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# STAGES OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

DUE TO ORGANIZATIONAL GROWTH



# DR BRUCE TUCKMAN PUBLISHED HIS FORMING-STORMING-NORMING-PERFORMING MODEL IN 1965. HE ADDED A FIFTH STAGE IN THE 1970'S. THE THEORY IS AN ELEGANT AND HELPFUL EXPLANATION OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT AND HUMAN BEHAVIOR.



## STAGES OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

THESE STAGES ARE COMMONLY KNOWN AS: FORMING, STORMING, NORMING, PERFORMING, AND ADJOURNING. TUCKMAN'S MODEL EXPLAINS THAT AS THE TEAM DEVELOPS MATURITY AND ABILITY, RELATIONSHIPS ESTABLISH, AND THE LEADERSHIP STYLE CHANGES TO MORE COLLABORATIVE OR SHARED LEADERSHIP.

TUCKMAN'S ORIGINAL WORK SIMPLY DESCRIBED THE WAY HE HAD OBSERVED GROUPS EVOLVE, WHETHER THEY WERE CONSCIOUS OF IT OR NOT. THE REAL VALUE IS IN RECOGNISING WHERE A TEAM IS IN THE DEVELOPMENTAL STAGE PROCESS, AND ASSISTING THE TEAM TO ENTER A STAGE CONSISTENT WITH THE COLLABORATIVE WORK PUT FORTH. IN THE REAL WORLD, TEAMS ARE OFTEN FORMING AND CHANGING, AND EACH TIME THAT HAPPENS, THEY CAN MOVE TO A DIFFERENT TUCKMAN STAGE. A GROUP MIGHT BE HAPPILY NORMING OR PERFORMING, BUT A NEW MEMBER MIGHT FORCE THEM BACK INTO STORMING, OR A TEAM MEMBER MAY MISS MEETINGS CAUSING THE TEAM TO FALL BACK INTO STORMING. PROJECT GUIDES WILL BE READY FOR THIS, AND WILL HELP THE TEAM GET BACK TO PERFORMING AS QUICKLY AS POSSIBLE.





# 1 FORMING



High dependence on the leader for guidance and direction. Individual roles and responsibilities are unclear. Processes are often ignored. While people are friendly, they are sizing up one another, thinking about who will lead, who will follow, who will cooperate, and who will operate from self-interest.

## OBSERVABLE BEHAVIORS

POLITENESS

TENTATIVE JOINING

ORIENTING WITH OTHERS PERSONALLY

AVOIDS CONTROVERSY

CLIQUEs MAY FORM

NEED FOR SAFETY AND APPROVAL

ATTEMPTS TO DEFINE TASKS, PROCESSES, AND HOW IT WILL BE DECIDED HERE

DISCUSSION OF PROBLEMS NOT RELEVANT TO THE TASK



# 2 STORMING



Decisions don't come easily within a group. Team members vie for position as they attempt to establish themselves in relation to the other team members and the leader, who may receive challenges from team members. Clarity of purpose increases but plenty of uncertainties persist. The team needs to be focused on its goals to avoid becoming distracted by relationships and emotional issues.

## OBSERVABLE BEHAVIORS

ARGUING AMONG MEMBERS

VYING FOR LEADERSHIP

DIFFERENCES IN POINTS OF VIEW AND PERSONAL STYLE ARE EVIDENT

LACK OF ROLE CLARITY

TEAM ORGANIZING ITSELF

POWER STRUGGLES AND CLASHES

LACK OF CONSENSUS-SEEKING BEHAVIORS

LACK OF PROGRESS

ESTABLISHES UNREALISTIC GOALS

CONCERN OVER EXCESSIVE WORK





# 3 NORMING



Agreement and consensus form within the team. Roles and responsibilities are clear and accepted. Big decisions are made by group agreement. Commitment and unity are strong. The team may engage in fun and social activities. There is general respect for the leader and some of the leadership is more shared by the team.

## OBSERVABLE BEHAVIORS

- PROCESSES AND PROCEDURES ARE AGREED UPON
- COMFORTABLE WITH RELATIONSHIPS
- FOCUS AND ENERGY ON TASKS
- EFFECTIVE CONFLICT RESOLUTION SKILLS
- SINCERE ATTEMPT TO MAKE CONSENSUAL DECISIONS
- BALANCED INFLUENCE, SHARED PROBLEM SOLVING
- DEVELOP TEAM ROUTINES
- SETS AND ACHIEVES TASK MILESTONES



# 4 PERFORMING



The team is more strategically aware; the team clearly knows why it's doing what it is doing. The team has a shared vision and is able to stand on its own feet with no interference from the leader. There is focus on overachieving goals.

Disagreements occur, but now they are resolved within the team. Team members look after each other.

**OBSERVABLE BEHAVIORS**

**FULLY FUNCTIONAL TEAMS**

**ROLES ARE CLEARER**

**TEAM DEVELOPS INDEPENDENCE**

**TEAM ABLE TO ORGANIZE ITSELF**

**FLEXIBLE MEMBERS FUNCTION WELL INDIVIDUALLY, IN SUBGROUPS OR AS A TEAM**

**BETTER UNDERSTAND EACH OTHER'S STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES AND INSIGHTS**

**INTO GROUP PROCESSES**





# 5 ADJOURNING

Bruce Tuckman refined his theory around 1975 and added a fifth stage, Adjourning. Adjourning is the break up of the group, hopefully when the task is completed successfully, its purpose fulfilled; everyone can move on to new things, feeling good about what's been achieved. From an organizational perspective, recognition of and sensitivity to people's vulnerabilities is helpful, particularly if members of the group have been closely bonded and feel a sense of insecurity or threat from this change.

**OBSERVABLE BEHAVIORS**

**VISIBLE SIGNS OF GRIEF**

**MOMENTUM SLOWS DOWN**

**RESTLESS BEHAVIOR**

**BURSTS OF EXTREME ENERGY USUALLY FOLLOWED BY LACK OF ENERGY**