

# LEADERSHIP AND GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Just like people, groups change and evolve over time. Psychologist Bruce Tuckman's well-accepted theory of group development identifies four phases a group can be in at any given time in its development: Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing. A group can move from one phase to another in any order, and often moves back and forth between phases. Understanding these stages is important to understanding group behavior, and the interpersonal experience of group members. Different leadership skills are needed for each phase, as described below:

PHASE	LEADER'S ACTIVITIES & ROLES
<p><b>1. Forming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Orientation phase for members – a time to define membership and identify similarities and differences</li> <li>✓ High expectations, some anxiety - "Where do I fit in?" "Do I belong?" "Will I be included?"</li> <li>✓ Unsure if they can commit to the group's goals</li> <li>✓ High dependency on the leader</li> </ul>	<p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Encourage high energy, and asking questions</li> <li>✓ Establish a safe group environment and let members get to know each other</li> <li>✓ Work with group members to clarify goals of the group</li> <li>✓ Establish realistic expectations for achievement, project timelines, etc.</li> <li>✓ Empower members, solicit their opinions, and help establish guidelines for performing tasks</li> <li>✓ Identify skills and assets each member can bring to the group</li> </ul> <p><b>Task, Maintenance, &amp; Individual Roles:</b> Facilitator, Doer, Team Builder, Entrepreneur, Mentor*</p>
<p><b>2. Storming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Disappointment with unmet expectations</li> <li>✓ members are more comfortable expressing their opinions</li> <li>✓ Frustration about unrealistic goals</li> <li>✓ Dissatisfaction with the leader</li> <li>✓ Competing for power and attention, individuality, and influence</li> </ul>	<p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Reassess group's goal-setting process—celebrate successes and re-evaluate goals</li> <li>✓ Set small, attainable short-term goals to foster morale</li> <li>✓ Delegate responsibility to encourage shared authority</li> <li>✓ Encourage <i>effective</i> communication; listen to grievances</li> <li>✓ Be confident that the group will survive this stage</li> <li>✓ Deal directly with conflicts that arise</li> <li>✓ Remain objective and do not take challenges personally</li> </ul> <p><b>Task, Maintenance, &amp; Individual Roles:</b> Facilitator, Entrepreneur, Quality Control, Team Builder, Mentor*</p>

*Adapted from the University of North Dakota Extension School publications • [www.ext.nodak.edu/extpubs/leaddev.htm](http://www.ext.nodak.edu/extpubs/leaddev.htm)*

*Adapted from "Partnerships for Parks Leadership Retreat – February 26, 2004" Deborah Howard © 2004*

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<p><b>3. Norming</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Establishing group identity</li> <li>✓ Establishing roles of members</li> <li>✓ Establishing group v. individual responsibilities</li> <li>✓ Testing the leader—other leaders begin to emerge</li> <li>✓ Come to care for each other in more than a superficial way</li> <li>✓ Conflict may be present but not openly stated</li> <li>✓ Concerned with how close they can be and how much they can trust each other</li> </ul>	<p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Allow participatory decision-making regarding group rules</li> <li>✓ Reinforce trusting relationships, encourage communication</li> <li>✓ Reconfirm group's commitment to its common goals</li> <li>✓ Continue activities that empower group members, provide a vision of a high-performing team</li> <li>✓ Help build decision-making and conflict resolution skills</li> <li>✓ Continue to reinforce trusting relationships and open communication</li> </ul> <p><b>Task, Maintenance, &amp; Individual Roles:</b> Facilitator, Entrepreneur, Team Builder, Synthesizer, Mentor*</p>
<p><b>4. Performing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Achieved a degree of harmony</li> <li>✓ Resolving differences; sharing responsibility and control</li> <li>✓ Feeling excited about working together as a team</li> <li>✓ Sharing leadership</li> <li>✓ Showing high confidence in achieving goals</li> <li>✓ Begin to see the results of the work</li> </ul>	<p><b>Activities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Encourage shared and increased responsibility through committees and delegation</li> <li>✓ Provide “big picture” leadership while committees handle the smaller stuff</li> <li>✓ Help members develop skills that will be rewarding to the individual and beneficial to the group</li> <li>✓ Challenge the group to take risks</li> <li>✓ Generalize and document learning</li> <li>✓ Continue to guide the group</li> <li>✓ Be aware of group needs for improvement.</li> </ul> <p><b>Task, Maintenance, &amp; Individual Roles:</b> Facilitator, Doer, Entrepreneur, Quality Control, Team Builder, Synthesizer Mentor, External Contact*</p>

\*See the “What Makes a Leader” tip sheet for a full explanation of the various leadership roles.