



# Tuckman's Model of Team Dynamics

## Forming or Stage 1

The first stage is when the team is formed and members meet.

### Members

What to expect in this stage:

- Most team members are positive and polite.
- Some are anxious, as they haven't fully understood what work the team will do.
- There may be confusion about their role.
- Some are excited about the task ahead; some not.
- They learn what the team opportunities and challenges will be.
- Members will agree on goals and assign actions for work.

### Leader(s)

What to expect in this stage:

- Leaders play a dominant role at this stage, because team members' roles and responsibilities aren't clear.
- Ground rules and team guidelines need to be established.
- The leadership will define the project and process.

This stage can last for some time, as people start to work together and some will work independently with guidance. There should be opportunities and efforts to get to know their colleagues.

## Storming or Stage 2

Low trust among team members is an evident indicator of this stage. It is where people start to test the boundaries established in the forming stage. Storming often starts where there is a conflict between team members' working styles or disagreement over how to interpret the group's mission.

## **Members**

What to expect in this stage:

- a) More willingness to share individual expression of ideas (which may cause open conflict between members).
- b) Members tend to focus on details rather than the issues and compete for influence.
- c) Team members may challenge your authority, or jockey for position as their roles are clarified.
- d) If you haven't defined clearly how the team will work, people may feel overwhelmed by their workload.
- e) Team members may be uncomfortable with the approach you're using.
- f) Some may question the worth of the team's goal.
- g) Some may resist taking on tasks.
- h) Some may experience stress, particularly as they don't have the support of established processes, or strong relationships with their colleagues.

## **Leader(s)**

What to expect in this stage:

- a) Identify a solid leadership style and decision methodology.
- b) Stress tolerance and patience between members.
- c) Guide the team process towards:
  - ✓ clear goals
  - ✓ defined roles
  - ✓ acceptable team behavior
  - ✓ mutual feedback process for team communication

This is the stage where many teams fail. The storming stage makes a group stronger by testing its ability to address conflicts and disagreements within the group. The length of the storming stage will depend on a group's ability to meet these challenges.

## **Norming or Stage 3**

Gradually, the team moves into the norming stage. This is when people start to resolve their differences, appreciate colleagues' strengths, and respect your authority as a leader. You should start to see good progress towards goals.

There is often a prolonged overlap between storming and norming, because, as new tasks come up, the team may lapse back into behavior from the storming stage.

## **Members**

What to expect in this stage:

- a) Increased socialization with members

- b) Ability to ask one another for assistance and feedback
- c) Increase in open communication
- d) Stronger commitment and motivation toward goals
- e) Develop work habits that support group rules and values.
- f) Utilize established tools and methods.
- g) Behaviors and relationships improve
- h) Become group focused

### **Leader(s)**

What to expect in this stage:

- a) Encourage participation and professionalism
- b) Use positive feedback to continue growth and development of team
- c) Plan group learning and additional training
- d) Stay consistent to avoid relapse to “Storming”

Group member roles and responsibilities are clearly established during the norming stage. The members agree on the rules, values and behaviors that will lead to success. As more and more issues are resolved, motivation levels tend to increase and the group starts to become more effective. The norming stage is therefore a good opportunity to achieve performance goals.

### **Performing or Stage 4**

This is the peak performance stage. This stage shows high levels of loyalty, participation, motivation, and group decision-making. It feels easy to be part of the team at this stage, and people who join or leave won't disrupt performance.

### **Members**

What to expect in this stage:

- a) Highly cohesive
- b) Increase in knowledge sharing and cross-training
- c) Interdependence increases
- d) Self-directing of plans and strategy to meet their goals and carry out work.
- e) Personal growth becomes apparent

### **Leader(s)**

What to expect in this stage:

- a) Role changes to facilitator rather than leader
- b) Encourage sharing
- c) Delegate additional work

- d) Concentrate on developing team members individual skills
- e) Allow new leaders to emerge and practice leading
- f) Stay consistent to avoid relapse to previous stages

The group is mature and able to solve problems with minimal supervision. Group members are committed to work cooperatively to achieve the group's goals. The group routinely accepts delegated tasks and the members stay focused on fulfilling the group's mission. A cohesive group still has conflicts and disagreements, but it can resolve them with minimal disruption to the group's activities.

### **Adjourning or Stage 5**

Many teams will reach this stage eventually. Some teams exist for only a fixed period, and even permanent teams may be disbanded through organizational restructuring. Team members who like routine, or who have developed close working relationships with colleagues, may find this stage difficult.

#### **Members**

What to expect in this stage:

- a) celebrate and recognize individual and group achievement
- b) some mourning over the dissolving of the team relationship
- c) planning for a change in individual work requirements

#### **Leader(s)**

What to expect in this stage:

- a) celebrate and recognize individual and group achievement
- b) emphasize organization gratitude

Time and effort are required to move through the various team development stages. Every team will go through all the stages. However, the timeline of each stage may be different for each team depending on the individual members and their skill levels, the work the team is expected to accomplish, and team leadership during each stage.