

[27] Hi, this is Vicki Steiner again, and welcome to the final part of our presentation on teamwork. In this part of the presentation, we will discuss the stages of team development. Understanding the stages of team development and knowing what to expect in each stage can help teams reach their potential more effectively and more efficiently.

[28] Although there are several models of team development in the literature on organizational theory, the most widely cited model is articulated by Bruce W. Tuckman in his 1965 article *Developmental Sequence in Small Groups*. Per this model, the four stages of forming, storming, norming, and performing are all essential in the successful functioning of a team. Tuckman and Jensen revised this developmental model in the 1977 article *Stages of Small Group Development Revisited* to include a fifth stage, adjourning, a terminating stage in which a team has achieved its goals, members recognize their accomplishment, disengage, and then consciously move on. Much of the relevant literature on teamwork today continues to focus on the initial four stages, which will be our focus as well.

Each of the four stages is marked by particular behaviors and tasks, and I have summarized some of those in this slide. Let us discuss these in turn. Forming is described alternatively as the polite phrase, the hesitant swimmer phase, or the stage of unbridled optimism. It is the period in which team members work to determine their roles, the procedures to follow, and the ground rules that will govern their work. Among the behaviors at this stage are things like initial emotions expressed, both positive and negative. While some members will express optimism, others might express frustration about the task, the use of technology, and teamwork in general.

It is important to note that venting frustrations at this stage is not necessarily destructive. It can allow team members to realize that the team might lack complete understanding about the team's goals, processes, and the task, and provide an opening for seeking clarification on these issues. It is also common at this stage for individual behavior to be driven by a desire to be accepted by others. To the extent that this leads team members to avoid frank discussion about conflict or confusion openly, this can impede the productive growth of the team. If conflict or confusion is discussed in sidebars, as I mentioned at the end of the last recording, this can lead to the formation of cliques, which can impede the development of the team.

In the task category, the primary work of the team at this point should be development of ground rules and assignment of roles. Members should, for example, identify the technical skills and resources needed to complete the task; identify a process for decision-making, including what to do when there is not unanimous agreement; share strengths and weaknesses to inform assignment of roles and responsibilities, using such

information to select a team leader; share previous teamwork experiences, such as what worked and what did not, so they might be considered in developing the ground rules for the team; agree to meeting times, and the tools to be used for the meetings, such as Collaborate, Skype, Google Handouts, Blackboard Instant Messaging, or the telephone; articulate a process and timeline for feedback, including how feedback should be provided; establish expectations, both in terms of the work product and work standards; establish consequences for failing to meet commitments; and, importantly, build trust.

As noted previously, the use of team building exercises in the forming stage is very helpful in building trust and promoting cohesion and creating a relaxed and friendly sense of community. This is, perhaps, particularly true of online teams, since social interaction plays an important role in building trust.

Among the conflicts that may arise in the forming stage, includes: when one or more members do not feel welcomed or that their contributions are not being acknowledged, when an overbearing member deters others' active participation, and, again, the formation of cliques. More specifically, in relation to online teamwork, reliance on e-mail and other technology often correlates to diminished communication frequency as compared to what is seen in face-to-face teamwork. Because frequent interaction increases opportunities to break the ice and establish open lines of communication, it is strongly recommended that you incorporate regular, perhaps weekly check-ins, as part of your team process.

Overall, students must resist the impulse to skip the forming stage and dive straight into dividing tasks and then going their separate ways to complete them independently. Not only does this typically impact the work of the team adversely, but it also ignores the fact that the learning objective of teamwork is as much about process as it is about product, and it is the process that is of particular value in the workplace.

Next, let us consider storming. The storming stage starts when conflict arises. Team members might start to rebel against ground rules or complain about interpersonal issues. There might be grabs for power. The creation of alliances toward that end, and communication failures may increasingly emerge. As noted earlier, it is important to empathize, or emphasize, that conflict is a normal part of team development, and can arise at any stage of team development. Also, they present opportunities to improve team workflows.

Among the conflicts that may arise in storming, include those that stem from an ineffective leader who might be defensive or overbearing, or not capable of dealing with conflict very well. In terms of issues that might arise particularly in online teamwork, those include, communication without the benefit of body language, tone of voice, and

facial expressions, which can lead to misunderstandings occurring more readily. To mitigate this problem, consider incorporating tools such as webcams in your team's communication toolkit.

Now let us consider norming. The norming stage is the point at which the team establishes cohesiveness and commitment to its task and settles into a synergy of common processes and effective ways of quickly resolving conflicts as they arise. By the norming stage, teams typically recognize the benefits of working together, they have strengthened their relationships and streamlined their processes. There also usually is an enhanced information sharing at this stage, which advances peer learning.

Conflicts that may arise in a norming stage include when members fail to meet commitments because they are struggling and do not seek guidance. Energy and attention levels may also start to wane, and that creates an opening for reversion to the storming phase. In relation to online teamwork, regression to the storming stage might be triggered by problems in coordinating work and infrequent communication, particularly as added pressures arise with other coursework, workplace obligations, and family obligations.

Last, we have the performing stage. The performing stage is reached when the group shows proficiency in working together to achieve its goals and becomes more flexible in following their procedures for working together. Since conflicts have largely been resolved by this point, productivity is higher in the performing stage. There also is open communication and clear ground rules are accepted and followed. Team members actively help and encourage each other, and there tends to be intense loyalty and high morale in the team. Note, however, that the performing stage of team development should not be confused with task completion. Rather, the performing stage is reached when the team is fully interdependent and can adapt to change easily, because each member is trusted to get the work done. Some teams never reach the performing stage.

Conflicts that may arise in the performing stage include those such as when unresolved issues crop up again, or new tasks are assigned, leading to perceived imbalance and work delegation, which, in turn, can lead to burn out.

[29] Although Tuckman's model is set forth as linear, subsequent research on team development strongly advises that the process is, in fact, not always linear. Circumstances that may arise anytime during teamwork may effect change and potentially cause conflict, which can lead to a team, even one that has reached the performing stage, to regress to the storming or norming stages.

[30] Now let us briefly consider the role of the leader in relation to each stage of team development. I have highlighted just a few here. In the forming stage, important roles of the leader include establishing clear objectives for the team and individual members, establishing ground rules, providing direction to the other team members, and assessing the team dynamic.

In the storming stage, important tasks of the leader include: continuing to build trust among members; working to mediate and resolve conflicts quickly; reasserting ground rules, and implementing consequences for failing to comply with ground rules; rewarding when ground rules are followed; recognizing the difference between free-riding and struggling; and the ongoing task of continuously assessing the team dynamic. As we mentioned in the previous slide, because the movement through the stages of team development can tend to alternate between the stages rather than be linear, it is important to continuously assess the team dynamic to ensure that all team members' concerns are discussed and addressed quickly and productively.

In the norming stage, important roles of the leader include, again, recognizing and rewarding adherence to ground rules, and creating leadership opportunities for others. You will recall that I previously mentioned that a good team leader engages in conduct that is democratic rather than autocratic. The team leader in the norming stage will facilitate frank and honest discussion among all team members, and, again, he or she will continuously assess the team dynamic to determine if any adjustments need to be made.

In the performing stage, some of the important tasks of the leader, include the delegation of any remaining or new tasks, evaluating the results of the work of team members in relation to its objectives, and, again, continuously assessing the team dynamic.

[31] Overall, today's presentation has aimed to provide you with an overview of teamwork, why it is important in your education in the program, and strategies for overcoming common problems that arise in teamwork to ensure success in your endeavors. Our final discussion discussed the stages of team development. In developing an understanding of these stages, and knowledge of what to expect in each stage, I hope that you have discovered ways in which a team can reach its potential more effectively and more efficiently.

I hope one of the overarching themes that you come away with in this presentation is the ample opportunities that are afforded by teamwork. I truly believe that together everyone achieves more, as illustrated in this acronym of team.

[32] I hope that you have found this presentation to be helpful in introducing you to teamwork principles in relation to the education that you are now starting, and that it will prove instructive in terms of the remainder of the work that you will complete in Module 5 of INFO 203. Once you complete listening to or watching this presentation, please proceed to complete the INFO 203 teamwork quiz. Thereafter, you will form in teams of three (or more, depending on the number of students in your section) to engage in a brief teamwork assignment, which I hope you will find both instructive and enjoyable.

[33] To the extent you have any questions regarding this presentation, please contact your INFO 203 instructor or the peer mentor who works in your section. You may also contact me. My name is Vicki Steiner, and my e-mail address is [vicki.steiner@sjsu.edu](mailto:vicki.steiner@sjsu.edu). Thank you for your time and I wish you every success in your education.

Goodbye!

**END OF PART THREE OF RECORDING**