

Stages of Group Development

Groups have individuals to achieve goals of both individuals and groups. Group development is necessary to gain objectives and this includes some essential stages as recognised by Tuckman in 1965.

Forming

In this stage, most group members are positive and polite. Some are anxious, as they haven't fully understood what work the group will do. Others are simply excited about the task ahead. As leader, one plays a dominant role at this stage, because group members' roles and responsibilities aren't clear. This stage can last for some time, as people start to work together, and as they make an effort to get to know their new colleagues.

Storming

Next, the group moves into the storming phase, where people start to push against the boundaries established in the forming stage. This is the stage where many groups fail. Storming often starts where there is a conflict between group members' natural working styles. People may work in different ways for all sorts of reasons but, if differing working styles cause unforeseen problems, they may become frustrated. Storming can also happen in other situations. For example, group members may challenge one's authority. Or, if one has not defined clearly how the group will work, people may feel overwhelmed by their workload, or they could be uncomfortable with the approach one is using. Some may question the worth of the group's goal, and they may resist taking on tasks. Group members who stick with the task at hand may experience stress, particularly as they don't have the support of established processes, or strong relationships with their colleagues.

Norming

Gradually, the group moves into the norming stage. This is when people start to resolve their differences, appreciate colleagues' strengths, and respect your authority as a leader. Now that group members know one another better, they may socialize together, and they are able to ask one another for help and provide constructive feedback. People develop a stronger commitment to the group goal, and start to see good progress towards it. There is often a

prolonged overlap between storming and norming, because, as new tasks come up, the group may lapse back into behavior from the storming stage.

Performing

The group reaches the performing stage, when hard work leads, without friction, to the achievement of the group's goal. The structures and processes that one has set up support this well. As leader, one can delegate much of his work, and he can concentrate on developing group members. It feels easy to be part of the team at this stage, and people who join or leave would not disrupt performance.

Adjourning

Many groups will reach this stage eventually. For example, project groups exist for only a fixed period, and even permanent teams may be disbanded through organizational restructuring. Group members who like routine, or who have developed close working relationships with colleagues, may find this stage difficult, particularly if their future now looks uncertain.