**Stages of Team Work**

Developing and forming a team takes time as you establish trusted relationships and team goals and norms. Teams go through recognizable stages, which psychologist Bruce Tuckman identifies 5 Stages of Team Development, forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. Understanding the stages helps to normalize the process and possible barriers of your team's development.
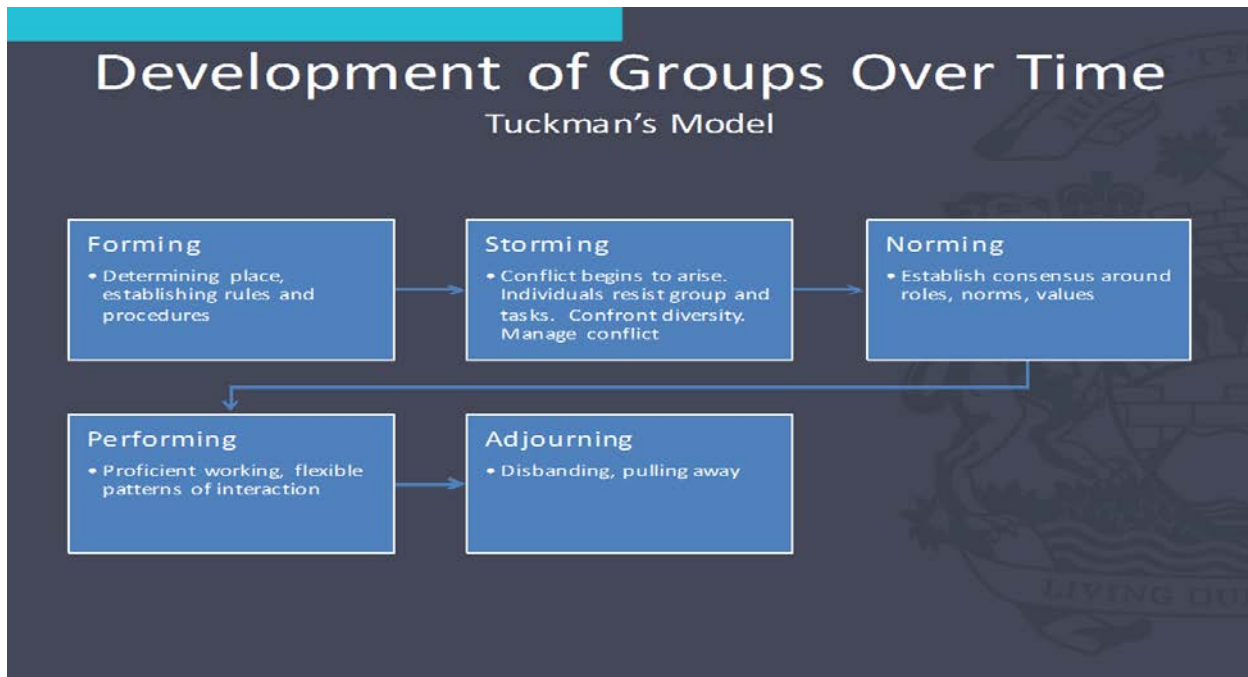
Forming

The forming stage group members rely on safe behaviour, with a desire for acceptance. They gather impressions and data about the similarities and differences amongst team members.

Serious topics and feelings may be avoided and the major task is orientating. The team is orientating to the assignment and task as well as to one another. Teams discuss the scope of the task, how to approach it, concerns and next steps. To emerge from this stage to the next each member must relinquish the comfort of non- threatening topics and risk the possibility of conflict.

- Confusion
- Uncertainty
- Assessing the situation
- Testing ground rules
- Feeling out others
- Defining goals

- Getting acquainted
- Establishing rules

Storming

This stage is when team members start to experience some discomfort and challenges. Storming can start when there is a conflict between team members' natural working styles, vision, and team goals.

Storming can also occur if roles and process are not clearly defined, people may feel overwhelmed by the workload, or uncomfortable with the approach that was suggested. The team has an opportunity to address and re-align, however if badly managed this phase can be very destructive for the team.

- Disagreement over priorities
- Struggle for leadership
- Tension
- Hostility
- Clique formation

Norming

The norming phase is when team members start to resolve their differences and appreciate and accept others' strengths and respect and follows the selected process, timelines and roles.

Team members know each other better, offering support and guidance through the process. A foundation of trust is set where team members are able to ask one another for help and provide constructive feedback. There is a deeper commitment to the team goal and task, with progression forward.

There is sometimes an overlap between the storming and norming phase, as new tasks come up, the team may lapse back into behaviours from the storming phase.

- Consensus
- Leadership accepted
- Trust established
- Standards set
- New stable roles
- Co-operation

Performing

The team is starting to perform, collaborating, anticipating and adjusting to change. The work is more efficient and the team is motivated to successfully complete the end goal. There is higher productivity and team cohesion.

- Successful performance
- Flexible, task roles
- Openness
- Helpfulness
- Delusion, disillusion and acceptance

Adjourning

The final stage is when the team is complete and there is disengagement. This stage happens at the end of a project or when organizations and teams are restructured. Team members separate and feelings of pride and accomplishment may be felt. Similar to mourning stage, team members may feel a sense of loss.

- Disengagement
- Anxiety about separation and ending
- Positive feeling towards leader
- Sadness
- Self-evaluation