

Introduction

Teamwork is essential! Individuals are becoming less and less autonomous as the world demands greater interdependence. The top ten Fortune 500 Companies globally diversified, universities are sending students around the world to learn everything from cultural practices to business practices, even in 4-H our experiential learning method involves teamwork. Teams and teamwork aren't going anywhere!

The number one thing college students dislike the most about any leadership class is the group work. Why? It's not because there is always a social loafer in every group, it's because teamwork is a process that sometimes takes much longer than we would like. The team development process is essential to the success of every team.

Lesson Objectives

At the end of the lesson, an individual will be able to

1. Define a team
2. Discuss stages of team development

Lesson Content

What is a team

A team is a group of people working together to achieve a common purpose for which they hold themselves accountable. This group will:

- ❖ Share a work product
- ❖ Have interdependent tasks
- ❖ Share responsibility of results
- ❖ Have a commitment to work together
- ❖ Manage relationships across boundaries

Why teams?

Why should we work in teams? There are several reasons!

- ❖ Complex tasks
 - It is easier to work on some assignments if there is more than one individual working! Remember the saying- two heads are better than one!
- ❖ Creativity is needed
 - The more people working on a problem, the more likely it is you will have more creative solutions!
- ❖ Path/direction is unclear
 - When your direction is unclear, having more than one person working on the problem can be beneficial.
- ❖ Efficient use of resources needed
 - People have differing abilities and talents. When you have limited resources, having people who are specialists in a particular area can help you streamline your processes and maximize your products.
- ❖ High commitment is desired
 - A group of people working on a common goal can inspire one another to stay committed.

- ❖ Members have a stake in the outcome
 - When more than one person has a stake in the outcome of a problem, it can be helpful to have them all come together to work on the issues.
- ❖ No one individual has sufficient knowledge to solve the problem
 - Just like with issues of complexity and creativity, many times, two heads are better than one!

Types of Teams

- ❖ Problem resolution team
 - Resolve problems on an on-going basis
- ❖ Creative team
 - Explore possibilities and alternatives
- ❖ Tactical team
 - Execute a well-defined plan

Information & Teams: Handling the Load

- ❖ Define your information needs
 - What do you need to know?
 - Who has the info?
 - How will you get it?
 - When do you need it?
- ❖ Share important news in team meetings
 - Especially if it is news that effects the whole team or the team product
- ❖ Take and distribute minutes for each team meetings
 - This will help to keep all members on the same page
- ❖ Develop routine reports like weekly team schedules
 - This will make all members aware of deadlines, responsibilities, etc.
- ❖ Post important and needed data
 - If you discover something that will be relevant to another team member, posting it will help everyone
- ❖ Keep team info reports simple (bullets, headings)

Stages of Team Development

Kipp and Kipp (2000) say that dysfunctional teams or groups often without realizing it keep their groups from being effective and productive. These teams handle conflicts badly, or conduct themselves according to unwritten rules that limit their effectiveness and waste time. Now, through research and study, we have steps we can use to aid in the successful development of our teams.

Tuckman and Jenson (CITE) counsel us that teams must go through different stages of development in order to maximize their potential and become a successful unit. While there is nothing to say that these stages are universally true for every group, or that they are sequential in nature, practice has shown that knowing these stages is helpful in recognizing where a team is in their development, knowing what is happening to a team, why and what to do next.

The Tuckman and Jenson model consists of five (5) stages. However, team development must be thought of as a continual process. A team could be at stage four, have some event occur and move back to stage one or two. A team may be at stage three for one task, but at stage four for another. Some teams pass easily from one stage to another, while others may reach a stage and stagnate and be unable to move on to the next level. Each of these stages has its own characteristics and behaviors. Those stages are outlined below:

Stage of Development	Team Activities/Characteristics
Forming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Get acquainted • Test boundaries • Task define • Initial goal setting • Rules established
Storming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Differences emerge • Conflict • Task related interactions
Norming	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issues are Conflicted and Resolved • Spirit of cooperation • Communication • Group Unity and Culture Established
Performing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group self management • Autonomy • Team unity • Problem solving
Reforming/Adjourning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluate the project • Evaluate the process

Kipp and Kipp (2000) authored a checklist to aid in the successful development of a team. First, being authentic is key to team development. As we have discussed in other lessons, knowing who you are, your challenges and strengths, and knowing the strengths and challenges of your followers is important. Being honest will help you go authentically through the process. Also key, is the willingness to bring a "whole person" to work; developing the capacity to be vulnerable with each other. Once team members have developed these two traits, six additional elements are suggested to keep a team healthy and functioning. Ask yourself these questions about your team:

- **Goals-** What constitutes success for us in a particular situation and overall?
- **Roles-** What are our expectations and what do we expect from each other?
- **Rules-** What are our agreements on decision making, work ethic, and follow-through?
- **Relationships-** How do we handle conflict, ambiguity, rumor, secrecy, trust, etc?

- **Results-** How do we determine performance day to day? What are our dials?
- **Rewards-** What is in it for us individually and collectively? Are we ok with that?

Team Building

Groups can gain a great deal from team building activities, but only if the activities merge the teams issues and the team building activity leader's intent. Evidence suggests that there are four reasons that any team should engage in team building exercises, but each reason has its own different strategy.

Reasons	Strategies
New group formation and improved relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Self disclosure exercises • Team challenges • Temperament or styles profiles
Problems in group dynamics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conflict management • Reflective listening • Communication • Community building
Barriers to goal attainment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Role definition • Decision protocols • Systems thinking
Resolution of goals and game plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business strategy • Management philosophy • Team charter development

Activities

Reflection Questions

- What is a team and when should we use teams?
- Describe an example in your own experiences where you have been involved in an effective team, and an ineffective team.
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