GROUP DYNAMICS

The following is presented in outline form and are the concepts to be aware of when dealing with various types of groups whether as an instructor managing a group of students or as part of a group such as a committee member on a college committee.

However, the surgical technology program director and instructors have an even more difficult role when it comes to managing groups and group dynamics due to managing the students as a group and meshing that with the surgery department personnel as a group. As surgical technology program directors realize, the surgery department has a diverse group of personalities with many individuals that could be classified as 'type A' personality. This can present many challenges to the program director as far as striking a balance between managing the students as a group and working with the surgery department personnel as a group. Consequently, the information below is meant as an aid or even checklist to consider, such as when analyzing a clinical rotation site as related to current conflicts occurring in the surgery department or overall behavior displayed by surgical team members.

1. Understand the surgical technologist's role in total quality management (TQM) in the surgery department and to what extent the surgical technologists are involved in TQM.
2. Relate concepts of group dynamics and TQM to the operating room environment to determine what extent the following is occurring, how it is occurring, and the end results:
   a. group behavior: situational and personalities
   b. proactive style of groups
   c. group empowerment
   d. multi-directional communication
   e. completion of group task
3. Analyze the impact formal groups are having on the surgery department, in particular the outcomes.
   a. impact of formal work groups
   b. functions of formal work groups
   c. advantages the formal work groups present to the dept.
   d. disadvantages the form work groups present to the dept.
   e. do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages or vice-versa
4. Know the goals and functions of the various work groups in the department.
5. Understand the reasons for informal groups and their impact on the department.
   a. reasons why informal work groups are occurring in the dept.
   b. advantages of the informal work groups
   c. disadvantages of the formal work groups
   d. do the advantages outweigh the disadvantages or vice-versa
6. Know the stages of formal group formation
   a. forming, including various roles such as chairperson
   b. brainstorming ideas
   c. norming

d. performing
7. Discover if any types of conflict are occurring in the department and classify them in order more fully understand the dynamics of the department. For example, if there are quite a few personal and/or personality conflicts within a department it helps the program director to be aware so as to more or less "shield" the students from getting caught up in any personal politics.
    a. personal conflicts between students
    b. conflicts between student(s) and instructor
    c. employee conflicts
    d. employee and employer conflicts
    e. conflicts between formal dept. groups
    f. conflicts between information dept. groups
    g. conflicts with between surgery dept. and other hospital departments
    h. conflicts between surgery dept. and upper hospital administration
8. Know the classifications of common sources of conflict in the surgery dept.
    a. limited resources
    b. differences of opinion
    c. personal disagreements
    d. professional disagreements
    e. disagreement of group goals
    f. disagreement of how to attain group goals
    g. disagreements pertaining to practice issues
    h. R.N.'s versus CST's and CFA's
    i. Employee hostility due to many reasons such as dissatisfaction with management
    j. Communication break downs
9. Identify those with assertive behavior in the group and those with aggressive behavior.
10. Identify the cultural backgrounds and differences among the groups.
11. Assess how the students as a group and the surgery dept. personnel as a group react to stressful situations and arrive at solutions.