

Lecture 4b: Teaming



Online Lecture - *Group Performance*

As a leader, organizing and leading a team of people is a central task of effectiveness. However, the **process** of group development is often not under the leader's control. The Tuckman model of group performance helps us understand why it takes time for teams to get going. It also help create observable milestones for leaders so they plan to maximize their teams effectiveness as well as their own.

The Tuckman model is composed of 4 stages. The fifth stage simply means ending the group. Below is an excellent (but edited) wrap-up of the model from Coaching sources by Emma-Louise Elsey.

1. Forming

Forming is where people get to know each other, and the task at hand. What are everyone's strengths, weaknesses? When can they be relied upon and when not? What quirks do our fellow team members have? What are we working towards and why?

At this stage people **avoid conflict and "play nice"** with each other because they want **to be accepted into the group**. The group is learning about the objectives and goals - getting a feel for the work that must be done together. People tend to focus on practical details - who, what, when and where and work reasonably independently at this stage - while they learn where they and everyone else fits into the team.

This **stage can be frustrating** for many as there is a **large focus on information gathering** - which takes time - and actions are postponed until the direction is clear.

ROLE OF THE LEADER: A leader is essential at this stage to help the team **figure out objectives and team roles** and responsibilities. The **leadership may be quite directive** at this stage.

2. Storming

As people begin to feel safer, they will **push the boundaries** set up by the team in the forming stage - and **conflicts may begin to erupt**. Clashes occur due to **different personalities** and **differences in working styles** - the ways things get done. Resentments and irritations that were buried in the last stage erupt and **negatively effect the team's performance**.

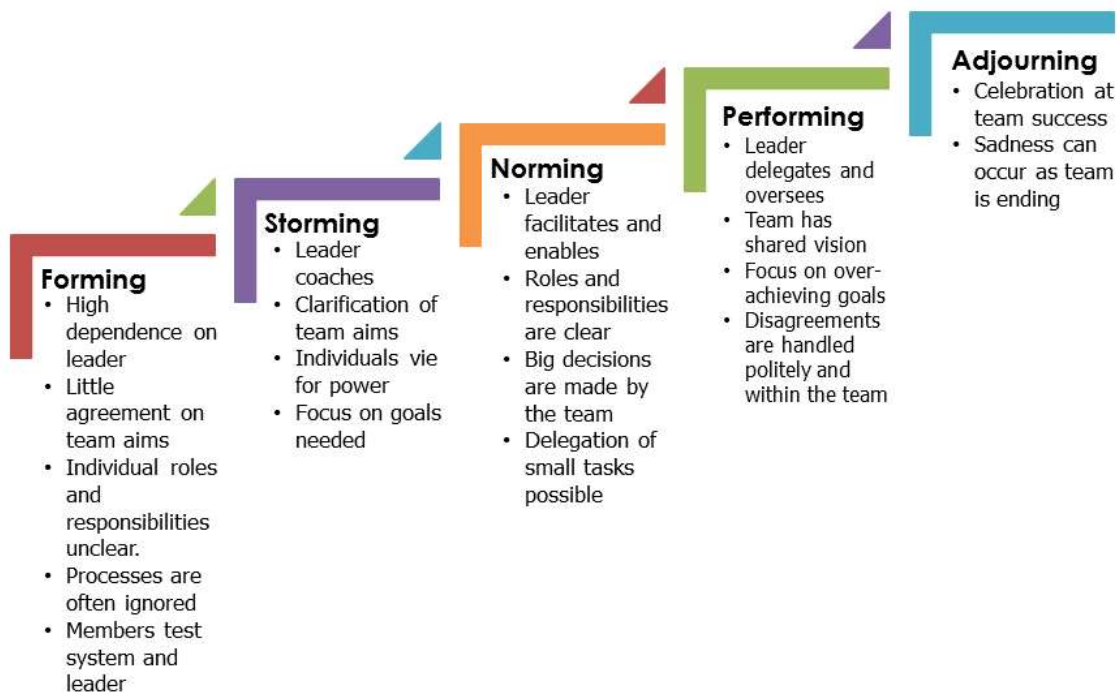
The **team must come together to decide how to move forwards** and solve the inevitable challenges and misunderstandings that come out as the task progresses. **People are competing**,

but beginning to open up to each other too. As they do this, the team begins to **establish how they will work together going forwards**.

NOTE: Some teams get stuck in this stage. Team members **may sabotage individual and group goals** through **unresolved conflicts**. Team members must **learn it is safe to share differing opinions and ideas** and it can be a very challenging stage for people who are conflict averse. It's great when more experienced team members model good team behaviour.

ROLE OF THE LEADER: The **leader will need to be very accessible** during this phase. Team members may challenge the leader and/or **jostle for position**. The leader needs to make sure that **team members are clear on their responsibilities** and tasks to keep the team on track. **Individual coaching may be needed** if team members are difficult or not completing their tasks. In addition, the **leader may need to step into a more directive role** to ensure the team remains professional - and resolves conflict in a non-judgemental and healthy way.

Tuckman's Team Development Model



3. Norming

Norming is where the plan comes together. During this stage the team **agrees the plan, timelines and who** should contribute what to the plan **according to their skills**. Some team members **may need to let go of 'their' ideas** and make **sacrifices for the greater good** of the team. Also, team members begin to **clearly see others' strengths and accept their weaknesses**.

The team will also be **developing trust - helping each other and asking for help**, and many **teams are socialising** with each other by this stage. **Storming can still occur** - especially

when there is change or stress on the team, but in general the team is beginning to work effectively.

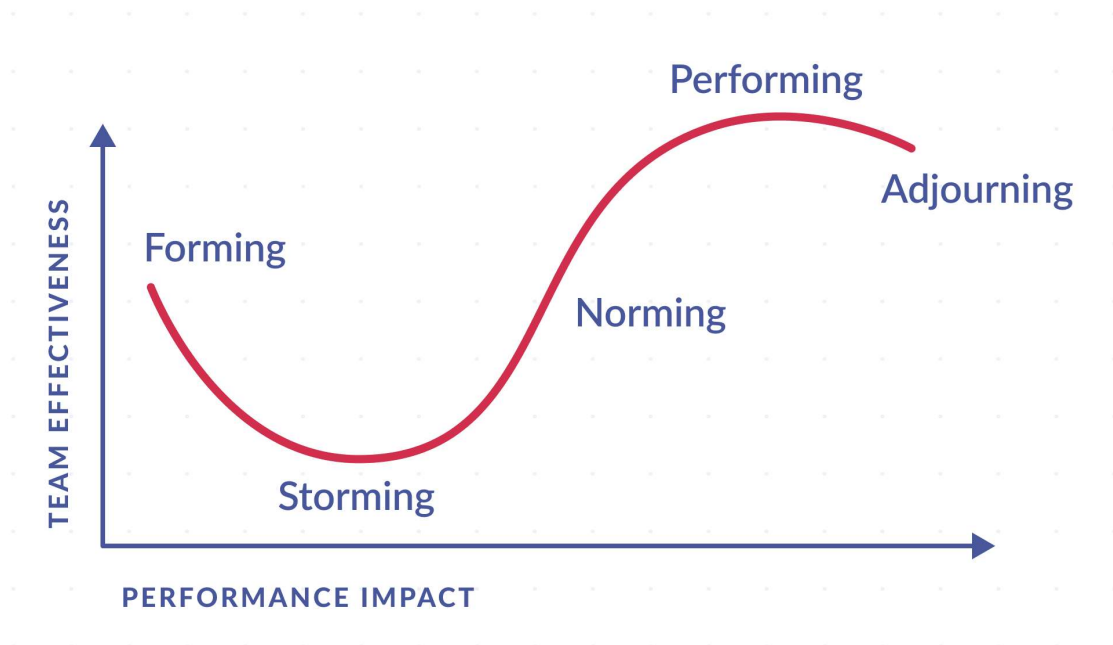
ROLE OF THE LEADER: The norming stage can be sped up with **helpful facilitation** from the leader - helping the team come to decisions for themselves and **learning to complete their tasks as a unit**. The leader should be **asking questions (coaching) and not directing**. The leader can also organize socialising events to **encourage healthy team-bonding** that moves a group into the performing stage.

WATCH OUT FOR: It can be **difficult at this stage for concerns and new ideas to be raised**, as people are keen to leave behind the uncertainty and unpleasantness of the "Storming" phase. There is a pressure to move forwards and get things done and **leaders must remain open to new ideas and ensure that conflicts are aired** and dealt with.

4. Performing

In short, the team is now performing. The team is **stable and the goals are clear**. The team has developed processes that work for the team and people follow them. Performing teams get the job done with **minimal supervision and conflict**. People are **motivated** and **competently get the job done**. Conflicts are no longer threatening and **different perspectives are seen as valuable**. When a team fully meets this stage, it is a high-performing team.

ROLE OF THE LEADER: For the team to perform at its best, a good leader will **encourage creative conflicts** and help **celebrate and reward achievements**. It empowers the team if the leader steps back once a team is performing. The high performing team is largely autonomous and a good leader will now be **delegating, developing team members and maintaining a visioning** role.



5. Mourning or Adjourning

The fifth stage of the model is called **adjourning, sometimes called mourning**. This stage is about **wrapping up the task** and the **team breaking up**. It **may be a difficult stage for some** team members who enjoy the routine, or who have made good friendships. A **leader can help** by working with team members to **plan their futures and what comes next**.

Lecture, Book, or Article Title with link

There exists an alternative model to group processes and team development. It is definitely worthwhile to read the original study. Please read : [**Gersick's Punctuated Equilibrium**](#)

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Optional Reading: [**Chapter 12 - Team.pdf**](#)

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