

WORKSHOP: IMPRESSIONABILITY: SOURCE OF GROUPTHINK OR ITS REMEDY? (SSPC-S-19)

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Groupthink has been defined as a phenomenon where collective, albeit irrational or non-optimal opinions are formed as a result of conformity, or are motivated by a strong belief that dissent is impossible (Groupthink, n.d.). Interestingly, a recent study has suggested that, "social conformists, or people-pleasers, may be neurologically hardwired to always agree with others" (Borrelli, 2016). Furthermore, impressionability has been associated with being easily influenced or manipulated, which has contributed to its negative connotation (Pollak, 2016). However, there are certain positive aspects of impressionability that are often overlooked, but can be supportive for creative thinking and personal growth because they encourage open-mindedness towards new ideas (Pollak, 2016).

The relationship between impressionability and groupthink has not been adequately studied, so this workshop is aimed at encouraging a thoughtful debate on how impressionability relates to groupthink, and discussing how the strengths of impressionability can be used as a tool to disintegrate the bonds that reinforce the groupthink mentality.

Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this presentation participants will be able to:

1. Identify, assess and integrate concepts pertinent to groupthink mentality, and evaluate its influencing factors. Additionally, participants will be equipped with tools to critically examine various perspectives on the sources of groupthink through a multicultural lens
2. Explore applications of the various concepts associated with groupthink to mitigate its negative effects, formulate courses of action based on peer-driven discussions, and appraise potential outcomes of each.