**Observational Exercise**

Establishing a Constructive Climate

Purpose

1. To develop an understanding of how leaders establish a constructive climate for a group or an organization

2. To identify how specific factors contribute to effective group performance

Directions

1. For this exercise, you will observe a leader running a meeting, a practice, a class, or some other group-related activity.

2. Attend a full session of the group and record your observations below.

Name of the leader: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Name of the group: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Observations about the structure (organization) of the group:

Observations about the group’s norms:

Observations about the cohesiveness of the group:

Observations about the group’s standards of excellence:

Questions

1. In what ways did the leader make the goals of the group clear to group members?

2. How did the leader utilize the unique talents of different group members?

3. What were some of the positive and negative norms of this group? How did the leader reinforce these norms?

4. How would you evaluate, on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high), the cohesiveness of this group? In what ways did

the leader promote or fail to promote the esprit de corps in the group?

5. A key factor in promoting standards of excellence is rewarding results. How did the leader reward group members for achieving results?

**Reflection and Action Worksheet**

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Reflection

1. Based on the scores you received on the Organizational Climate Questionnaire, what are your strengths and

weaknesses regarding establishing a constructive climate for a group or an organization? Discuss.

– Strengths:

– Weaknesses:

2. How did you react to the example in this chapter (pp. 167–168) of the service-learning group that developed

cohesiveness? In what way do you think cohesiveness plays an important role in groups? Have you ever

experienced cohesiveness in a group yourself? Discuss.

3. In this chapter, group rules and norms are stressed as being very important to effective teams. Do you agree

with this? Explain your answer. Briefly comment on your own desire and ability to adapt to the rules of a group.

4. An important aspect of establishing a constructive climate is giving recognition to others. Is rewarding or

praising others something that would come easily for you as a leader? Discuss.

Action

1. Imagine that you have been chosen to lead a group project for your class and are preparing for the first

meeting. Based on what you have read in this chapter, identify five important actions you could take to help

establish a constructive climate for the group.

2. This chapter argues that establishing a constructive climate demands that the leader be a role model for how

group members should act. What three values are important to you in a group? How would you demonstrate

these values to group members?

3. High-performing teams have strong standards of excellence. Discuss your level of comfort with encouraging

others to “keep the quality up.” What leadership behaviors could you strengthen to encourage others to work

to the best of their ability?