

Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing and Adjourning

*Managers are people who
do things right,
while leaders are people
who do the right thing.*

– Warren Bennis, Ph.D.
"On Becoming a Leader"

Introduction

A team has “A *small number* of people with *complementary skills* who are committed to a *common purpose*, *performance goals*, and a *common approach* for which they hold themselves *mutually accountable*.”

- ❑ Forming – team members are introduced
 - ❑ Storming – the team transitions from “as is” to “to be”
 - ❑ Norming – the team reaches consensus on the “to be” process
 - ❑ Performing – the team has settled its relationships and expectations
 - ❑ Adjourning – the team shares the improved processes with others
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Staged Development of Teams

- The Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing stages are seemingly obvious but are in fact difficult.
 - Participants want to move to the Performing stage without passing through the first three stages.
 - The Forming stage is relatively easy.
 - The Storming stage is difficult and many times the cause of the team's failure.
 - Performing seems easy once the storming process is complete.
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Staged Development of Teams

- The “Real” problem is how to identify when a stage is complete:
 - The team members agree that the stage is complete?
 - The team coach agrees the stage is complete?
 - The team simply moves on to the next stage?
 - The definition of the “exit criteria” between stages needs to be worked out prior to the team’s reaching the end of the stage.
 - This again seems obvious but is also very difficult.
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Forming

- ❑ The “polite” stage in which the team starts to form.
 - ❑ Everyone is trying to figure out what the team concept is.
 - ❑ Initial “silent” leaders may take the rein.
 - ❑ The team is usually positive – for the most part – for the initial meetings.
 - ❑ No one has offended anyone at this point yet!
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Forming

- Forming includes feelings and behaviors of:
 - Excitement, anticipation, and optimism.
 - Pride in being chosen for the project.
 - A tentative attachment to the team Suspicion and anxiety about the job.
 - Defining the tasks and how they will be accomplished.
 - Determining acceptable group behavior.
 - Deciding what information needs to be gathered.
 - Abstract discussions of the concepts and issues, and for some members, impatience with these discussions. There will be difficulty in identifying some of the relevant problems.
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Forming

- ❑ Because there is so much going on to distract members' attention in the beginning, the team accomplishes little, if anything, that concerns it's project goals. This is perfectly normal.
 - ❑ Exit Criteria?
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Storming

- ❑ The honeymoon is over.
 - ❑ The silent leaders may be clashing for control of the group.
 - ❑ People disagree and may blame the team concept, saying it doesn't work.
 - ❑ Management needs to do a lot of coaching to get people to work past their differences, may take separate 1-on-1's with people.
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Storming

- Storming includes feelings and behaviors of:
 - Resisting the tasks.
 - Resisting quality improvement approaches suggested by other members.
 - Sharp fluctuations in attitude about the team and the project's chance of success.
 - Arguing among members even when they agree on the real issues.
 - Defensiveness, competition, and choosing sides.
 - Questioning the wisdom of those who selected this project and appointed the other members of the team.
 - Establishing unrealistic goals. Disunity, increased tension, and jealousy.
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Storming

- ❑ The above pressures mean that team members have little energy to spend on progressing towards the team's goal.
 - ❑ But they are beginning to understand one another. This phase sometimes takes 3 or 4 meetings before arriving at the Norming phase.
 - ❑ Exit Criteria?
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Norming

- ❑ The team is starting to work well together, and has turned around from the 'storming" phase.
 - ❑ They may start to "brag up" the team concept to others who aren't in the team and will be very positive about their role/team group.
 - ❑ Often, the team will bounce back and forth between "storming" and "norming" when issues crop up.
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Norming

- ❑ Regressions will become fewer and fewer and the team will bounce back to “norming” in a quicker manner as the team “matures.”
 - ❑ The natural leaders at this stage may not be the ones who were visible in stages 1 & 2 (those people may no longer have the “unofficial lead roles” within the team.
 - ❑ This team still takes management direction, but not as much as storming.
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Norming

- Norming includes feelings and behaviors of:
 - An ability to express criticism constructively.
 - Acceptance of membership in the team.
 - An attempt to achieve harmony by avoiding conflict.
 - More friendliness, confiding in each other, and sharing of personal problems.
 - A sense of team cohesion, spirit, and goals.
 - Establishing and maintaining team ground rules and boundaries.
 - As team members begin to work out their differences, they now have more time and energy to spend on the project.
 - Exit Criteria?
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Performing

- ❑ This is the level where the team is a high-performance team.
 - ❑ They can be given new projects and tasks and accomplish them successfully, and very seldom fall back into the “storming” phase.
 - ❑ At this level, the team is taking on new work on their own, and selling it to other teams.
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Performing

- ❑ At this level, the team can usually take on a new member or two with little trouble as far as regressing goes.
 - ❑ They are a complete self-directed team and require little, if any, management direction.
 - ❑ In many organizations, this can take 6 months or longer to reach this state this stage.
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Performing

- Performing includes feelings and behaviors of:
 - Members have insights into personal and group processes, and better understanding of each other's strengths and weakness.
 - Constructive self-change.
 - Ability to prevent or work through group problems.
 - Close attachment to the team.
 - The team is now an effective, cohesive unit. You can tell when your team has reached this stage because you start getting a lot of work done.
 - Exit Criteria?
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Adjourning

- ❑ The team briefs and shares the improved process during this phase.
 - ❑ When the team finally completes that last briefing, there is always a bittersweet sense of accomplishment coupled with the reluctance to say good-bye.
 - ❑ Many relationships formed within these teams continue long after the team disbands.
 - ❑ Exit Criteria?
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Teams versus Work Groups

Roles and Responsibilities

Groups

- Individuals establish a set of behaviors called roles.
- These roles set the expectations governing the relationships between the group members.
- The search for role definition serves as a source of confusion and conflict.

Teams

- Teams have a shared understanding of how to perform their role.
- For example:
 - Time keeper
 - Score keeper
 - Leader
 - Facilitator

Teams versus Work Groups

Identity

Groups

- ❑ Groups do not have a cohesive identity.
- ❑ It is difficult to establish a sense of cohesion that characterizes a team.

Teams

- ❑ Teams have an identity.
 - ❑ A team has a clear understanding about what constitutes the team's "work" and why it is important.
 - ❑ They can describe a picture of what the team needs to achieve, and the norms and values that will guide them.
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Teams versus Work Groups

Cohesion

Groups

- ❑ Groups lack a source of cohesion.
- ❑ Being a member of a group still leaves the person “alone” and an individual.

Teams

- ❑ Teams have an esprit that shows a sense of bonding and camaraderie.
 - ❑ Esprit is the spirit, soul, and state of mind of the team.
 - ❑ It is the overall consciousness of the team that a person identifies with and feels a part of.
 - ❑ Individuals begin using “we” more than “me” or “I.”
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Teams versus Work Groups

Facilitating **Groups**

- Groups tend to get bogged down with trivial issues.

Teams

- Teams use facilitators to keep the team on the right path.
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Teams versus Work Groups

Communication

Groups

- ❑ The communications with a group tend to be centered on individuals.
- ❑ Individual positions are more important than a "team" opinion.
- ❑ Defending one's opinion becomes an end unto itself.

Teams

- ❑ The team is committed to open communication.
 - ❑ Team members feel they can state their opinions, thoughts, and feelings without fear.
 - ❑ Differences of opinion are valued and methods of managing conflict are understood.
 - ❑ Through honest and caring feedback, members are aware of their strengths and weaknesses as team members.
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Teams versus Work Groups

Flexibility

Groups

- Most groups are extremely rigid.
- This rigidity is due to many causes:
 - Defense of individual positions
 - Individual reward systems
- The strengths of each individual is difficult to capitalize on since someone has to give up a role to allow another to assume that role.

Teams

- Teams, provide flexibility and perform different task and maintenance functions as needed.
 - The responsibility for team development and leadership is shared.
 - The strengths of each member are identified and used.
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Acknowledgement of Sources

- ❑ This set of slides is a compendium of ideas.
 - ❑ Collecting of good ideas and repurposing them seems to add value to new readers who may not have encountered these ideas in the past.
 - ❑ The concepts of teaming and the processes of team building can be traced to many authors.
 - ❑ John Kotter is one source everyone should consult.
 - ❑ Although these ideas appear obvious, they are in fact quite difficult to put into practice.
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