

# ROLES PEOPLE PLAY IN MEETINGS

## Group-Blocking Roles

**The aggressor** criticizes and deflates status of others; disagrees with others aggressively.

**The blocker** stubbornly disagrees; rejects other's views; cites unrelated personal experiences; returns to topics already resolved.

**The withdrawer** won't participate; "wool gatherer;" converses privately; self-appointed note-taker.

**The recognition seeker** boasts; excessive talking; conscious of his status.

**The topic jumper** continually changes the subject.

**The dominator** tries to talk over, assert authority and manipulate the group.

**The special-interest pleaser** uses group time to plead his own cause.

**The playboy/playgirl** wastes group time showing off; story teller, nonchalant; cynical.

**The self-confessor** talks irrelevantly about his own feelings and insights.

**The devil's advocate** is more devil than advocate.

## Group Building Roles

**The initiator** suggests new or different ideas for discussion and approaches to problems.

**The opinion giver** states pertinent beliefs about discussion and others' suggestions.

**The elaborator** builds on suggestions of others.

**The clarifier** gives relevant examples; offers rationales; probes for meaning and understanding; restates problems.

**The tester** raises questions to "test out" whether group is ready to come to a decision.

**The summarizer** reviews discussion; pulls it together.

## Group Maintenance Roles

**The tension reliever** uses humor or calls for a break at appropriate times to draw off negative feelings.

**The compromiser** is willing to yield when necessary for progress.

**The harmonizer** mediates differences; reconciles points of view.

**The encourager** praises and supports others; friendly; encouraging.

**The gate keeper** keeps communication open; encourages participation.

