

SOCIOMETRIC PERCEPTION IN TERMS OF ROLE ACCESSIBILITY

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Every group has a role repertoire, those activities which are implied by the purpose of the group and the roles which exist to help the group function and maintain itself. Being in any group requires skills in relating and connecting to both the other group members and the expectations which each shares. The activity level of the roles may vary, the focus the role has may vary, and the status of the role varies. Some roles are more highly valued than others. Some roles are more accessible than others. This article, and the accompanying procedures, is about training your perception and increasing the accuracy of your perceptions of the dynamics associated with role access. The underlying purpose of studying role access is related to empowerment and directly relates to J.L. Moreno's philosophy of "sharing the sociometric wealth."¹ Learning about role access may help persons examine decisions regarding their membership in a group, what fosters or hinders the experience of belonging, and interpersonal structures which may limit, or promote the abilities of persons to act on behalf of their issues and concerns.

Role Access

Perception of role accessibility is about your observations, your memory and your expectations about whom in the group, including yourself, has, has had, or will have an opportunity to be in specific roles. Factors contributing to access are:

1. Knowledge and skill in the role. In instances where the persons's knowledge and skill is being learned, there must be receptivity in the group and the leaders for practice in the role.
2. Energy and receptivity for the role and the capacity in group members and the leader(s) to explore inhibiting factors.
3. The capacity of persons who have ready access to the role to decline the role, and the capacity of the group members to allow those persons highly chosen for the role (stars) to vacate the role.
4. Sociometric consciousness of one's pull to choose and not to choose others for a role, awareness of others pull to choose and not to choose oneself for a role.
5. Awareness of one's beliefs, values and inclinations which relate to role choice and the receptivity which exists in the group to explore and expand consciousness about these beliefs.
6. The stage of group development and its harmonic and conflictual cycles.
7. The act hunger that exists for access to roles and how it is managed by the leaders and the group members.
8. The capacity of the group and leaders to heal from difficulties which have resulted from role rigidity, denied access, role vacancy, and role conflict in the past.

¹Moreno, J.L. Who Shall Survive? Beacon, NY, Beacon House, 1978, pp. 639-642.

Figure 1.

ROLE ACCESSIBILITY PERCEPTION

DATA COLLECTION SHEET

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Write the name of the role being explored in the space marked "criterion". Consider the members of the group and indicate the degree of access you perceive each person has to the role in relation to you. Persons more likely to be chosen for the role have more access than you, and persons less likely to be chosen for the role have less access than you. Be sure to include each group member in one of the three columns.

Criterion: _____

More access than I About the same access as I have Less access than I have

Criterion: _____

More access than I About the same access as I have Less access than I have

Criterion: _____

More access than I About the same access as I have Less access than I have

Criterion: _____

More access than I About the same access as I have Less access than I have

the group after their absence. The group selected the following list of criteria to explore:²

Is chosen as auxiliary more than me, the same as me, less often than me.

Is asked to direct psychodrama more often than me, the same as me and less often than me.

Offers to direct someone more often than me, about the same as me, and less often than me.

Is protagonist more than me, about the same as me, less often than me.

Expresses feelings of tension and conflict more often than me, about as often as I do, and less often than me.

Speaks in group more often than me, about the same as me, less often than me.

Is more likely to be absent than me, is likely to absent about as often as I am, if less likely to absent as often as I will be.

In Figure 3 the composite data is depicted. One issue for the group was clarified when the group examined the data for the access to the role of auxiliary ego. Three of the five persons perceived as having higher access to auxiliary roles are also persons perceived as more likely to be absent.

Richard
Peter
Susan

The group was able to realize that these group members' absence allowed more access to practice of auxiliary roles. What may have been communicated indirectly was "we didn't miss you because we discovered one benefit of your absence was greater role access for those who attended. What you experienced as not being re-integrated into the group may have been that your position as highly chosen for auxiliary roles had shifted somewhat due to new information about the capacities of other group members to play roles effectively..

Also, notice Bruce's data. He is perceived as having the highest access to the protagonist role and having the lowest access to speaking in group and expressing feelings of tension and conflict. It is possible to inquire of Bruce if he experiences being protagonist as one way the group could get to know him better. Also, there may be a connection between verbalizing issues directly and the need for facilitation as a protagonist. Bruce's position in the hierarchy of perceived role access is improved by the fact that he offers to direct, more than he is asked to direct. By speaking out about his own availability for a role, his overall status is increased.

Conclusion

Group members need vehicles for speaking about what they believe to be true in terms of role accessibility and a mechanism for examining the degree to which their perceptions are shared by others. Unless there

²The group also discussed the impact of the co-leaders expectations on role access. They designed the question related to each co-leader: This (named) co-leader expects more of these people than me, expects about the same of these people as me; and, expects less of these group members than me. The data was collected on a similar form and viewed along with the role access perception data.

SOCIOMATRIX

CRITERION: *Is Asked to Direct*
DATE: *2/29/94*

NAMES		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
NAMES		Marie	Robert	Judith	Siobhan	Roger	Betsy	Edith	Janet	Sandy	Peter	Caroline	Susan	Bruce	Richard
1	Marie		+						+		+				
2	Robert			-	-										+
3	Judith	+	+		+	+			+		+	+	+	+	+
4	Siobhan		+	-					+		+	+	+		+
5	Roger	+	+						+				+		+
6	Betsy	+	+										+		+
7	Edith	+	+	+		+									+
8	Janet		+												+
9	Sandy	+	+		+				+			+	+		+
10	Peter	+	+		+								+		+
11	Caroline		+	+	+	+	+		+		+			+	+
12	Susan	+	+	+	+	+			+						+
13	Bruce	+	+						+		+		+		+
14	Richard														
15															
16															
17															
18															
19															
20															
	+ Recd	8	12	3	3	5	1	0	8	0	6	2	8	1	12
	- Recd	0	0	5	2	0	3	5	1	7	1	8	2	5	0
	S Recd	5	1	5	8	8	9	8	4	6	5	3	3	7	1

Figure 2b. Sociomatrix with data entered for criterion: "asked to direct"

SOCIOMATRIX

CRITERION:
DATE:

NAMES		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16
NAMES		Richard	Robert	Susan	Marie	Janet	Peter	Roger	Judith	Siobhan	Betsy	Bruce	Caroline	Edith	Sandy		
1	Richard						+										
2	Robert	+															
3	Susan		+		+	+		+	+								
4	Marie	+	+			+	+										
5	Janet	+	+														
6																	
7	Peter	+	+	+	+			+									
8	Roger	+	+	+	+	+											
9	Judith	+	+	+	+	+	+							+	+		
10	Siobhan	+	+	+	+	+	+										
11																	
12	Betsy	+	+	+	+												
13	Bruce	+	+	+	+	+	+										
14	Caroline	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+	+						
15	Edith	+	+	+	+		+	+									
16	Sandy	+	+	+	+	+				+				+			
17																	
18																	
19																	
20																	
	+ Recd	12	2	8	8	8	6	5	3	3	1	1	2	0	0	0	0
	- Recd	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	5	2	3	5	8	5	7		
	S Recd	1	1	3	5	4	6	8	5	8	9	7	3	8	6		

Figure 2c. Sociomatrix re-ordered with data for criterion: "asked to direct" Names ordered from high access to low access.

	Chosen as Auxiliary		Asked to Direct		Offers to Direct		Be Protog.		Speak in Group		Express. tension		Be absent	
	+	(S)-	+	(S)-	+	(S)-	+	(S)-	+	(S)-	+	(S)-	+	(S)-
Richard	5	(7)-1	12	(1) 0	11	(3) 0	4	(9)-4	10	(2)-1	4	(7)-1	11	(1)-1
Robert	5	(8) 0	12	(1) 0	8	(4)-1	1	(7)-5	7	(6) 0	2	(10)-1	5	(5)-3
Peter	7	(6) 0	6	(5)-1	12	(1) 0	6	(7) 0	11	(2) 0	10	(9) 0	5	(4)-4
Susan	9	(4) 0	8	(3)-2	6	(5)-2	4	(6)-3	8	(3)-2	3	(5)-4	10	(3) 0
Janet	9	(3)-1	8	(4)-1	7	(4)-2	6	(7) 0	10	(2)-1	11	(2) 0	1	(7)-5
Marie	6	(6)-1	8	(5) 0	5	(5)-3	4	(7)-2	4	(5)-4	4	(5)-4	7	(3)-4
Roger	5	(7)-1	5	(8) 0	8	(3)-2	5	(8) 0	1	(8)-3	0	(8)-5	3	(6)-4
Judith	3	(5)-5	3	(9)-5	7	(2)-4	1	(7)-5	2	(6)-5	7	(4)-2	1	(8)-3
Betsy	9	(4) 0	1	(4)-3	1	(6)-6	6	(6)-1	0	(5)-8	0	(10)-10	7	(7)-5
Siobhan	5	(7)-1	3	(8)-2	2	(6)-5	6	(5)-2	0	(6)-7	3	(4)-6	0	(7)-6
Bruce	0	(8)-5	1	(7)-5	3	(7)-3	7	(4)-2	0	(4)-9	0	(2)-11	0	(4)-9
Caroline	1	(6)+6	2	(3)-8	2	(4)-7	3	(5)-5	1	(3)-9	0	(7)-6	6	(6)-1
Edith	2	(4)-2	0	(8)-5	0	(4)-9	3	(5)-5	2	(7)-4	2	(4)-6	6	(4)-3
Sandy	1	(7)-5	0	(6)-7	0	(5)-8	2	(6)-5	1	(4)-8	1	(7)-5	6	(6)-1

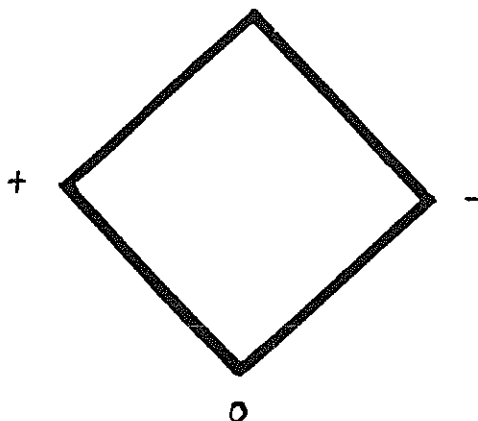
Figure 3. COMPOSITE SCORES: ROLE ACCESSIBILITY PERCEPTION TEST
2/29/93 Data from all roles depicted.

Diamond of Opposites - Pre/Post Explorations of Criteria of Significance

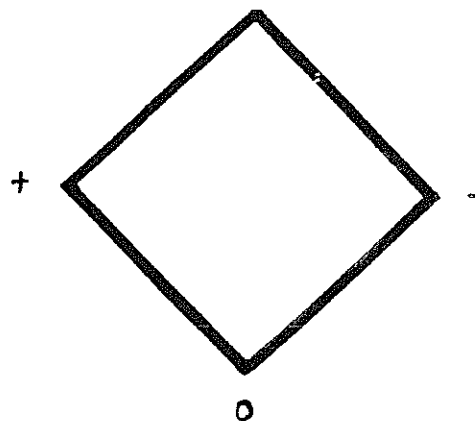
We would like to know, and imagine that you will also want to know, the impact of learning encountered in this workshop upon your relationships and groups "back home", particularly in regard to empowerment issues. The Diamond of Opposites is a device for reporting degrees of ambivalence experienced *here and now*--- an internal *pull to* and *pull not to*.

Part I. Name a significant group, other than this one, to which you belong. Make up a name if there is no formal name or the group.

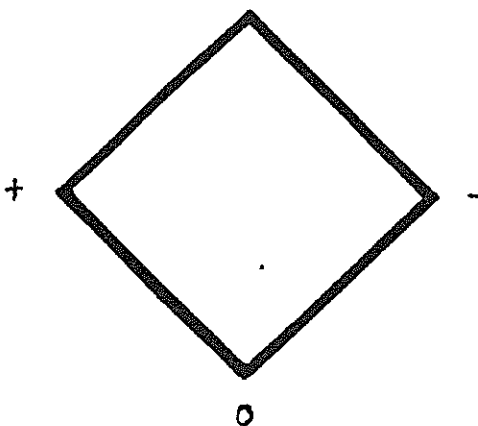
Part II. A. As you think of the group named above, identify on the diamond below, your *pull to be and show vulnerability at the present time in that group* AND the *pull not to be and show vulnerability in that group*.



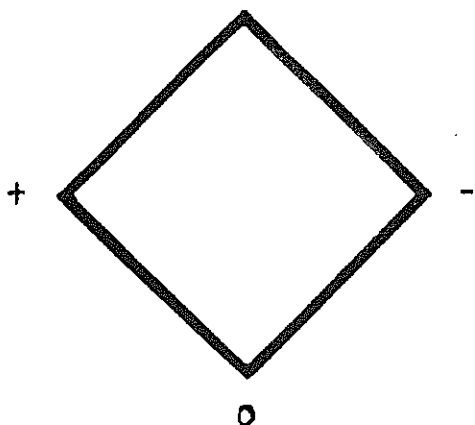
Part II. B. As you think of the group named above, identify your *pull to discuss openly in the group topics about which there is (or could be) intense conflict*, and your *pull not to discuss openly topics about which there is (or could be) intense conflict*.



Part III A. As you think of this group here and now, what is your pull to show vulnerability /not show vulnerability.



Part III. B. As you think of this group here and now What is your pull to discuss openly topics about which there there could be intense conflict, and your pull not to discuss openly topics about which there is (or could be) intense conflict.

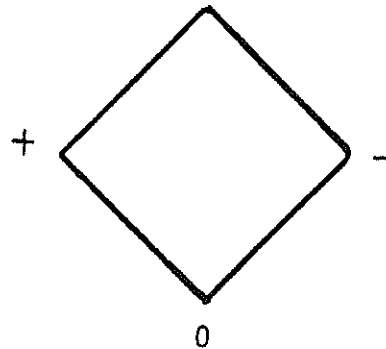


A PAIRED ACTIVITY FOR EXPLORING H. SABELLI'S DIAMOND OF OPPOSITES

Think of a leisure activity you could be engaged in while you are here that has (1) high value to you, and (2) requires a partner or others to share in the activity with you. _____

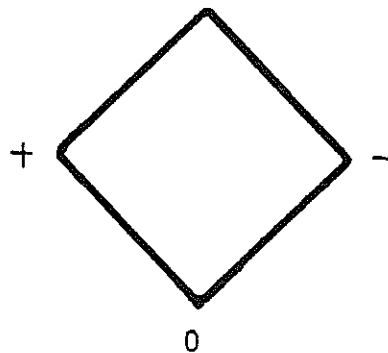
1. Discuss the relevance of this activity with your partner in this exercise.

2. Change your sitting position to one where you and your partner are sitting with your backs to one another. Contemplate your partner as a potential partner for your chosen activity. Locate a point within the diamond which represents both the strength of your PULL TO CHOOSE and your PULL NOT TO CHOOSE him or her for this activity.



3. Next, come to a decision whether or not you will in fact choose him/her to be a partner in the activity you have selected: ___ I choose you ; ___ I do not choose you; ___ I choose to be neutral toward you on the basis on this criterion. Note your reason here:

4. Make a perceptual guess about the strength of your partner's PULL TO CHOOSE you and their PULL NOT TO CHOOSE you as a partner for their chosen activity. Place a dot on the diamond which best represents the imagined strength of both their pull to choose you and pull not to choose you.



5. Make a perceptual guess about whether your partner has chosen you to as a partner for their activity: ___ they chose me; ___ they did not choose me; ___ they chose to be neutral toward me.

6. Turn back around. Facing one another, discuss your data and perceptions with your partner. You have just completed the Sociodynamic Test of Interpersonal Preference as it relates to one group member. The complete test involves generating this data for each group member and sharing the information in pairs.

For more information on the sociodynamic test, the diamond of opposites and the ways these methods relate to Moreno's sociometric test, consult "Sociometry and Sociodynamics" by Linnea Carlson-Sabelli, Hector Sabelli and Ann Hale in Psychodrama Since Moreno by Paul Homes, Marcia Karp and Michael Watson. London, Routledge, 1994, pp. 147-185.

DIAMOND OF OPPOSITES

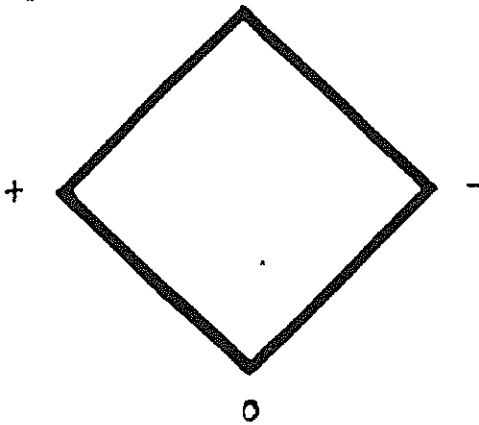
SOCIODYNAMIC TEST OF INTERPERSONAL PREFERENCE INTENSITY RATING SOCIOGRAPHS - OBJECTIVE AND PERCEPTUAL DATA

Your Name: _____ Date: _____

Criterion: _____
If you are using this data in conjunction with the sociometric test you can compare the data with actual choices group members have made for you.

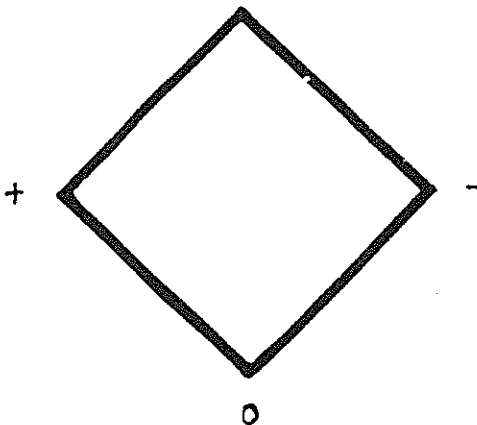
OBJECTIVE CONDITION

On the diamond below take into account both your PULL TO CHOOSE and your PULL NOT TO CHOOSE each person in the group for the activity indicated. Place a point within the diamond which best represents the combination of these two pulls. Draw an arrow from the point out to the margin and write the person's name. More than one person can occupy the same point.



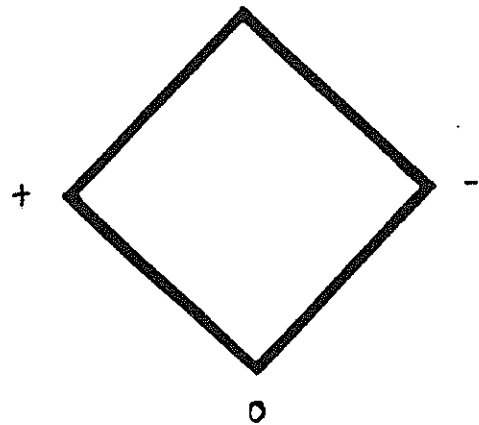
COMPOSITE SOCIOGRAPH OF PERCEPTUAL DATA

Find the place each group member has chosen for you on their SOCIOGRAPH under the title "perceptual condition" (upper right). Mark the place on the diamond below. Draw a line from the point out to the margin and write their name. Once completed you can compare how group members thought you would choose with how you actually chose them by comparing this diamond with the diamond directly above titled "Objective Condition".



PERCEPTUAL CONDITION

On the diamond below make a perceptual guess about the intensity of each group member's PULL TO CHOOSE you and their PULL NOT TO CHOOSE you. Place a point which best represents the combination of these two points on the diamond. Draw an arrow out to the margin and write the group member's name.



COMPOSITE SOCIOGRAPH OF OBJECTIVE DATA

Find the placement each group member has for you on their sociograph titled "objective condition". Mark the place and draw a line from it out to the margin and write their name. Once the diamond is completed you can compare group members actual pulls to choose/not choose you with your perceptions, by comparing this data with the data on the diamond directly above titled "Perceptual Condition".

