Groupthink

What is Groupthink?

Groupthink: when group members strive to minimize conflict and reach a consensus without critically testing, analyzing, and evaluating ideas.

Symptoms of Groupthink

1. Critical thinking is not encouraged or rewarded
2. Members believe that their group can do no wrong
3. Group members are too concerned about justifying their actions
4. Members apply pressure to those who do not support the group
5. Group members often believe that they have reached a true consensus
6. Group members are too concerned about reinforcing the leader’s beliefs

Suggestions to Reduce Groupthink

1. The group leader should encourage critical, independent thinking
2. Group members should be sensitive to status differences that may affect decision making
3. Invite someone from outside the group to evaluate the group’s decision-making process
4. Assign a group member the role of Devil’s Advocate
5. Ask group members to subdivide into small groups and to consider potential problems with the suggested solutions