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Analysis: Evaluating Group Dynamics through Challenger Disaster

There are many lessons we can learn about the function of groups through the Challenger situation. The accident has encouraged organizations outside of NASA to share their own experiences of group work while evaluating for new practices. Addressing organizational teamwork is important in every line of work since it enhances communication and creates a clear understanding of information that is being shared. Ideas such as social loafing, facilitation and groupthink caused mis-communication between all streams of management. This simple fix cost NASA their reputation with it being named the worst space shuttle disaster in US History. However, could've been avoided by enforcing stronger communication, taking accountability, and improved training to ensure the safety of the astronauts.

Social Loafing is one the main causes for the Space Shuttle Challenger explosion. This phenomenon occurs when an individual is under the assumption that a task is being taken care of by someone else. This mis-understanding can be linked to the lack of accountability established by an organization. As a result, management failed to listen to the concerns that the engineers voiced regarding the faulty o-rings.

Social Facilitation was another cause that led to the Space Shuttle Challenger disaster because engineers fell victim to conformity. It could be said that staff and management faced risks like losing their jobs and reputation. Ultimately, it discouraged staff and management from

voicing concerns as the government failed to listen. This decision led management to choose their own interest over the safety of the astronauts.

Lastly, Groupthink is the most popular reason for why this incident occurred. This dynamic created a culture where concerns from the engineers didn't matter. We can assume that government pressure was partially responsible for the management ignoring opinions from engineers. Despite this, management should be held accountable creating a culture that inhibits groupthink while failing to consider the safety of the astronauts.