

# **Stages of Group Development**

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# **Stages of Group Development**



The model of group development was first proposed by Bruce Tuckman in 1965.

He maintained that these phases are all necessary and inevitable in order for:

- ▶ the team to grow
- ▶ to face up to challenges
- ▶ to tackle problems
- ▶ to find solutions
- ▶ to plan work
- ▶ and to deliver results.



## **The Five-Stage Model of Group Development Consists of the following stages:**

1. Forming Stage
2. Storming Stage
3. Norming Stage
4. Performing Stage
5. Adjourning Stage

# FORMING STAGE

**The first stage in group development, characterized by much uncertainty.**

**In this, the team is formed and members meet. They learn what the team opportunities and challenge will be.**

**Members will agree on goals and assign actions for work and ground rules or team guidelines are established.**

**At the start, the team leader may be a member of the group, a supervisor, a manager, or a consultant who will facilitate the team-building process. Leadership will help the team to define their processes. At this stage, the leader needs to be directive and understand the requirements for team training.**

**This stage is complete when the members have begun to think of themselves as a part of a group.**

# STORMING STAGE

The second stage in group development, characterized by intragroup conflict.

During the second stage, individual expression of ideas occurs and there is open conflict between members. Members tend to focus on details rather than the issues and compete for influence.

Low trust among team members is an evident indicator of this stage. The team needs to select their desired leadership style and decision methodology.

The team leader can help by stressing tolerance and patience between members. The leader should guide the team process towards clear goals, defined roles, acceptable team behavior, and a mutual feedback process for team communication.

When this stage is complete, there will be a relatively clear hierarchy of leadership within the group.

# NORMING STAGE

The third stage in group development, characterized by close relationships and cohesiveness.

In the third stage, the team develops work habits that support group rules and values. They use established tools and methods; exhibit good behaviors; mutual trust, motivation, and open communication increase; positive teamwork and group focus are apparent.

The team relationships grow and individual characteristics are understood and appropriately utilized. The team leader continues to encourage participation and professionalism among the team members.

This stage is complete when the group structure solidifies and the group has assimilated a common set of expectations of what defines correct member behavior.

# PERFORMING STAGE

The fourth stage in group development, when the group is fully functional.

The fourth stage shows high levels of loyalty, participation, motivation, and group decision-making. Knowledge sharing, cross-training, and interdependence increases.

Team is self-directing in development of plans and strategy to meet their goals and carry out work. Personal growth and sharing is encouraged throughout membership. The leader becomes a facilitator aiding the team in communication processes and helping if they revert to a prior stage.

Group energy has moved from getting to know and understand each other to performing the task at hand.

Note: For permanent work groups, performing is the last stage in group development.



# ADJOURNING STAGE

The final stage in group development for temporary groups, characterized by concern with wrapping up activities rather than performance.

For project teams, temporary committees, or task forces coming to an end, there will be a finalizing stage as they celebrate and recognize group achievement. Then some mourning over the dissolving of the team relationship and begin planning for the change in individual work requirements.

During this stage, leadership needs to emphasize organization gratitude and both team and individual recognition. For continuous work teams, there may be a higher performance level as they develop and transform as individuals and reform into revised teams. It is important to note that continuous work teams may revert to prior stages when new people are added to the team.