

Group identification, powerful motivator

A recent review regarding research on group-behavior showed very interesting results. One study took a roomful of total strangers and divided them into two groups. The groups were then assigned a competitive task. Results were to be judged and a prize awarded for the best solution. The groups were in the same room and could overhear each other.

labeled by others and identify themselves as members of some group such as the sales department, engineering department, etc., the identification of who is good and who is bad occurs automatically. **THIS SEEMS TO BE** human nature and there is apparently no way to avoid such group identification.

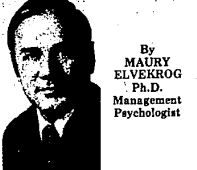
In business organizations, however, the problem occurs that the organizational structure of a company often does not match the goals of the company. The result is built-in hostility and friction. For example, a company decides to enter the widget market. The engineering department is given the assignment of developing a new widget. But engineering is not really in-

terested in developing the widget that will produce the most results for the company overall. Engineering is interested in designing a widget that will put engineering in the best light. **THE SALES DEPARTMENT** is given the assignment of selling the widget. Sales is mainly interested in making sales look good. If there are problems, the first reac-

tion is to pass the buck back to engineering or production. The result of recognizing these problems in the structure of organizations has been more emphasis on putting together a functional unit that has overall responsibility. This is opposed to doling out specific assignments to departments who see other departments as almost enemies. In the new system, a project

team is put together of people who have appropriate experience but whose assignment is to the project, not to any department. Recognition and reward for each member of the group must then depend on the overall results of getting the widget designed, built and sold. We will probably see much more project orientation rather than hierarchical department organization in future years.

TESTING AND questionnaires showed that within a very few minutes people developed the image of members of their own group



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as "good" and "solid" while members of the other group were "hostile" and "negative." An even more extreme experiment took place during examinations for college entrance. Students on the left side of the room were given large red badges and examinations while students on the right were given blue. These students did not interact with each other in any way, but simply went about completing the testing. At the end of the period, however, they had developed some fairly strong feelings. These were attached to the ideas of friend or enemy related to the color of badges others were wearing. Group identification is one of the most powerful motivators there is, both in a positive and in a negative direction. If employees are

Theater to stage 8 plays

Meadow Brook Theatre has announced its 1974-75 season. The new season of eight plays ranges from the Michigan premiere of Eugene O'Neill's tragedy, "A Touch of the Poet," to the premiere performance of a new musical version of a comedy called "The Drunkard." Works by Moliere, Noel Coward, William Shakespeare and William Inge will be included in the ninth season. "Tonight at 8:30," three one-act comedies by Noel Coward, will open the new season in October. MEADOW BROOK Theatre has scheduled a production of William Shakespeare's fantasy, "Twelfth Night," for November. The holiday production in December will be Mary Chase's comedy classic, "Harvey." Eugene O'Neill's tragic, "A Touch of the Poet," will be staged in its Michigan premiere in January.

FOR FEBRUARY, Meadow Brook Theatre will present Moliere's "The Misanthrope." "See How They Run," Philip King's farce that has mated couples giving chase and getting caught at a chaotic pace, has been scheduled for March. Playwright William Inge's work will be presented on the Meadow Brook stage for the first time in April in his moving success, "Come Back, Little Sheba." A new musical version of an old favorite, "The Drunkard," will have its Michigan premiere as the final play of the season.

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