opinionated, more objective, and higher in orientation.

Gouran's extensive study of the variables related to group consensus revealed that orientation was the most consistent concomitant of consensus. Gouran used statements, not individuals, as his dependent variable. There are four advantages to this method: (a) it can measure discussion behavior, (b) it is more efficient, (c) it emphasizes the use of content of discussion, and (d) it offers a researcher a more natural setting (Gouran, 1969, p. 391). This method was later employed by other behavioral scientists in the field of group dynamics and consensus.

Kline (1970) expanded Gouran's study by seeking to discover, by the content analysis of the statements of Gouran's study, those measurable indices of a statement rated high or low in orientation. He attempted to quantify the language of the variable.
Results of Gouran's study revealed that consensus groups had higher orientation than non-consensus groups. Kline selected a total of 68 statements including the 34 statements which were rated highest and lowest on orientation from the original list of 600. Kline sought to show that the higher orientation a statement gives, the lower will be the stereotype of choices. The measuring device was Taylor's cloze procedure. In this procedure, words are deleted from the statements. The more stereotyped a message, the greater the success of filling in correctly the missing word. Two groups of statements, seven of high orientation and seven of low orientation, were chosen. Each of these was manipulated to contain a total of 54 missing words. Ten subjects were chosen to take the test. Results confirmed the first hypothesis. There was a significant difference between high and low orientation statements on the Taylor cloze test. High orientation statements are less stereotyped than low orientation statements. Kline proposed that a speaker who makes highly opinionated statements rather than less opinionated statements would have a higher motivational level. He reasoned further that highly opinionated speakers would make more stereotyped statements.

Kline's second hypothesis was based on the assumption that a high orientated statement would be more abstract or metadiscussional in nature. In short, Kline hypothesized that high orientation statements will (a) contain more questions, (b) contain more group
words such as we, us, (c) contain more other-directed words, (d) have fewer self-referent words, and (e) contain more metadiscussional verb markers such as agree, adopt. First, an adjustment of the length of the high orientation statements was made to match the length of the low orientation statements. Only in two instances was there a significant difference between the high and low orientation statements. High orientation statements did contain fewer self-referent words and had more metadiscussional verb markers. Kline's content analysis of the orientation variable increased the knowledge of the discussion process.

Another researcher, Knutson (1970), expanded Gouran's findings on orientation behavior and group consensus. Specifically, the purpose of the study was to determine if there was a causal relationship between orientation and reaching consensus. Orientation behavior was manipulated through the use of confederates. The levels of the independent variable of orientation were high, low, and no orientation. Confederates were trained to make statements facilitating the group's goals (high), remain silent or non-committal (no), or intensify or disrupt the group's goal (low). Prior to discussion, statements were rated either high or low in orientation; and then given to the Confederates to use during the discussions. Then, thirty small groups discussed the policy; What should be
the University's policy concerning a grading system? Each group consisted of five subjects -- including the confederate. In each group, pre-discussion differences were polarized at a position from one to five on a scale offering alternatives. Distance from consensus was measured by the number of positions a subject was away from complete agreement on the policy alternative. Using a confederate to manipulate the levels of orientation, Knutson predicted that the high orientation group would be closer to consensus than the low or no orientation group; and the no orientation group would be closer to consensus than the low orientation group.

Analysis of variance indicated significance in the success of the confederate in manipulating orientation. The results confirmed that the high orientation group was closer to consensus than the low or no group. The no orientation group was not closer to consensus than the low orientation group. In order to check the lack of significance in the second prediction, Knutson investigated the individual group members' perception of orientation behavior and those ratings received by other group members. The results of a Scheffe comparison test revealed that subjects in the no orientation group rated their fellow group members significantly higher than those subjects in either the high or low orientation condition. Knutson suggested that sometimes negative comments serve a positive function, a conclusion earlier reached by Guetzkow and Gyr (1954).
A second reason offered is that in the no orientation group, the role of the orientator will be assumed by someone in the group. Thirdly, the deliberate orientation behavior of one person is not a good base to predict the outcome of policy.

Kline (1972) again expanded Gouran's results on orientation and consensus. At Knutson's suggestion, no confederate was used. Using Knutson's methodology, Kline grouped the subjects according to their average orientation rating received by classmates and the alternative chosen on the policy of liquor sales on campus. The subjects rated high in orientation were placed in four groups. Half of the subjects in each group chose the more liberal alternative. Then these subjects met to discuss the topic. After discussion, each subject privately chose his position on the topic from a list of alternatives.

The results were tabulated by the total number of positions a subject moved from his initial position toward the most agreed upon consensus. High orientation groups came significantly closer to consensus than low orientation groups. The conclusion is that orientation is significant to reaching agreement in a subject of policy. Kline supported the contention that a group exhibiting high orientation can reach consensus without a leader or confederate. Since rating consensus was a private matter, the influence of group pressure is difficult to determine. Again, orientation behavior
emerged as a significant factor in reaching consensus in small group discussions.

Kline and Hullinger (1972) explored still another aspect of orientation behavior. They predicted that statements from groups which reach consensus will be less redundant than statements from non-consensus groups. The Cloze Procedure and the Type-Token Ratio (TTR) both measured redundancy. Participants were assigned to groups according to the alternative chosen on the policy discussed. Three participants chose the most conservative position; three chose the most liberal alternative. Consensus groups were defined as those groups who reached agreement. The TTR and Cloze tests analyzed ten statements from each group. The first prediction was supported. Statements of consensus groups exhibited less redundancy than non-consensus groups.

The second hypothesis proposed that statements from consensus groups will show less self-orientation than non-consensus groups. Self-orientation was operationally defined as those statements containing self-referent words, such as I, me, or my. Consensus groups would show more other-directed words, such as you or your, and more group words, such as we or us. This hypothesis was not completed supported. Surprisingly, the results were opposite to the predicted direction for self-referent and group words.

Kline and Hullinger offer the observation that other-directed words may not be a factor hindering a group from reaching consensus, and
that redundant and self-referent words are indicators of self-motivating behavior.

Leathers (1972) examined the quality of group communication as a determinant of group product. His hypothesis was that quality of the product in problem-solving groups experiencing high quality communication will be significantly higher than in groups experiencing communication of medium or low quality.

Eighty subjects were assigned to 20 treatment groups. Two confederates were instructed to introduce statements in the group discussions. In the disruptive treatment, confederates were to disrupt the flow of communication by introducing twelve statements to hinder the group process. In the natural treatment (control), no confederate manipulation was employed to enhance or hinder the group process. In the facilitated treatment, confederates were instructed to enhance the flow of communication and heighten the quality of discussion.

Careful controls were placed on the confederate in his role in each of the treatment groups and his statements. To measure the quality of communication, the Leathers' Feedback Rating Instrument (LFRI) was employed. Each of the nine dimensions—deliberatedness, relevancy, atomization, fidelity, tension, ideation, flexibility, digression, and involvement—was rated on a seven point scale. Two highly trained judges chose statements which most clearly represented the rating session which followed the group discussions.
Then the judges applied the scales to all three types of quality of communication—disruptive, natural, and facilitated.

Leathers measured the solutions drawn by the various treatment groups on the problem of drug abuse. His Productivity Rating Instrument (PRI) defined and outlined five standards for judging the quality of solutions. The five standards were effectiveness, feasibility, creativity, significance, and comprehensiveness. Judges then used these standards and rated the quality of the products of each group.

Results yielded significant differences between treatments for all five scales of the PRI. Significant differences, however, were found in only seven of the nine dimensions of the Feedback Rating Instrument. Application of Tukey's HSD test for mean scores confirmed the first hypothesis—that groups experiencing high quality communication produced higher quality solutions. Secondly, these groups produced solutions rated qualitatively superior to groups experiencing communication of average quality. The quality of solutions of groups experiencing average communication quality was significantly superior to solutions with low quality communication. If it is important for small groups to reach consensus it is equally important for those groups to reach a high quality solution. Leathers' research is particularly noteworthy since it established a tool for measuring the quality of a group's solutions.
Hemphill (1973) examined the relationship of orientation behavior and quality of solutions on a discussion of policy. He used Knutson's methodology and a variation of Leathers' PRI for analysis of product. A confederate was trained in making statements which facilitated the group's goal (high), equally facilitated and hindered the group's goal (medium), and disrupted the group's goal (low).

Sixty male undergraduate students in groups of five, including the confederate, met and discussed grading policy at the University. Each group member rated all other group members on orientation behavior. Written solutions were obtained in the 30 minute discussions. A variation of Leathers' PRI called the Quality of Product Scales (QPS) was used to measure quality of product. The four scales were Effectiveness, Creativity, Significance, and Comprehensiveness.

With the confederate manipulating the high, medium, and low orientation, Hemphill hypothesized that the high orientation treatment would produce a higher quality of product than either the medium or low orientation treatments; and also the medium orientation treatment would produce a higher quality of product than the low orientation treatment.

The only qualitative difference between high and medium orientation groups, however, occurred on the Comprehensiveness scale. A possible explanation offered was the time limit and the
lack of preparation on the part of participants. Differences between high and low, and low and medium orientation groups were significant and in the predicted direction on all scales of the QPS.

The major factor contributing to the significant differences in all three treatment groups was the effectiveness of the confederate in manipulating the group's decision-making process. When group orientation ratings were compared in all treatments, excluding the rating of the confederate, there was no significant difference in the orientation behavior exhibited in the groups.

Marr (1974) investigated orientation behavior from a new viewpoint. He determined that two types of statements are important in the communication process—orientation statements and threat statements. He hypothesized that orientation has a greater effect on conciliatory behavior during a low threat condition than a high threat condition than in a low threat condition when a group seeks consensus. To increase the power of the experiment, and to increase incentive to reach consensus, money was given as the reward.

In a controlled feedback condition, four subjects participated in each of the four conditions: (a) low orientation-low threat, (b) low orientation-high threat, (c) high orientation-low threat, and (d) high orientation-high threat. The communication process was controlled by the experimenter. Each member of a condition thought he was carrying messages to other members of a group. This
was a ficticious set-up. Each subject chose a reward schedule. He communicated and made choices. The subject was rewarded if he was in agreement with the imaginary group member. This way, the independent variables of threat and orientation were controlled by the experimenter alone. In addition, Marr added sex as a variable in a $2 \times 2 \times 2$ factorial design.

Marr found a significant interaction between orientation and threat. Hypothesis one was not confirmed. More conciliatory behavior was found in the high threat condition than the low threat condition when orientation was low. Subjects who made high orientative statements showed significantly more conciliatory behavior.

In conclusion, Marr, like others before, found that high orientation as exhibited through verbal behavior evokes a greater degree of conciliatory behavior than low orientation when the group seeks consensus. Although the influence of threats on conciliatory behavior was not confirmed, Marr felt that orientation behavior may not be completely independent of the effect of threat. On the sex variable, Marr found that females compromised more than males. Marr's study reaffirms the contention that consensus in small group discussions means each individual giving a little in his position.

Knutson and Holdridge (1975) analyzed leadership in relation to group consensus and orientation. As in other studies,
orientation was defined as that verbal behavior which facilitates the achievement of a group goal. This was a study of the message variable as seen in communication behavior and subsequent leadership in a group. The purpose of the study was to analyze message contributions of leaders in three aspects—lexical, syntactical and functional. They proposed that "leadership is a role behavior performed within the group... but also it is manifested through orientation behavior as enacted by the discussion participant"(p.109) A participant will be perceived as a leader if he exhibits orientation behavior. The variation in the amount of orientation will result in the amount of perceived leadership.

The first hypothesis proposed a high correlation on the rating a participant gets on orientation behavior and the amount of interaction of the participant. The authors also predicted that perceived leaders would exhibit more orientation than perceived non-leaders. Finally, they hypothesized that groups with highly oriented participants would be closer to consensus than those with low oriented participants.

Twenty six groups of five participants each took part in thirty minute policy discussions. Each participant rated all others on orientation and leadership scales, and rated the group on consensus. Group interaction was recorded by trained observers on PROANA 5 computerized analysis technique. This analysis
determined interaction and the perceived group leader.

The following definitions emerged. A task leader, as analyzed by PROANA, was a participant who interacted the most. A perceived leader had a high score on leadership as rated by other participants. Orientation was the rating done by participants. Consensus was the level of perceived agreement on a six question consensus test.

Hypothesis one was confirmed. The more interaction by a participant, the more he was perceived as using orientation behavior. Hypothesis two was confirmed. The perceived leader exhibited more orientation behavior. The PROANA analysis revealed a positive correlation between the degree of interaction and the perceived leadership ratings. These results suggest that leadership performance is related to the frequency of interaction.

Hypothesis three was not confirmed. There was not a positive relationship between high orientation and achieving consensus. Because this result contradicted earlier studies by Gouran, Kline and others, Knutson and Holridge evaluated further. They took the mean scores of 13 groups where three individuals received higher orientation ratings than the group average. The analysis revealed that these 13 groups had a significantly greater amount of consensus than the 13 groups who had two or less participants scoring above the group average. The conclusion drawn was that orientation in small groups and the amount of interaction among group members may well be "predictors of the amount of consensus achieved than the
total of group orientation" (p. 113). Knutson felt that consensus could be better understood if orientation is viewed as a concomitant leadership function".

Knutson's evaluation of leadership and interaction is not surprising. The nature of the definition of orientation reveals behavior in a leadership function. This study does indicate the role of the confederate in small group discussions is not essential to controlling orientation or consensus. Many individuals may exhibit high orientation behavior at one time, in one group, and reach consensus.

Nemiroff and King (1975) investigated the effects of instruction procedures in group decisions and the level of self-orientation of group members on the quality of group solutions. The authors explained the rationale for instructions:

The Instructions, adapted from the Hull and Watson study (1971), are designed to promote consensual approaches to decision-making, which, presumably, are not generally employed by procedurally 'unsophisticated' groups. By encouraging members to seek out differences of opinion, and by dissuading them from using 'conflict-reducing techniques such as majority vote or trading, are expected that group efficiency, among 'instructed' groups will be upgraded (p. 3).

One hypothesis proposed that the group receiving instruction on decision-making would produce higher quality decisions. Secondly, they hypothesized that self-oriented groups, whether receiving instructions or not, would perform less effectively than low self-oriented groups.
Two hundred and sixteen undergraduates completed the Bass Orientation Inventory to determine the amount of self-orientation of each participant. The participants who rated high in self-orientation were placed in two conditions; those who rated low in self-orientation were placed in two conditions. These groups performed the task on the topic of the NASA Moon-Survival Problem. There were four treatment groups: (a) high self-orientation and instructions, (b) low self-orientation and instructions, (c) high self-orientation and no instructions, and (d) low self-orientation and no instructions.

The first hypothesis was confirmed. Groups receiving instructions on the decision-making process produced higher quality decisions than those who received no instructions, regardless of the self-orientation of the groups. The instruction groups, however, utilized 50% more time than the uninstructed groups. The second hypothesis was not confirmed. The manipulation of a group's composition by self-orientation was not supported. High and low self-orientation groups in the instruction and non-instruction groups did not differ in performance criteria. But the low and high orientation groups differed in the amount of averaging used and their achievement of the assembly effect bonus. Finally, instructions did enhance consensus, but high self-orientation did not facilitate reaching a goal.

The introduction of instructions or procedures for reaching
consensus seems a practical way to assist many types of group discussions. Increased research emphasis on the relationship between group orientation behavior, instructions on decision-making, and quality of product seems imperative.

Purpose and Hypotheses

A review of previous research revealed that orientation behavior promotes consensus, lessens disruption, contains verbal markers, produces a higher quality of product, and functions in relation to leadership qualities and amount of interaction in the group process. The present study seeks to extend this beginning by analyzing the effects of instructions on orientation behavior and the consequent quality of product. The purpose of group discussions is to produce quality decisions. Earlier studies concentrated on factors leading to consensus or the effects of the orientation variable. Many of the elements for achieving consensus in small group discussions have been isolated. It has been demonstrated that orientation is an effective means of achieving consensus. Now a method for placing the knowledge about orientation at the hands of the group participant is needed. Decision-making groups could benefit by a method for informing each participant about the orientation variable and its effects.

It has not been shown that knowledge about orientation behavior affects the actual orientation behavior exhibited in a group
discussion. Various levels of this knowledge may have different effects on the exhibited orientation behavior of the group.

Since our complex world relies more and more on groups and committees for deciding issues and making policy, it is important to know how knowledge or instructions on orientation behavior affects the final decisions. Accordingly, this study will examine the relationship between the levels of knowledge about orientation behavior and the quality of product.

Since research has shown that it is possible to induce orientation behavior through the use of a confederate in small group discussions, it seems logical that such training would also enhance the orientation behavior of other members of the group.

Based on the work of Knutson (1970) and Hemphill (1973), who found a positive relationship between orientation and product quality, and Nemiroff and King's (1975) results on instructions, the following hypotheses were formulated.

The first three hypotheses predict a positive relationship between orientation behavior and instructions on orientation behavior.

1. Groups receiving the strong level orientation instructions will exhibit more orientation behavior than groups receiving moderate, weak, or no orientation instructions.

2. Groups receiving the moderate level orientation instructions will exhibit more orientation behavior than groups receiving weak or no orientation instructions.

3. Groups receiving the weak level orientation instructions will exhibit more orientation
behavior than groups receiving no orientation instructions.

The following hypotheses predict a positive relationship between level of orientation instructions and quality of product.

4. Groups receiving the strong level orientation instructions will have a higher quality product than groups receiving moderate, weak, or no orientation instructions.

5. Groups receiving the moderate level orientation instructions will have a higher quality product than groups receiving weak or no orientation instructions.

6. Groups receiving the weak level orientation instructions will have a higher quality product than groups receiving no orientation instructions.
Method

Subjects

A total of 80 undergraduate students from six sections of the basic speech course at Florida Technological University participated in this study as part of their course requirement. Twenty discussion groups of four members each were formed. Each group consisted of two males and two females. Fifteen of the groups were randomly assigned to one of the three treatment conditions. The remaining five groups were assigned to a control condition to validate the orientation instruction manipulation.

Materials

The experiment was conducted in a conference room in the Administration Building. The room had no windows, four large conference tables, one door, and fluorescent lighting. One rectangular table was set aside for the group discussions. Two chairs were placed on either side of the table. A standard size reel to reel tape recorder was placed on one end of the table. Each of the twenty group discussions was taped with the full knowledge of the subjects. After each discussion, the number at which the tape was stopped was recorded. Then, the experimenter
turned the tape on again and announced the treatment to be received by the next participating group. No one was present except the assistant to the experimenter. Each group member received a packet including the instructions, the topic to be discussed, the manipulation, and a questionnaire from the experimenter (see Appendix A). One solution sheet was placed on the table for use by each group. Orientation was defined as behavior which reflects an attempt on the part of the individual to resolve conflict, facilitate achievement of a group's goal, make helpful suggestions, or lessen tension. The strong presentation on orientation behavior included a definition, examples, and example statements. The moderate level presentation included a definition and examples. The weak level presentation contained only a definition of orientation behavior. Copies of these instructions are found in Appendix B, C, and D, respectively.

The solution sheet was designed to mask the purpose of the experiment and guarantee a solution for each group (See Appendix E). Finally, a questionnaire was used to measure the group members' perception of the manipulation and the effectiveness of the manipulation (see Appendix F).

Operationalization of Variables

Independent Variable. The independent variable, orientation behavior instructions, was operationalized into three treatment
conditions: strong, moderate and weak. Each group member in each
treatment condition was read the directions, topic, and orientation
manipulation. The levels of orientation presentations had earlier
been read and rated by six professors from the Department of
Communication. Five professors ranked the presentations in the
proposed predicted order (see Appendix G). In addition, ten graduate
students in Communication read the presentation and noted the
differences perceived in each level of presentation. All confirmed
that the strong, moderate and weak presentations were clearly identi-
ifiable and different from each other (see Appendix H).

Dependent Variables. After all discussion groups had been
taped, 30 statements were extracted from the taped recordings-- one
every 30 seconds. This procedure yielded 604 statements which were
rated for orientation by four judges on a seven interval scale (see
Appendix I). The range of possible responses was from 1, "does not
give orientation", to 7 "very obviously gives orientation" (Appendix J).

Each of the twenty discussion groups completed the solution
sheet. Six judges rated the quality of the solutions using the
Hemphill (1972) Quality of Product measure (see Appendix K). The four
scales on which the solutions were judged are Effectiveness, Creativity,
Significance, and Comprehensiveness (see Appendix L).

Procedure

Subjects had previously signed-up for a time convenient for
them to participate in the experiment and were asked to report to the designated testing room. Each group was composed of four members. One male and one female were asked to sit on each side of the table. Each subject was given the packet of information containing: (a) the alleged purpose of the experiment and the topic to be discussed, i.e., What, if any, change should be made in the name of the University?; (b) the orientation manipulation, and (c) a questionnaire about participation in group discussion. The interviewer read silently along with the experimenter. The experimenter remained present to answer any questions. Only a few subjects asked for additional clarification. The experimenter then left the room and returned fifteen minutes later. She then asked the subjects to fill out the solution sheet and questionnaires were collected. Each solution sheet was marked as to the level of orientation received. Finally, the subjects were thanked for their cooperation. Subjects were not told of the purpose of the experiment, and were cautioned not to discuss the topic or instructions with others. The tapes, statements, solution sheets, and questionnaires are on file in the Communication Department at Florida Technological University.
Results

Judge Reliability

The inter-rater reliability coefficient for the four judges rating the 604 statements on amount of orientation was .95. The reliability rating for product quality across the six judges was .78. The Cromback Alpha test was used in analyzing the reliability of judges' ratings.

Tests of Hypotheses

The means of the four groups who received levels of orientation instructions are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Effects of Orientation Instructions on Orientation Behavior

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>No. Statements</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strong Presentation</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>14.51</td>
<td>5.52</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Presentation</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>13.76</td>
<td>5.90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weak Presentation</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>12.03</td>
<td>5.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>12.39</td>
<td>5.10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
An inspection of the means indicates that the groups given the strong orientation behavior instructions used higher oriented statements in the group discussion than any other group. The overall trend of orientation behavior was in the predicted direction with a non-significant reversal between the weak presentations and control conditions. A one-way analysis of variance was used to investigate differences among the four groups. The results are presented in Table 2.

### Table 2

**Effects of Orientation Behavior Presentation**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between Groups</td>
<td>606.75</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>202.25</td>
<td>6.65**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within Groups</td>
<td>18250.00</td>
<td>600</td>
<td>30.42</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>18856.75</td>
<td>603</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01**

F \( .99 (3-600) = 4.61 \)
Taken together, H1, H2, and H3 predicted a positive relationship between level of orientation behavior and instructions on orientation behavior. This prediction was supported at well beyond the .01 level ($F = 6.65, 3-600$ df). The Newman-Keuls procedure evaluated the specific effects. The groups receiving the strong presentation showed significantly more orientation behavior than the weak and control groups ($p < .05$). In addition, the groups receiving the moderate presentation showed significantly more orientation behavior than either the weak or control groups ($p < .05$). Finally, no significant differences were observed between either the strong and moderate presentation treatments, or the weak presentation treatments.

Test on Quality of Product Data

A one-way analysis of variance and the Newman-Keuls procedure were also used to explore the effects of orientation presentations on product quality (H4, H5, and H6). The results are in Table 3. The analysis of variance indicated that the quality of the products of the four groups differed significantly on only the creativity dimension ($p < .01$). This difference was due to the significantly greater creativity of the strong presentation group over all other groups. The groups receiving the moderate, weak, and control presentations did not differ significantly from each other on the creativity scale. Thus, only partial confirmation was
Table 3

Effects of Orientation Instructions and Quality of Product on Four Scales

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scales</th>
<th>Control</th>
<th>Weak</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Strong</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Effectiveness</td>
<td>26.50</td>
<td>27.00</td>
<td>23.17</td>
<td>22.33</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>.129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creativity</td>
<td>13.83</td>
<td>16.00</td>
<td>17.83</td>
<td>22.83</td>
<td>8.24</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant</td>
<td>25.83</td>
<td>22.67</td>
<td>22.00</td>
<td>22.67</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.451</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehensiveness</td>
<td>21.17</td>
<td>18.50</td>
<td>20.33</td>
<td>22.50</td>
<td>1.00</td>
<td>.43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
obtained for the latter three hypotheses, which together, predicted that product quality would be positively related to level of orientation instructions.

Data from Questionnaire

Analysis of variance was used to explore the effects of orientation presentations on still another dependent measure - the questionnaire. Only three questions from the questionnaire were relevant to this study. The remaining questions were included to distract subjects from the critical items. The questions were designed to obtain information on how much each group member (1) enjoyed being a member of the discussion group (2) felt the orientation presentation assisted decision-making, and (3) felt that his group displayed orientation behavior. The results are found in Table 4.

Since Question 1, self-satisfaction with group participation, nearly reached the level set at .05, two-tailed tests were made among the four groups. A significant difference was found between the groups receiving the moderate presentation and the groups receiving the weak presentation. The members of the group receiving the weak presentation enjoyed being a member of the group discussion significantly more than the moderate presentation group members.

In addition, on a chi square analysis of the four groups, results confirmed the analysis of variance on the question about self-
satisfaction. A 7.82 was needed for .05 significance (3 d.f), the chi square returned a 7.78 (3 d.f).
## Table 4

Results of Three Questions from the Post-Questionnaire

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>d.f.</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Question 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.23</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>6.50</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>2.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between</td>
<td>2.25</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>49.30</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>.65</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Between</td>
<td>1.10</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within</td>
<td>49.90</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>.66</td>
<td>.59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

F .95 (3-76) = 2.75
Summary and Discussion

The general prediction that there would be a positive relationship between orientation behavior and instructions on orientation behavior was supported. The means of the amount of orientation behavior at each level of instructions were: strong - 14.51, moderate - 13.76, weak - 12.03, and control - 12.39. The groups receiving the strong level of orientation instructions did elicit significantly more orientation behavior than the weak or control groups. No significant differences were found between the groups receiving the strong level and moderate level. This could be due to the similarity of the instruction treatments. The groups receiving the weak level of orientation instructions did not significantly differ from the control groups. These results were also found in Kline (1972) and Hemphill (1973). It could be that the small amount of instruction given the weak level groups was not enough to differ qualitatively from no instructions.

A further implication of giving instructions on orientation behavior to small group discussions is based on the findings that orientation behavior is a significant variable in reaching consensus as supported by the research of Gulley (1960), Gouran (1969), Kline (1970), Knutson (1970), Kline (1972), and Knutson and
Holdridge (1975). Therefore, if orientation behavior increases the possibility of reaching consensus, instructions to group members on orientation behavior are an asset to decision-making groups (Nemiroff and King, 1975).

The prediction that there would be a positive relationship between level of orientation instructions and product quality was only partially supported. The only significant difference occurred in the groups receiving the strong level instructions. These groups produced significantly more creative products than the other groups. This supports the findings of Hemphill (1973).

Despite the lack of significant differences between groups on the effectiveness, significance, and comprehensiveness scales, the groups receiving the strong level orientation instructions were consistently high on all scales. This is in the predicted direction. Surprisingly, the control groups means were also high on three of the four scales: effectiveness - 26.50, significance - 25.83, comprehensiveness - 21.17. The reason for these high means could be that small task-oriented groups were motivated by the requirement of a written solution. It could also mean that in one or more of the five control groups, one or more subjects assumed the role of leader and/or exhibited orientation behavior. This would support the findings of Burke (1966). The high means on the effectiveness scale in the control group may be due to the fact that groups working at a task can arrive at realistic, workable solutions.
without knowledge of decision-making techniques. Orientation instructions effect on product quality is limited by the measurement used. The causal relationship between orientation behavior and product quality still needs clarifying and investigating.

An examination of the results of the questionnaire may assist in interpreting the results. It is of interest to note that although subjects displayed orientation behavior, they did not feel that the instructions were very helpful in the discussion. This suggests that the effects of the instructions were quite subtle, and not readily observable by the subjects. Perhaps, then orientation can be introduced into a group without members feeling that they are being manipulated.

No group differed significantly on the question of how much orientation was displayed by group members. This result may be due to the fact that statements made by group members may not always have been recognizable as giving orientation or not. Group members may not have had time to evaluate other group members at a time when each, as a member, was busy participating. This result supports the analysis of Nemiroff and King (1975) who found no differences in "subjects' reactions to their group in terms of satisfaction with group decisions, satisfaction with self-performance and perceived group effectiveness". The rationale for these results could be that the group members had a favorable attitude toward the final project; but were not favorable to group work.
The final analysis of the questionnaire revealed that the groups receiving the weak level instruction enjoyed being group members more than the moderate groups. This accounts for the very nearly significant F ratio on this question. It is possible that the groups receiving the weak level compensated for the lack of quantity of information on orientation behavior and increased the feelings of groupness.

Problems arise during an experiment that do not become apparent even during a pilot study. A number of improvements in the implementation of the current experiment should accompany any replication. All 80 subjects were processed in a two day period. In a replication, more time should be allotted for the movement of groups in the experimental condition.

Also, the topic, what, if any, change should be made in the naming of this university, was a high interest topic at the time of the experiment in the fall of 1972. A solution for this topic may have not been feasible or realistic. Due to the topic-bound aspect of the experiment, the quality of solutions may have been affected to some extent. Careful topic selection and/or a number of topics may increase the possibility to generalize and evaluate product quality. In addition, the subjects were required to participate in some experiment conducted by the Communication Department. Before subjects learned of this study, they may have become negative about participating in any experiment.
The time limit set for each group to complete the solution sheet and questionnaire may have been too short. The groups could have felt rushed to complete both of these. In some cases, the questionnaire was filled out in a "spirit of fun" rather than a serious manner.

The tape recorder's presence could have enhanced or hindered the discussion and final solution depending on the personalities of the subjects. If the tape recorder were placed nearby, but not on the same table, this could reduce some of the reactive effects.

A new scale for measuring quality of product is needed. The Quality Product Scales did not appear to work well in either the Hemphill study or the current study. The scales do not effectively discriminate on the various aspects of the product quality.

Because of society's emphasis on successful communication, it is imperative that research in the area of small group communication continue. In all types of small group discussions, a variety of purposes and functions are served. If it is important to reach decisions, it is important to know how quality decisions are attained. At all levels of business, government and education, small groups function in one of the most important aspects of the decision-making process. Instructions on how to make a good decision, how to arrive at consensus are significant to members of any decision-making group.

In the area of group product, it is still important to isolate
those variables which lead to a high quality product. As with the studies on consensus, product quality needs further exploration. It is through constant replication, examination of old and new theories, that these variables can be isolated and used. Systematic research on product quality has been ongoing for only about 25 years. By continuing the study of product, we may provide the group member with ways to produce an effective decision.

**Summary**

This study was designed to investigate the effects of orientation instructions on orientation behavior and product quality. Support was obtained for the prediction that the higher level, more detailed orientation instructions would produce a greater amount of orientation behavior in small group discussions \((p < .01)\).

The prediction that level of orientation instructions is related to the quality of discussion product was not fully supported. It was found that groups receiving the higher level, more detailed instructions produced a significantly more creative group product. The lack of confirmation on all measures of the Quality Product Scales was discussed in terms of the time and topic limit, and the lack of effective means for evaluation of said product.
APPENDIX A

Instructions to Participants

You have volunteered for a project in group discussion. The purpose of this project is to get student response to a variety of contemporary campus topics. The results will be forwarded to the Dean of Student Affairs for consideration.

Your task is to discuss the question below. The final objective of the discussion is to reach a decision on what seems to be a most satisfactory solution to the question.

Carefully read the question and then the following page. Then begin the discussion. You have approximately 15 minutes. At the end of that time, write a solution on the sheet provided in this packet within 5 minutes.

An administrator will be nearby if you need anything. If you finish early, write the solution, but do not leave. Thank you for your cooperation.

The controversy concerning Florida Technological University's name still continues.

QUESTION: What, if any, change should be made in the name of this University?
Effective group discussions result in workable solutions. In order to reach such a solution, group members must display orientation. Orientation involves behavior which aids in quick achievement of group's goals. Specific examples of orientation are as follows:

1. Using pertinent facts
   "Last week, the campus paper reported a meeting of the Board of Regents here on campus".

2. Making helpful suggestions
   "Let's elect a secretary to take notes".

3. Trying to resolve conflict
   "Let's try another approach".

As productive group members, you are urged to achieve orientation by making statements which contribute to a solution. Contribute your share.
Effective group discussions result in workable solutions. In order to reach such a solution, group members must display orientation. Orientation involves behavior which aids in quick achievement of group's goals. Specific examples of orientation are as follows:

1. Using pertinent facts
2. Making helpful suggestions
3. Trying to resolve conflict

As productive group members, you are urged to achieve orientation by making statements which contribute to a solution. Contribute your share.
APPENDIX D

Weak Presentation

Effective group discussions result in workable solutions. In order to reach a solution, group members must display orientation. Orientation involves behavior which aids in quick achievement of group's goals.

As productive group members, you are urged to achieve orientation by making statements which contribute to a solution. Contribute your share.
APPENDIX E

Solution Sheet

Directions: Write your group solution here. Do not sign your names to this sheet. Your group solution will be regarded in the strictest confidence.
APPENDIX F

Post Discussion Questionnaire

1. Did you enjoy being a member of this group?
   yes ___ no ___ no opinion ___

2. The assigned problem was relevant to contemporary campus issues.
   1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree

3. The short presentation on orientation helped you as a group member.
   1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree

4. You were given too much information about small group discussion behavior.
   1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree

5. You were given too little information about small group discussion behavior.
   1 strongly disagree 2 disagree 3 neutral 4 agree 5 strongly agree

49
6. Your group displayed orientation behavior.

1 strongly disagree
2 neutral
3 agree
4 strongly agree

7. You contributed to the group's goal.

greatly ___ moderately ___ not at all ___
APPENDIX G

Instructions for Judges
Rating Orientation Presentations

Directions: On the following pages are three presentations about orientation behavior and its application in small group discussions. These presentations have been prepared as a part of a pilot study on the effects or impact of written presentations or orientation behavior. The definition of orientation is inherent in the presentations.

After reading all presentations, rank them as to the degree to which they advocate orientation behavior. Place the letter of the presentation in the blanks below.

LETTER OF PRESENTATION

Strong presentation
Moderate presentation
Weak presentation
APPENDIX H

Instructions for Judges
Evaluating Differences In
Orientation Presentations

Directions: On the following pages are three presentations about
orientation behavior and its application to small group discussions.
These presentations have been prepared as a part of a pilot study
on the effects or impact of a written presentation on orientation
behavior. The definition of orientation is inherent in the
presentations.

After reading all presentations, write briefly what you feel
are the differences between each presentation. In referring to
each presentation, use the code letter, A, B, or C.

Evaluation
APPENDIX I

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS GIVEN TO JUDGES IN THE FINAL STUDY

GENERAL INSTRUCTIONS: This package contains the following materials:

(1) Instructions for judging statements on the characteristic, orientation.

(2) The four sets of instructions given to the students discussing the question concerning a possible name change for the university.

(3) A set of thirty statements from each of the twenty discussion groups.

(4) A three page answer sheet for marking the rating of each statement.

Before continuing, make sure that you have all of the materials listed above.

The statements which you are being asked to judge have been selected at random from twenty discussions by Freshmen speech students at Florida Technological University. You will notice that for some statements additional information has been included in parentheses. This information has been provided only as a means of giving you a minimum amount of context for statements which in isolation could refer to an almost infinite number of different situations. The information is in no way intended as an indication of the investigator's opinion of a statement's importance.

The characteristic on which you are to judge the statements has been defined and illustrated on the page immediately following these instructions. The characteristic, orientation, is to be rated on a seven point scale. Try to use the full range of scale values in making your judgments. In addition, the instructions and suggested agenda given to the students have been included. You will find it helpful to read the discussants' instructions before beginning to
judge the statements.

Following the discussants' instructions, you will find 604 statements. Following these pages, you will find the answer sheets with corresponding numbers to each statement.

To rate 600 statements on orientation will require approximately three hours. When you are judging, try to work rapidly, steadily, and above all, independent. Avoid spending large amounts of time on any one statement. If you pass over any statement, be sure that you return to it and make a judgment. Do not leave any blanks even if you are dissatisfied with the judgment that you make. Please make all entries on the answer sheet in pencil. If you change your judgment on any item, please erase the entry on the answer sheet completely before recording the new entry. Thank you for your assistance.
APPENDIX J

Instructions for Judges Rating Orientation Variable

INSTRUCTIONS: On the following pages are a number of contributions of individuals who participated in twenty different discussions. I would like for you to read each item carefully and then assign it a number between 1 and 7 depending on the extent to which you believe that it gives orientation. A statement is said to give orientation if it reflects an attempt on the part of its maker to facilitate achievement of a group's goal by using facts, making helpful suggestions, or trying to resolve conflict. If you think that the statement very obviously gives orientation, assign it a rating of 7. If you think that it obviously does not give orientation, assign it a rating of 1. If you think that the statement falls midway between these extremes, assign it a rating of 4. Use the values 2, 3, 5, and 6 to indicate degrees of giving orientation other than specified above.

Consider the following examples:

(1) "Perhaps we can get around the problem if we come at it from a different direction."

(2) "I don't understand why you can't agree with the rest of us, the evidence speaks for itself."

(3) "We'll never be able to agree on a solution."

The first statement is obviously intended to facilitate the achievement of a goal. You would probably assign it a rating of 6 or 7. The second statement also seems to be designed to help the group reach its goals, but the rather blunt manner of the speaker would probably do little to induce cooperation on the part of the person to whom he is speaking. You would probably assign it a rating of 3 or 4. The third statement reflects no desire on the part of its maker to help the group reach its goal. You would probably assign it a rating of 1.

55
APPENDIX K

INSTRUCTIONS FOR JUDGES
RATING SOLUTIONS

The following are group solutions to the question, "What, if any, change should be made in the naming of this University?"

In reference to this question, rate each solution (each of the 20) on the scales provided on the answer sheet. Remember each solution is separate from the others and should be rated as such. You are to be as objective as you can in your ratings.

On the next page, you will find the Quality of Product Scales which are used to rate solutions. Each of the four categories are defined for you. Read this carefully.

The following page contains the twenty solutions. And next the answer sheets. Please make sure you have all these materials before beginning. You should have materials to rate twenty solutions.

Rate each solution on each scale by marking (X) or (✓), in the appropriate space as shown.
APPENDIX L

QUALITY OF PRODUCT SCALES

EFFECTIVENESS


EFFECTIVENESS = degree to which ideas, which are part of the major decision or solution, are realistic and could be adapted to the present system.

CREATIVITY


CREATIVITY = degree to which the major decision or solution reflects original ideas not previously applied to the problem under discussion.

SIGNIFICANCE


SIGNIFICANCE = degree to which the major decision or solution reflects relevant and significant information as opposed to non-relevant and insignificant information.

COMPREHENSIVENESS


COMPREHENSIVENESS = degree to which the group's major decision or solution reflects a response to all the dimensions of the problem under consideration.
References


Burke, P. J. Authority relations and disruption behavior in small discussion groups. Sociometry, 1966, 34, 273-250.


Leathers, D. G. Quality of group communication as a determinant of group product. Speech Monographs, 1972, 39, 166-173.


