

Stages of Team Development

Hitting milestones is only one measure of a team's success. The health of team relationships is a more vital metric, as it will facilitate the long-term sustainability of the team. Teams go through multiple stages as they grow. It's helpful to understand the process, and that all teams experience these issues. For a successful team, everyone must be willing to adapt, accept differences and give/receive feedback. As team members join or leave the team, dynamics will change and the team may revert to an earlier stage. Important note- this is not a rigid guideline, but a tool for team reflection and continued growth.

FORMING



CHARACTERISTICS

- Excitement for the project
- Anything is possible
- New and familiar faces
- Individual expectations
- Boundaries tested

TIPS

- Icebreaker activity
- Communicate goals/values
- Identify learning styles
- Identify strengths/weaknesses
- Recognize and fill talent gaps

STORMING



- Having doubts about project
- Disagreement about direction/goals
- Conflict over roles/responsibilities
- Unclear expectations
- Decreased productivity

- Establish clear roles/responsibilities
- Discuss and agree to team norms/expectations
- Set timelines for meeting milestones
- Break down goals into smaller parts

NORMING



- Members comfortable sharing ideas and feedback
- Settling into routines
- Accepting differences

- Encourage regular feedback (no bad ideas)
- Help clear roadblocks
- Evaluate roles

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Shift from individual mindset to team mindset
Productivity increases

PERFORMING



- Team is a cohesive unit
- Members aware of their own and other's strengths and weaknesses
- Performing in sync
- Goals may be reassessed

- Monitor for regression
- Prepare cohesive onboarding for new team members
- Document successful processes
- Be open to iteration and innovation

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Roles become more fluid
Team able to anticipate and proactively address problems
Significant progress towards goals achieved

ADJOURNING

Only applies to teams with finite projects

- Project completed
- Members may feel anxiety or sadness over end of project

- Celebrate success
- Recognize contributions
- Document lessons learned