Stages of Group Development / Tuckman's Stages

Reference

Website: http://coral.wcupa.edu/tuckmanstages.htm

Tuckman, B.W. (1965). Developmental sequences in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 6396, 384-399.

Tuckman, B. & Jensen, M. (1977) Stages of small group development. Group and Organizational Studies, 2, 419-427.

Forming: The initial forming stage is the process of putting the structure of the team together. Members are oriented to the group structure and one another. Team members feel ambiguous and conflict is avoided at all costs due to the need to be accepted into the group. Team members look to a group leader for direction and guidance.

Observable Behaviors	Feelings & Thoughts	Team Needs	Leadership Required
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	Many feel excited, optimistic, and full of anticipation Others may feel suspicious, fearful, and anxious working with others What is expected of me? Why are they here? Uncertainty & Apprehension How can I please the leader or other members?	Team mission and vision Establish specific objectives and tasks Identify roles and responsibilities of team members Establish team ground rules Team member expectations Operational guidelines for team Early achievement/success	Instructors provide structure & task direction Allow for get-acquainted time Create an atmosphere of confidence and optimism Invest in personal relationships Call out sarcasm and passive aggressive attacks Team members believe an appointed leader necessary to make decisions One-way communication from leader to team-members

To advance from this stage to the next stage, each member must relinquish the comfort zone of non-threatening topics and risk the possibility of conflict.

Storming: This stage begins to occur as the process of organizing tasks and processes surface interpersonal conflicts. Leadership, power, control, and structural issues dominate this stage.

Observable Behaviors	Feelings & Thoughts	Team Needs	Leadership Required
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 Push back against established leadership Alliances form in group	Feel Defensive Confusion, loss of interest can result Resistance to tasks Fluctuations in attitude about the team Unsure if I agree with teams mission and purpose Question the wisdom of team members Increase in tension and jealousy Unsure about my personal influence and freedom in the team We are not getting anywhere Is this group safe?	Inter & intra personal relationships Identify stylistic and personal differences Effective listening. Giving and receiving feedback Healthy conflict emerges Clarify and understand the team's purpose Reestablish roles and ground rules How to deal with 'some' team members violating team codes of conduct Receiving feedback from instructors	Instructors acknowledge conflict Get members to assume more task responsibility Concept of Shared Leadership emerges Teach about negotiation and conflict resolution methods Offer support and praise Team members begin consulting one another – shared leadership emerging but have difficulty with decision making Fair amount of clarifying, persuading and explaining Turn members back toward the group vs. allowing to walk away Ask helpful questions to clarify

In order to progress to the next stage, group members must move from a "testing and proving" mentality to a problem-solving mentality. The most important trait in helping teams move to the next stage is the ability of team members to listen to their team mates - what are they trying to say?

Norming: In this stage, team members are creating new ways of doing and being together. As the group develops cohesion, leadership changes from 'one' teammate in charge to shared leadership. Team members learn they have to trust one another for shared leadership to be effective. Group begins functioning as one unit.

Observable Behaviors	Feelings & Thoughts	Team Needs	Leadership Required
Processes and procedures are agreed upon	Sense of belonging to a team	Develop a decision making process	Shared leadership
Comfortable w/ relationships	Confidence is high	Be prepared to offer ideas and suggestions	Give feedback and support
Focus and energy on tasks	Team members feel a new ability to express criticism constructively	Problem solving is shared	Allow for less structure
Effective conflict resolution			Promotes team interaction
Sincere attempt to make consensual decisions	Acceptance of all members in the team	Utilizing all resources to support the team effort	Asks for contributions from all team members
Balanced influence, shared problem solving	General sense of trust	Team members take responsibility in shared leadership skills	Collaboration becomes clearer
Develop team routines	Assured that everything is going to work out okay		Encouraging others in making decision
Sets and achieves task milestones	Freedom to express and contribute	Receiving Feedback from instructors	Continues to build strong relationships
Group & individual initiative vs. dependence on leaders		Affirmation of effective group behaviors	Celebrate accomplishments
			Give additional challenges to help the group continue to grow

The major task function is the data flow between group members: They share feelings and ideas, solicit and give feedback to one another, and explore actions related to the task. Creativity is high. Collaboration emerges during this stage when team work ethic and shared leadership is understood.

The major drawback of the norming stage is that members may begin to fear the inevitable future breakup of the team; they may resist change of any sort.

Performing: True interdependence is the norm of this stage of group development. Team is flexible as members adapt to meet the needs of other team members. This is a highly productive stage both personally and professionally.

Observable Behaviors	Feelings & Thoughts	Team Needs	Leadership Required
Fully functional teams	Empathy for one another	Project guides assure team is moving in collaborative direction	Shared Leadership being practiced
Roles are clearer	High commitment. Begin understanding collaborative work ethic	Maintain team flexibility	Observing-Inquiring-Fulfilling-team needs
Team develops independence	Tight bonds emerge	Measure knowledge performance	Collaborative efforts among team members
Team able to organize itself	Fun and excitement		Instructors step back and provide little direction
Flexible members function well individually, in subgroups or as a team	Lots of personal development and creativity	Provide information Giving and Receiving Feedback and Dialogue with instructors	Team members offer positive reinforcement and support
Better understand each other's strengths and weaknesses and insights into group processes	General sense of satisfaction	Harder challenges	Share new information
Group fully functions without group leader	Continual discovery of how to sustain feelings of momentum and enthusiasm		

The Performing stage is not reached by all groups. If group members are able to evolve to stage four, their capacity, range, and depth of personal relations expand to true interdependence. In this stage, people can work independently, in subgroups, or as a total unit with equal competencies.

Adjourning: In this stage typically team members are ready to leave (course termination) causing significant change to the team structure, membership, or purpose and the team. They experience change and transition. While the group continues to perform productively they also need time to manage their feelings of termination and transition.

Observable Behaviors	Feelings & Thoughts	Team Needs	Leadership Required
Visible signs of grief	Sadness	Evaluate the efforts of the team	Instructors help team develop options for termination
Momentum slows down	Humor (that to outsiders could appear cruel)	Tie up loose ends and tasks	Good listening
Restless Behavior	Glad it is over – relief		Reflection and carry forth collaborative learning to next opportunity
Bursts of extreme energy usually followed by lack of energy		Recognize and reward team efforts	

The final stage, adjourning, involves the termination of task behaviors and disengagement from relationships. A planned conclusion usually includes recognition for participation and achievement and an opportunity for members to say personal goodbyes. Concluding a group can create some apprehension – in effect, a minor crisis. The termination of the group is a regressive movement from giving up control to giving up inclusion in the group.