

# **Mitigating the Negative Decision Making Consequences of Groupthink and Other Social Pressures**

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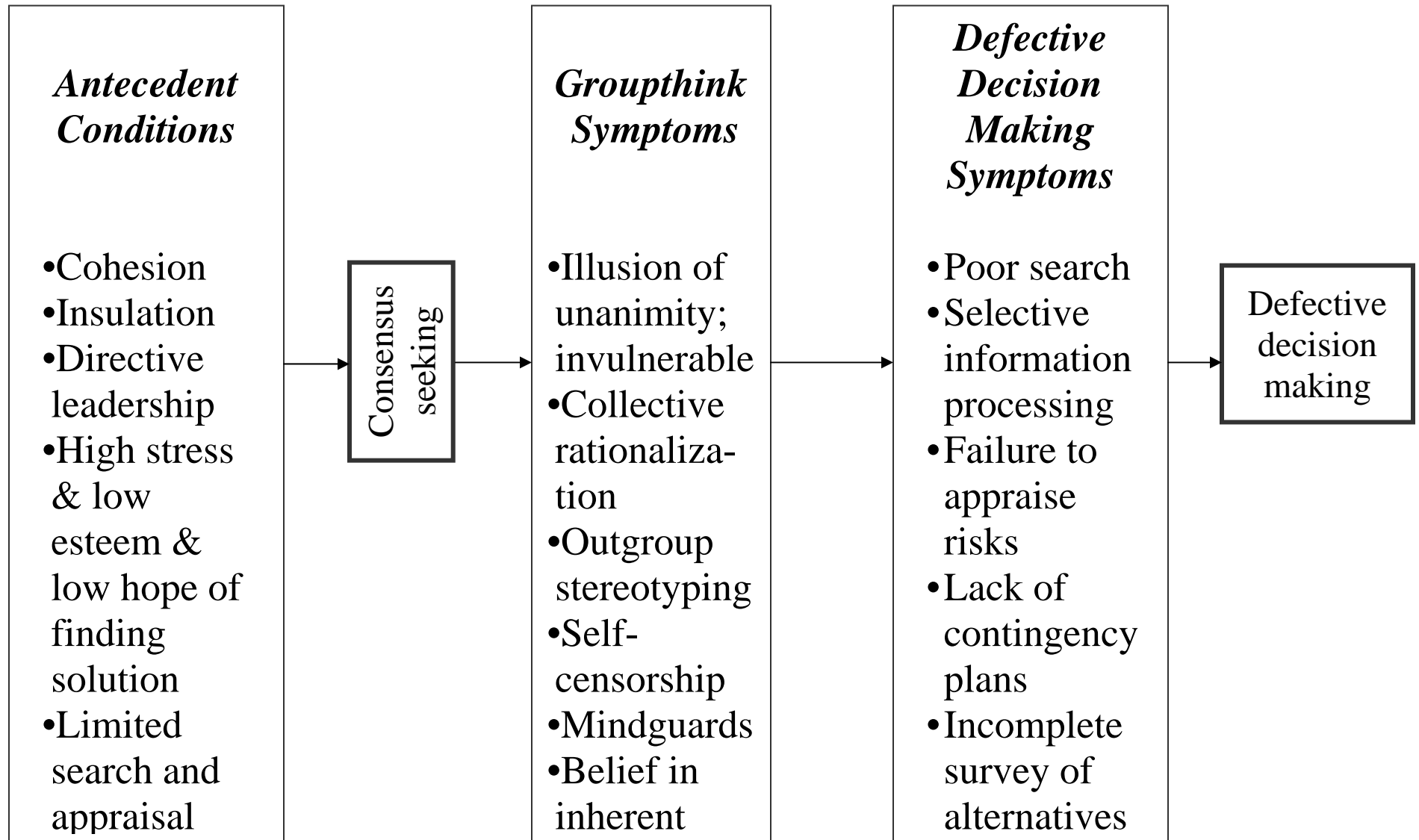
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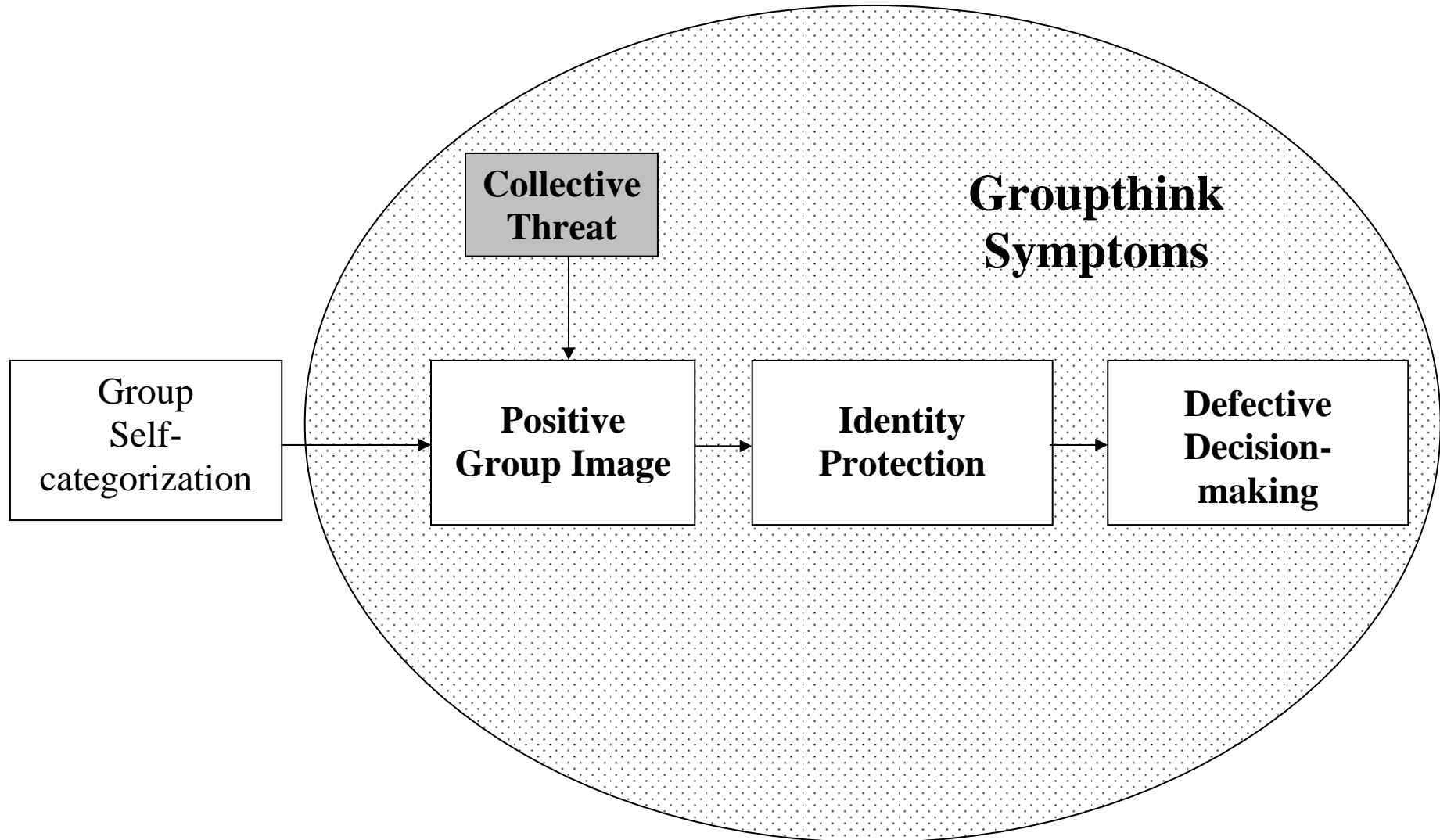
Monday, September 25, 2006

House Conference Room 7 (US Capitol)

## Antecedents and Consequences of Janis's Groupthink



## A Social Identity Maintenance Model of Groupthink



## **Strategies and Techniques for Preventing Groupthink and Other Negative Influence Processes**

### **Goals:**

- Improve decision quality
- Increase decision acceptance (by group and constituents)

### **Decrease Emotional Conflict (desire to maintain social identity):**

- Provide a face saving mechanism for poor performance
- The risk technique
- Multiple role playing procedures
- Link a social identity to critical analysis
- Identity metamorphosis

### **Increase Constructive Conflict (debate and discussion about the issues)**

- Structured discussion principles
- Establish procedures for protecting minority opinion
- Use directed decision aids
- Debias technique of multiple hypotheses

### **Social Influence Analysis**

- Conduct a social influence analysis to determine sources of influence that may serve to bias decision making

### **Instill in Each Decision Maker the Norms of the Scientist**

- Ask: What else can it be?
- Ask: So what? (If a given hypothesis is true, then how should the world look?)
- Go find out if the “so whats” are true, looking for cases when they are not.

## For Further Reading

### On Groupthink:

Janis, I. L. (1972). *Victims of groupthink*. Boston: Houghton-Mifflin.

[First presentation of the groupthink idea].

Janis, I. L. (1982). *Groupthink: Psychological studies of policy decisions and crisis management*. New York: Free Press.

[Revised edition of Janis, 1972 including two additional cases].

Pratkanis, A. R. & Turner, M. E. (1999). Groupthink and preparedness for the Loma Prieta earthquake: A social identity maintenance analysis of causes and preventions. In B. Mannix, M. Neale, & R. Wageman (Eds.), *Research on groups and teams: Groups in context* (Vol. 2 pp. 115-136). Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.

[Provides a case of a government organization engaged in groupthink and describes interventions that might have prevented the negative results].

Turner, M. E., Pratkanis, A. R., Probasco, P. & Leve, C. (1992). Threat, cohesion, and group effectiveness: Testing a social identity maintenance perspective on groupthink. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 63, 781-796.

[Presents an experimental analysis of groupthink].

Turner, M. E. & Pratkanis, A. R. (1998). A social identity maintenance theory of groupthink. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, 73, 210-235.

[Provides a theoretical overview of the Social Identity Maintenance model of groupthink].

Turner, M. E., Pratkanis, A. R., & Samuels, T. (2003). Identity metamorphosis and groupthink prevention: Examining Intel's departure from the DRAM industry. In A. Haslam, D. van Knippenberg, M. Platow, & N. Ellemers (Ed.), *Social identity at work: Developing theory for organizational practice* (pp.117-136). Philadelphia, PA: Psychology Press.

[Provides a case study of how groupthink was prevented at Intel. During the Andy Grove period, Intel was noted for its ability to create constructive conflict].

### On Interventions to Mitigate Negative Group Processes:

de Dreu, C. & van de Vliert, E. (Eds.) (1997). *Using conflict in organizations*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

[A collection of articles on the use of conflict in organizations].

Eisenhardt, K. M., Kahwajy, J. L., & Bourgeois, L. J. (1997, July/August). How management teams can have a good fight. *Harvard Business Review*, 75(4), 77-85.

[Investigated top management teams in high-tech markets to find that teams that focus on facts, consider multiple alternatives, create common goals, use humor, balance power, and seek consensus based on qualifications perform better than their counterparts.]

George, A. L. (1972). The case for multiple advocacy in making foreign policy. *American Political Science Review*, 60, 761-785.

[Illustrates how multiple roles can be used in making foreign policy].

Maier, N. R. F. (1952). *Principles of human relations: Applications to management*. New York: John Wiley.

[Describes many of the techniques for mitigating groupthink consequences along with experimental data demonstrating their effectiveness].

### **On Social Influence:**

Cialdini, R. B. (2001). *Influence*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon.

[Excellent introduction to the findings of a science of social influence].

Pratkanis, A. R. (in press). Social influence analysis: An index of tactics. In A. R. Pratkanis (Ed.), *The science of social influence: Advances and future progress*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press.

[Lists and describes 107 experimentally tested influence tactics].