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### ABSTRACT

#### C-TASKS: An Exercise and In-Class Experiment in the Effects Of Creative and Non-Creative Tasks on Group Structures and Group Performance

The organization behavior literature contains many references to changes brought about in organizations as the result of changes in organizations' environments and/or tasks. C-TASKS is an in-class exercise which is designed to demonstrate experientially the differential impact on group structure, performance and quality of output of groups given creative and non-creative tasks in a counter balanced design.

The class is organized into 6 person groups, each of which includes an observer. Half of the groups are assigned non-creative tasks as their first task set, the other half creative tasks first. Performance is measured by clocking completion time for assigned tasks. Quality is measured for the non-creative task by actual error count, and by a 3 judge panel for the creative tasks. Satisfaction is measured after completion of each task set by standard satisfaction questionnaire (MSQ). Structure is assessed by observers and is scaled on the basis of its complexity.

Non-creative group tasks consist of counting vowels on several specific pages of the textbook. Creative group tasks include writing greeting card verses and short creative prose passages, and developing a name for a special interest group in such a way as to derive a catch acronym from the name's 5 first letters.

Results typically strongly support the hypothesis that non-creative (and more highly structured) tasks lead to higher group structures and lower satisfaction than more creative (are less highly structured) tasks. The different sequence of tasks is a second order effect seen in this design, and appears to cause same consistent differences in group development and performance.