

## Video Transcript: "Tuckman's 5 Stages of Team Development"

<https://youtu.be/-RwkZxGPQb8>

**Speaker 1:** The five stages of team development. The Tuckman team development model. What are the stages of team development? Studies have shown that a group needs to evolve through certain steps to become an effective team. The most well known and memorable theoretical model of this development process is the Tuckman model. Bruce Tuckman did research that demonstrated that every team goes through various stages. He first identified four stages and then upon further research, amended this to five stages of team development. These five stages of team development are forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning. A manager can do things to speed the process through these steps to the performing stage. It is especially important to get through the painful storming phase, but you cannot completely short circuit the system [00:01:00] to get straight to performance. There has to be some pain to get to the gain.

Let's look at the stages in turn. Forming, this is the initial stage where people come together to form a team. At this point, people and team are trying to understand two fundamental questions. Why am I here? Who are you? But in trying to answer these questions, people are likely to be tentative and polite as they gauge the dynamics of the group and assess the other members. At this early stage, it is important that the leader casts their vision for the team to define success and answer the first question. To help with the second question, the leader or manager can create ways for the team members to get to know each other and settle in quickly.

Storming, next, a team goes through the storming phase. People become more assertive as the honeymoon period of forming fades and they start to try and get things done. Individuals [00:02:00] want to know exactly what needs to be done and how to go about it. Wrestles over roles, goals, and approaches to work are common at this stage. To help bind the team together, a leader needs to clearly define the overall missional task, communicate the plan, and help to facilitate agreement on ways of working.

Norming, once through the storming phase, the team can settle down to a more normalized state. Here the primary concerns are those of management. The questions of who does what, when and where? As the plan starts to be put into practice, people find their place and the team starts to progress towards their goal. For the leader at this stage, it is good to think about any barriers that are stopping the team from reaching higher levels of performance. What adjustments to roles, tasks, plans, and processes can be made to improve efficiency? How can the team be best encouraged and supported [00:03:00] so that it continues to grow momentum towards success?

Performing, the performing stage is when the team reaches a flow and the outputs of the group becomes exponentially larger than the inputs. To get to this point, there needs to be an interdependent within the team, a level of trust that allows people to stretch their limits or find new and creative ways of doing things. The leader needs to cultivate a supportive environment, one of personal development and psychological safety that allows people to grow and experiment. The danger for a leader at this stage is to become complacent. A good boss should always help the team to reflect upon three questions. What should we stop doing? What should we continue doing? What should we start doing? In this way, the team can continue to learn and improve. If not, they can fall back into the Norming or even into the storming phases.

Adjourning, [00:04:00] sadly, all things come to an end. Projects end, or team members move on when the situation evolves, when the task or team changes, then they enter an adjourning phase. A leader can help the team acknowledge and work through this phase. This period of transition might include a celebration of our job well done, but as well as happiness, there may also be disappointment that things have come to an end. Or grieving for team members who have parted from the group. The leader can support individuals through this process as they enter the forming stage. Again, either with the same group for a different task or with another team completely. The cycle starts again.

That is a brief introduction to the Tuckman model of team development. Identifying the different stages of forming, storming, norming, performing and adjourning helps a manager to assess a team's progression. By spotting where a team is located [00:05:00] within the cycle, the leader can work out what the team needs to help it progress through to the next level. The model is not just for the boss, it also helps a team to appreciate its own internal dynamics. A team with a common understanding of their progression is better equipped to propel itself more quickly through the different stages. Particularly the storming phase, shared perspective on why things might be difficult. Once people realize this phase is normal, it becomes less personal and they can focus on solutions rather than frustrations.