BMP #1

Team Building & Team Dynamics: The Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing Model
Executive Summary

This page shows a snapshot of what this model is for and how it rates in terms of Efficiency (is it quick and easy to implement?), Effectiveness (does it get the desired results?) and Difficulty (how easy the model is to understand?)

Subject Area:
Team Building

Efficiency:

Effectiveness:

Difficulty:

Abstract:
A very useful model, simple to understand and use in any team building situation. This tool should be used to help understanding of team behaviour and development and therefore achieve better progress.
This slide pack contains a high level overview of Tuckman’s Stages of Group Development Model along with brief notes on application and observations.

1. Introduction
2. Stages of Team Building
3. Stage Overviews
4. Application of the Model
5. Questions & Actions
Introduction

- First proposed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965
- Phases are necessary & inevitable in order for the team to grow
- Other models have since been based on this (Tannenbaum & Schmidt Continuum, Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership model, Rickards and Moger, White-Fairhurst TPR Model, Colin Carnall's "coping cycle" and the Comfort Zone Theory)
- 5th ‘Adjourning’ phase added around 1975
Stages of Team Building

- Forming
- Storming
- Norming
- Performing
- Adjourning

Time

Conflict
Stage Overview: Forming

- This is usually a comfortable stage to be in.
- Behaviour is generally driven by a desire to be accepted by others.
- Conflict, issues & feelings generally avoided.
- High dependence on leader for guidance and direction – leader should be directive.
- Focus on being busy with routines.
- Individuals gather information and impressions.
- Little agreement on team aims other than received from leader.
- Individual roles and responsibilities are unclear.
- Not much actually gets done.
- Leader must be prepared to answer lots of questions about the team's purpose, objectives and external relationships.
Stage Overview: Forming (continued)

- Processes can often be ignored.
- Members may test tolerance of system and leader.
- They may be motivated but are usually relatively uninformed of the issues and objectives of the team.
- Team members are usually on their best behaviour but very focused on themselves.
- Mature members begin to model appropriate behaviour even at this early phase.
- Sharing the knowledge of "Teams - Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing" helpful to the team.
- Members get to know one another, exchange some personal information, and make new friends.
- Also a good opportunity to see how each member works and how they respond to pressure.
Stage Overview: Storming

- Different ideas compete for consideration.
- Issues addressed such as what problems they are really supposed to solve, how they will function independently and together and what leadership model they will accept.
- Team members confront each other's ideas and perspectives.
- Some team members may focus on small details to evade real issues.
- The storming stage is necessary to the growth of the team.
- It can be contentious, unpleasant and even painful to members of the team who are averse to conflict.
- Tolerance of each team member and their differences should be emphasized - without tolerance and patience the team may fail.
Stage Overview: Storming (continued)

- This phase can become destructive to the team and will lower motivation if allowed to get out of control.
- In some cases storming can be resolved quickly. In others, the team never leaves this stage.
- The maturity of some team members usually determines whether the team will ever move out of this stage.
- Supervisors of the team during this phase may be more accessible, but tend to remain directive in their guidance of decision-making and professional behavior.
- There are different schools of thought as to whether higher involvement from the leader can help or hinder at this stage (consider re-forming theory).
- The team members will therefore resolve their differences and members will be able to participate with one another more comfortably.
Stage Overview: Storming (continued)

- The ideal is that they will not feel that they are being judged, and will therefore share their opinions and views.
- Decisions don't come easily within group.
- Team members vie for position as they attempt to establish themselves in relation to other team members and the leader, who might receive challenges from team members.
- Clarity of purpose increases but plenty of uncertainties persist.
- Cliques and factions form and there may be power struggles.
- The team needs to be focused on its goals to avoid becoming distracted by relationships and emotional issues.
- Compromises may be required to enable progress.
- Leader may need to use more coaching than direction in this stage.
Stage Overview: Norming

- At this stage the team has one goal and a shared plan.
- Some may have to give up their own ideas and agree with others in order to make the team function.
- Team members take responsibility and have the ambition to work for the success of the team's goals.
- Agreement and consensus is largely formed among team, who respond well to facilitation by leader.
- Roles and responsibilities are clear and accepted.
- Big decisions are made by group agreement.
- Smaller decisions may be delegated to individuals or small sub-teams.
- Commitment and unity is strong.
- The team may engage in fun and social activities.
- The team discusses and develops its processes and working style.
Stage Overview: Performing

- It is possible for some teams to reach the performing stage.
- These high-performing teams are able to function as a unit as they find ways to get the job done smoothly and effectively without inappropriate conflict or the need for external supervision.
- By this time, they are motivated and knowledgeable.
- The team members are now competent, autonomous and able to handle the decision-making process without supervision.
- Dissent is expected and allowed as long as it is channeled through means acceptable to the team.
- Supervisors of the team during this phase are almost always participative.
- The team will make most of the necessary decisions.
- Even the most high-performing teams will revert to earlier stages in certain circumstances.
Stage Overview: Performing (continued)

- Many long-standing teams go through these cycles many times as they react to changing circumstances.

- For example, a change in leadership may cause the team to revert to *storming* as the new people challenge the existing norms and dynamics of the team.

- The team is more strategically aware; the team knows clearly why it is doing what it is doing.

- The team has a shared vision and is able to stand on its own feet with no interference or participation from the leader.

- There is a focus on over-achieving goals, and the team makes most of the decisions against criteria agreed with the leader.
Stage Overview: Performing (continued)

• The team has a high degree of autonomy.
• Disagreements occur but now they are resolved within the team positively and necessary changes to processes and structure are made by the team.
• The team is able to work towards achieving the goal, and also to attend to relationship, style and process issues along the way. Team members look after each other.
• The team requires delegated tasks and projects from the leader.
• The team does not need to be instructed or assisted.
• Team members might ask for assistance from the leader with personal and interpersonal development.
• Leader delegates and oversees.
Stage Overview: Additional Stages

- **Adjourning**: added by Tuckman c1975: this stage describes the eventual break-up of the group, hopefully when the purpose of the group is completed successfully.

- **De-forming**: Another term for Adjourning.

- **Mourning**: another term for Adjourning which may be used more in relation to the feelings of the group particularly if members of the group have been closely bonded and feel a sense of insecurity or threat from this change.

- **Re-forming**: Timothy Biggs suggested that an additional stage be added of Norming after Forming and renaming the traditional Norming stage Re-Norming.
Application of the Model

· **Suitability**
  - This model applies to all Team Building situations.
  - The model applies in any industry sector.
  - The model is not time-bound.

· **Use of the model**
  - The model can be used to help the team reach and sustain high performance as soon as possible.
  - To help the team most effectively using the model, a different approach is needed at each stage.
    - **Identify** which stage of the team development the team is at from the descriptions above.
    - **Consider** what needs to be done to move towards the Performing stage, and what you can do to help the team do that effectively.
    - **Review** where the team is, and adjust your behaviour and leadership approach to suit the stage your team has reached.
Application of The Model – The Changing Leadership Role

Forming
- Guarded
- Time

Storming
- Confront

Norming
- Resolve

Performing
- Trust

Adjourning
- Regret

Team

Leader / Manager

High Direction
- High Support
- High Direction
- High Support
- Less Direction
- Self Support
- High Direction
- High Support
- Leader / Manager

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Application of the Model – Further Practical Tips

- **Be Understanding**: Remember you've got to go through the "Forming", "Storming" and "Norming" stages before the team can Perform.

- **Schedule Accordingly**: Plan for things to take longer through the tougher stages. If coaching is needed then time should be allocated to this.

- **Manage Expectations**: Be realistic when considering how much progress should be made by when and measure success against realistic goals.

- **Communicate Progress**: The best way to help a team grow and thrive is with good, consistent and clear communication. Poor communication particularly in the “Storming” phase can be disastrous as the cracks in the communication will be exaggerated.

- **Set Appropriate Targets**: Having appropriate targets or 'markers' along the way can help a team see it's progress and make the effort worthwhile. This avoids the perception of having done lots of work or lots of time passing by without really getting anywhere.

- **Don't Abuse the Model**: Use this approach, but don't try to force situations to fit it – e.g. don't use the “Storming” stage as an excuse for bad behaviour.
Questions & Actions

• Think of past team situations you've been involved and consider how they relate to this model and how quickly you moved through the stages in each different situation.
  • (You should find that some teams you were in reached the performing stage quicker than others – perhaps some didn't reach the performing stage at all!)
• Think of teams you are in now – what stage are you at?
• Use your understanding of this model (and the advice on how to apply it) to provide context for any team situation you are faced with.
  • **Patience**: the model can help you to be more patient with certain situations when you understand the necessary evolution that a team must go through.
  • **Productivity**: being able to understand team dynamics via the model may help to resolve issues and conflicts quicker and improve productivity.
  • **Performance**: now you have the understanding via the model of what it takes to build a high-performing team – so use it wisely!