

Fall 2016

# Effective Team Building Guide

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## Original Publication Citation

Wade, N. & Macpherson, A. (2016) *Effective Team Building Guide*. Surrey, B.C.: Kwantlen Polytechnic University

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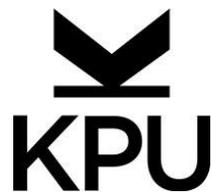


*Answering the Call*

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# EFFECTIVE TEAM BUILDING GUIDE

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Revised: September, 2016

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Kwantlen Polytechnic University would like to acknowledge the contributions of the many members of the Public Safety community who reviewed and gave feedback.

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# SECTION ONE

## COOPERATIVE TEAMS

There are many ways a group can work together well. This guide focuses on cooperative team building to help individual teams and groups function more effectively.

### Why Use Cooperative Teams?

Industry requires people who can work together. The Conference Board of Canada has said that people need academic skills, personal skills and teamwork skills (see appendix A). Colleges teach the academic skills, but personal and teamwork skills may be missed because they are seen as a home responsibility. With family life changing, many learners may not develop these skills at home.

People often manage conflicts destructively. We tend to behave as we have been taught. Highly individualistic and competitive environments may lead to an inability to get along with others or resolve conflicts constructively.

Researchers have found that 90 to 95 per cent of the people who lose their jobs do so because they cannot get along with other people on the job. Only 5 or 10 percent (depending on which studies) of people lose their jobs because they cannot do the work. Cooperative team building helps people learn communication skills and therefore increases the chances that they will be able to keep their jobs.

We all bring with us our own negative attitudes and prejudices. Population diversity is becoming more the norm than the exception in many places. When there is a mix of learners there is the potential to diminish negative attitudes and to develop positive ones depending how interaction is structured. Cooperative teams can be used to develop constructive and supportive relationships.

Every time people work together a decision must be made about the strategies that will be used. In the college environment courses or classes may be structured so that:

- Learners compete in a win-lose struggle to see who is *best*.
- Learners learn on their own, individually, without interacting with other learners.
- Learners work in pairs or small groups to help each other master and complete the assigned material.

Knowing when to work competitively, individualistically or cooperatively is an essential skill we all need. Each style of working is useful at some time.

## Definitions

Based on the work of done by D. and R. Johnson, and E. Holubec on Cooperative Learning published through the Interaction Book Co.

### **Cooperation: We Sink or Swim Together**

Teams are structured so that members work together to maximize their own and each other's learning, production and to achieve shared goals.

- All members of the group strive for each group member's success.
- Teams are small groups that are usually heterogeneous.
- Joint success is celebrated.
- Achievement is evaluated by comparing performance to preset criteria.

### **Competition: I Swim, You Sink; I Sink, You Swim**

Activities are structured so that learners compete with each other to achieve a goal only a few can attain.

- Learners work alone.
- They strive to be better than the rest of the group.
- What benefits self, deprives others.
- Own success and others' failure is celebrated. Rewards are limited.
- Learners are graded on a curve or ranked from *best* to *worst*.

## **Individualistic: We are Each in this Alone**

Individuals work by themselves to accomplish learning goals unrelated to those of other learners.

- Learners work alone.
- They strive for their own successes.
- What benefits self does not benefit others.
- Own success is celebrated.
- Rewards are viewed as unlimited
- Learners are evaluated by comparing performance to preset criteria.

## **Types of Cooperative Groups**

There are three basic types of cooperative learning groups: base groups, formal cooperative groups and informal cooperative groups.

### **Base Groups**

Base groups are long-term cooperative support groups with stable membership. These groups are set up to provide members support so that all can succeed academically or in the workplace. They provide support to each other in ways that the academic, lab, shop or job site does not. For example, they may pick up handouts for each other if one of the group members is absent or pick up the slack when a person is away.

### **Informal Cooperative Groups**

These groups are temporary, ad hoc groups that last for a few minutes, one discussion or time period. They may be used at any time but they are especially useful during a lecture, direct reading or quick activity. The length of time that most people can attend to a lecture or meeting before they begin to drift away is around 20 to 25 minutes. These groups help people process the content as they take part in a session.

### **Formal Cooperative Teams**

These groups may last for half an hour to several sessions to the length of a particular project and have the mandate to complete a specific task or assignment (such as doing a set of problems, completing a unit of

work, writing a report, conducting an experiment, or reading and comprehending a chapter or book.)

## **Five Basic Elements of Cooperative Teams**

Cooperative Teams are far more complex than just moving the furniture around so that people can work in the same space at the same time. Cooperative Teams have:

### ***Positive Interdependence***

Members believe they are linked together; they cannot succeed unless the other members of the group succeed (and vice versa).

They sink or swim together.

### ***Individual Accountability***

The performance of each individual member is assessed and the results given back to the group and the individual

### ***Group Processing***

At the end of its working period, the groups processes its functioning by answering two questions:

- What did each member do that was helpful for the group?
- What can each member do to make the group work better?

### ***Skills in Communication***

Necessary for effective group functioning.

Members must have – and use – the needed leadership, decision making, trust-building, communication, and conflict-management skills.

### ***Face-to-Face Promotive Interaction***

Members help, assist, encourage, and support each other's efforts to learn.

Adapted from *Active Learning: Cooperation in the College Classroom* (1991), Johnson, Johnson, Smith

## Benefits to Team Members

### **Feedback from Participants**

The following comments are from participants in teams at Kwantlen Polytechnic University concerning how their cooperative groups worked for them.

“in a nutshell, continuity”

“helps hold myself accountable”

“facilitates knowing each other”

“building/forming relationships”

“closer communications to develop trust”

“building relationships”

“supporting, connectedness”

“The material makes more sense to me when we talk about it”

“networking with others”

“comfort level rises”

“get more done in less time”

“sense of accomplishment has been great”

“beginning and ending together”



## SECTION TWO

# FRAMEWORK FOR WORKING TOGETHER

### What Are We Doing?

#### Core Values

Your personal beliefs are the core values that affect and drive how you look at the world, your behaviour in the world and your interaction with others. They are how you do “business” with the rest of the world. In other words, they are the basis for everything that you are and do.

These beliefs about appropriate behaviours, attitudes and strategies also guide every working group and need to be explicit and understood.

#### Mandate

It is useful to know what you are expected to do in a group situation.

This is often delivered or requested from an administrative or political level and appears in the form of a “job description”. The group which is mandated may not be able to effect the general outline of the mandate.

The context in which the group operates has critical effects on what can be done.

#### Identifying a Mission Statement

A mission statement embodies the group’s current purpose and intent and answers (within the mandate of the group) questions such as: What are we about? Why are we working together? What do we want to achieve? It describes the business that you are in. This may be a statement developed by the whole organization or it may be more localized in a department, program, class, work group or individually. It gives direction to actions. Without knowing your mission, you may not be able to get started.

#### Developing Shared Vision

Vision is a future oriented statement of a group’s purpose in a task, project or work team. Having the members shared a vision that aligns with their personal values and aspirations is a solid basis for production. Time spent at the beginning in dreaming and discussing what the final result will be is time well spent. If it is not possible to

have a shared vision of the end product and the goals and milestones that must be reached then the group may also have difficulty identifying whether they have accomplished their purpose.

Sometimes, when the project is open ended or ongoing, the final product cannot be totally “visioned” at the beginning. A shared vision will then be one that all of the group members agree are the elements of where they want to get at this time and the direction that they will start moving towards to achieve these elements.

Visions should be revisited and refined over time. If the group is not heading in the same direction, then it may not get anywhere.

### **Determining Appropriate Goals**

What are the individual tasks and goals that will build to making your vision manifest? Goals lead towards the realization of the vision. It is important to develop appropriate goals, make them explicit and share an understanding of each one.

Goals have:

- **Targets** – where we expect to get to realistically balanced with time and resources.
- **Objectives** – identifiable, measurable and achievable steps.
- **Tasks** – ways of reaching the objectives.
- **Indicators** – ways of measuring progress.

Like our vision statement, goals need to be realigned with reality on a regular basis. Evaluation and adjustment drive this process.

### **Improving Continuously**

Knowing where you are going and how you intend to get there is a good start. The final step is continuous improvement. Planning, implementation, and verification are tools for analysis and change as the process unfolds. Improvement is continual but the steps are small. Pick changes that can be made now that will have a positive effect – one per cent is enough each time.



## SECTION THREE EFFECTIVE SKILLS FOR COMMUNICATION

### Developing Group Guidelines

Deciding how you want to communicate and work together in a group is a positive first step in meeting the goal or objective you are working towards. There are probably as many styles of communicating and working together as there are people, so it is important to take time to get to know your group members and to negotiate how you would best like to receive (and transmit) information as you proceed.

It is important to identify the guidelines that are meaningful to each person. Brainstorming or small group discussions are effective ways to make sure all wanted guidelines items are identified.

It is even more significant to complete the exercise by clearly defining what is meant by each of the guidelines suggested. *Confidentiality* may mean different things to different people. *Honesty with each other* may range from *nice* to *brutal* depending on the individual. The right to choose not to contribute (the *right to pass*) may be vital to building a feeling of safety into the group.

This second part of the guideline development is the most vital part because it allows every member of the team to be involved with the process of creating shared meanings.

### Giving and Receiving Feedback

#### Giving Positive Feedback

It is easy to criticize and to think that we are helping a person deal with a situation. To give the right commentary, at the right time, to the right person, with the right reasons, in the right way, and to the right degree is **very difficult**.

You first need agreement to interact. If the other person is not ready to hear your comments, you set up a negative interaction that will cause

them to block you and your opinions out. If you do not have permission to comment, you may be seen as aggressive and the other person may respond by being aggressive or defensive towards you.

Ask if the other person wants your feedback. If they say *no*, then you will have to discuss or problem-solve that before you say anything more, or you will say nothing at all.

Search out all the facts you can prior to giving your feedback. Ask the people involved about what they feel is happening and how they see the situation. This may solve or help to solve the problem.

Time the discussion so that you are all reasonably unstressed. Leave time so there is another chance to talk before a parting of ways. This will help to avoid or clear misunderstanding or confusion.

**Be Positive.** Try to begin and end your feedback with comments about what is working, correct, or right about the situation. No matter how *bad* you perceive things to be, there will be good points to comment on.

**Avoid using absolutes or negative words,** words like *always* or *never* or *don't*. Each situation tends to be many shades of grey rather than black and white. Actions taken are seen by each person in the light of his/her own experiences and perceptions. Use alternative positive words and phrases. Avoid comparing the person involved to other people in other situations. The *where*, *when*, *what*, and *who* of each situation are different. Comparisons tend to produce resentment and frustration.

**Be Specific** in your description of the problem. Avoid vague or misleading statements. If attitude seems to be a problem, show specific instances and then take one point at a time so as not to overload or overwhelm the other person. Make sure that it is something that can be changed.

When you tell someone that you feel they could improve or change, then also make suggestions on how you think they might go about making those changes, and what behaviour would be observed if the changes were made. Be prepared for no change.

Feedback can be positive if it:

- is offered at the right time and place,
- is offered with comments on good points as well as changes,
- is connected to facts and not rumours,
- is directed to behaviour that can be changed,
- is specific and one point at a time, and
- gives information and possible solutions to change the situation.

## **Receiving Feedback**

If another person offers you feedback, it may sound like *criticism*. It may be that they intend to be positive but may not know how to say something in a positive way. It may also be that their self-esteem is low and they are being defensive or aggressive towards you. Most importantly, you may become defensive or aggressive if you see their feedback as critical or negative, **no matter what was meant**.

Attempt to suspend your reaction until you understand the information that is being given. Paraphrase what you hear. If it seems unclear, ask for clarification. Having it presented in other words or from another point of view may increase your understanding about what is being said.

Explore and discover the reasons for the comments.

- Is a change by you indicated?
- Is it an evaluation of the past or an indication for the future?

Think about and cope with your possible defensive reaction.

- Do you see wants as demands?
- Do you feel guilty or obligated?
- Are you hearing more than is being said?

Ideally, listen to his/her comments and find the positive side of them. Then, explain your position or point of view without feeling that you must justify yourself. Determine the importance of the message to you. You may choose not to change.

Any discussion will profit from more information. You can wall yourself away from information and change by being defensive. You may open new lines of communication by being open.

## Encourage Constructive Communication (and Avoid Destructive Communication)

We need information to function in this world. To get information we must communicate. The more effective our communication, the better our understanding.

*Be wary of communication breakdown.* Keep the channels for productive communication open. Avoid comments or other behaviours that might jeopardize the open flow of information.

- Let the other person speak, and do not interrupt.
- Accept rather than discount the other person's statements.
- Avoid purposely putting people on the defensive.
- Stay with the subject.

*Practice good active listening.* Listen intently and with an open mind. Remember, people tend to overemphasize or overstate their points when they feel they are not being listened to.

*Recognize **terminological tangles** or arguments about semantics.* There is no ultimately correct or single meaning to most concept words. Do not demand that other people have the same meaning for words that you have. Give the other person specific examples of how you are using disputed words. Ask the other person for examples.

*Be careful about assumptions.* Do not assume others have understood when you have explained something. Request feedback. Clarify meanings. Verify understanding with others.

*Discuss for clarification and understanding instead of for victory.* If we do so, we shall probably find that ultimately, agreement and disagreement, approval and disapproval, are not so important.

*Train yourself to recognize misunderstandings.* Do something about them as soon as you can. All too often the fact that misunderstandings exist is not apparent until deeper misunderstandings have already occurred because of the original one.

*When asking questions avoid all implications* (whether in tone or wording) of skepticism or hostility. Questions should be motivated by curiosity about the speaker's view.

*Voice your opposition to ideas, not opposition to people.*

*Be specific* rather than general when giving feedback.

*Use I statements* to express your own feelings.

*Do not make people guess* where you're coming from.

*Acknowledge and respect the feelings and experience of others.* Avoid letting personal animosity affect your dealings with others.

*Avoid snap decisions.* Pause before responding. Refrain from agreement or disagreement with a speaker or from praise or censure of his/her views until you are sure what those views are. Do not be so intent on "shooting down" the other that you are no longer alert for new information.

*Avoid thinking in absolutes.* Make sparing use of words like *all, always, everybody, every time, never, nobody.* Consider relative values in your evaluations. Beware of making generalizations about segments of the population.

*Avoid either-or thinking and expressions.* Expressing things in polar terms (i.e. good vs. bad, pretty vs. ugly, smart vs. dumb) is part of our conditioning. Committing yourself to one polar position makes compromise difficult. Think of things as being on a continuum. Avoid stereotyping.

*Stay flexible.* Be willing to consider alternate ways of thinking.

*Avoid over-committing yourself.* Learn to say no.

*Avoid trigger phrases,* those verbal expressions people may react to in a negative way. These include "That's a stupid idea," or "You are wrong about that."

*Give up needing to be right all of the time.* Let the other person survive.

*Prevent or reduce adversary situations* where opposing parties take up positions and proceed to bombard each other.

*Find humour* in the situation when appropriate.

*Remove yourself from the situation* for a time if needed; be aware if over tiredness, extra stress, or other external factors are affecting your interaction ability.

## Building Trust

For effective communication to take place there must be trust between those communicating. We both need to trust that our intent is not misinterpreted and that the other person's intent is not to harm us, physically or mentally. Trust grows and is nurtured. Demands or threats will not bring it about. There are a variety of ways to encourage trust.

- Be reliable and trustworthy yourself.
- Embrace your risk at the level that you can handle. There is always a risk in trusting.
- Always support the person, however you define that person's behaviour.
- Ask, "How can I help?"
- Search out the positive. What is good in their words and deeds?
- Redefine the negative. How can good come out of it?
- Identify when people are *right*.
- Expect the best of others. Expect that the person's intent is good.
- Hear others. Listen carefully.
- Share your toys (tools, experience, skills, etc.)

As we go from day to day we are surrounded by change. This can be scary and undermining to one's self-esteem. By finding out where one is right, one can see where others are also right. The more risk one takes with others, the more one learns and grows, and the more one is open to change. When one can see and examine change, one has the possibility of adapting to it and growing with it.

## SECTION FOUR TEAM BUILDING BASICS

### How Cooperative Teams Work

A team can occur anytime there are two or more people working towards a common goal or objective. After a team gets bigger than four there is a tendency to form sub-teams who may all be working towards the same goal. An ideal size for a cooperative team is four members per group. When you have four in a group, you can have pairs working together at times and four working together at other times. There is a possibility of six pair combinations. Various constraints will affect the size of the group.

For a team to work effectively it is important to recognize that there are steps that will happen and that the team task and interpersonal behaviours will change over time. A team or group develops a *culture* of traits and patterns as they progress. Dr. Bruce Tuckman developed a model of how teams progress and have behaviours around both the task being done and the interpersonal interactions.

#### **Stage 1: Forming**

This is the time of organization and orientation to tasks. The task(s) and information about them will be identified. The question to be answered is “What is the task of this group and how will I be able to contribute to that task?” In the behaviour area, group guidelines will be developed, either by consensus or by informal testing of behaviours by the members. Some members will look to others to either lead or follow. The question to be answered is, “What kind of behaviour is acceptable in this group and how am I to behave?”

#### **Stage 2: Storming**

Here there is individual emotional responses to the group. The demands of the task will trigger part of this response and the more difficult the task appears in relation to individual’s self-perceived abilities, the greater the potential for a “storm”. The question to be answered is “Am I emotionally ready to deal with this task?” Varied understandings of

task and roles are expressed or become apparent. Differences between members may be expressed in a hostile manner and members may wonder if they want to be part of the group. They think, “Do I really want to work with these people?”

### **Stage 3: Norming**

Now communication is opening up and developing. Information is being exchanged and ideas and opinions are shared. The focus is on the task and members are answering the question, “What do I have that will help us accomplish this task?” Workable guidelines are established. On the behavioural side, the individuals are becoming a group. There is a sense of harmony and people are looking at “How can I help contribute to group unity?”

### **Stage 4: Performing**

Everyone is focused on constructive action directed towards successful completion of the task. The interpersonal and task behaviours with shared understandings start to merge and functionality is the main idea. Problem solving will be primarily directed to the work and the product. A well functioning team may reach the heights of Transforming, where real synergy happens.

### **Last Stage: Adjourning**

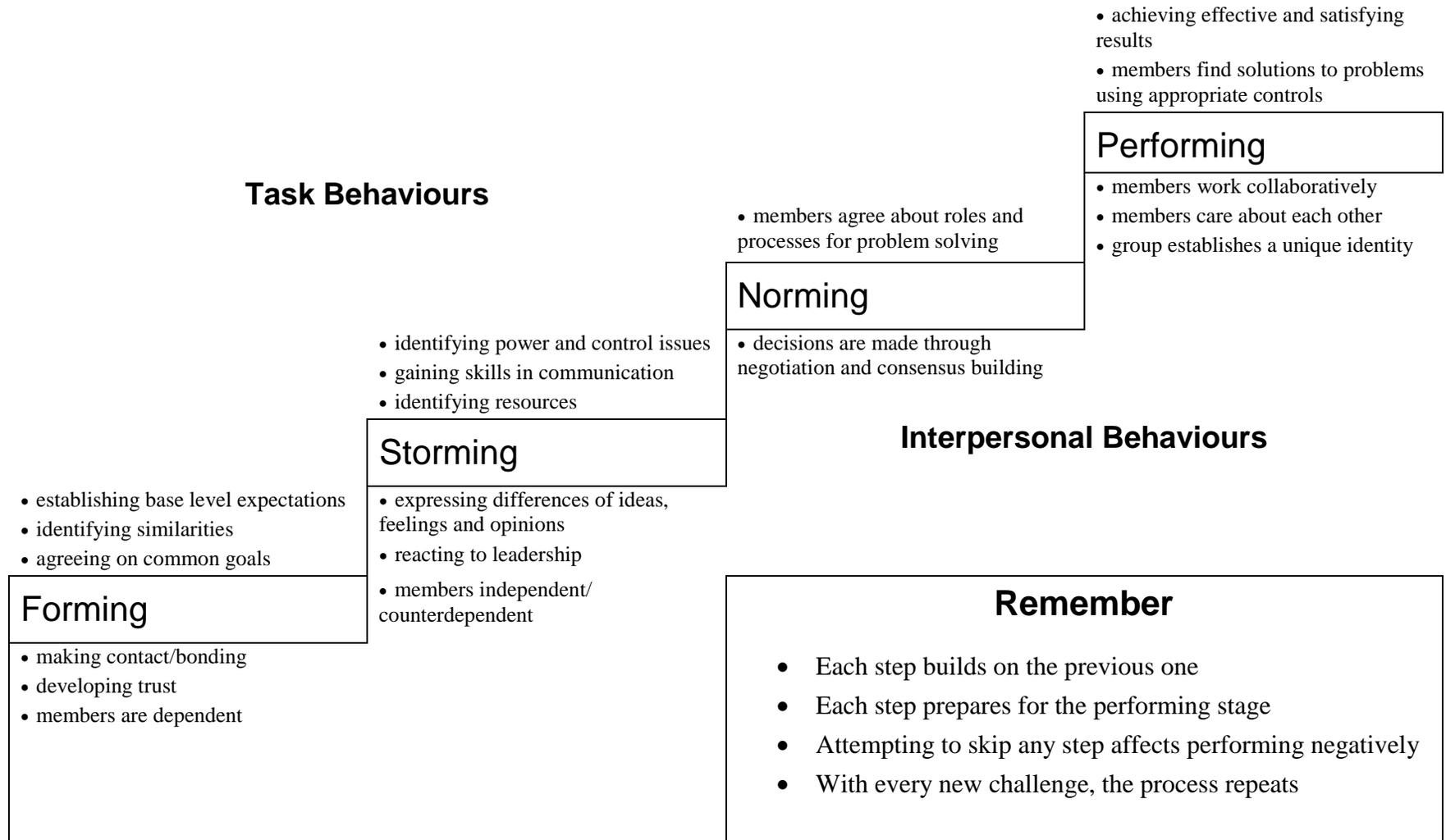
When teams have completed their tasks, wrap up and go on to other teams in other places. It is important for the team to take the time to look at its process one last time. “What went well?” “What could we do better in another situation?” so that the loose ends are wrapped up on the task. The conclusion of the interpersonal behaviours includes a chance to say thank you and good-bye to the team members. This can range from an *imaginary gift* to each person all the way to various celebrations and even plans to meet again at a later date. Closure is a final essential part of the team process.

The next two pages includes descriptions of the stages and a variety of questions that may come up for each team on its journey.

## TUCKMAN'S TEAM DEVELOPMENT MODEL

See chart next page.

# TUCKMAN'S TEAM DEVELOPMENT MODEL



## STAGES OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

Stage 1 “Forming”	Stage 2 “Storming”	Stage 3 “Norming”	Stage 4 “Performing”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individuals are not clear on what they’re supposed to do</li> <li>• the mission isn’t owned by the group</li> <li>• wondering where we are going</li> <li>• no trust yet</li> <li>• high learning</li> <li>• no group history; unfamiliar with members</li> <li>• norms of the team are not established</li> <li>• people check one another out</li> <li>• people are not committed to the team</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• roles and responsibilities are articulated</li> <li>• agendas are displayed</li> <li>• problem solving doesn’t work well</li> <li>• people want to modify the team’s mission</li> <li>• trying new ideas</li> <li>• splinter groups form</li> <li>• people set boundaries</li> <li>• anxiety abounds</li> <li>• people push for position <b>and power</b></li> <li>• competition is high</li> <li>• cliques drive the team</li> <li>• little team spirit</li> <li>• lots of personal attacks</li> <li>• level of participation by members is at its highest (for some) and its lowest (for some)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• success occurs</li> <li>• team has all the resources for doing the job</li> <li>• appreciation and trust build</li> <li>• purpose is well-defined</li> <li>• feedback is high, well-received, and objective</li> <li>• team confidence is high</li> <li>• leader(s) reinforce team behaviours</li> <li>• members self-reinforce team norms</li> <li>• hidden agendas become <b>open</b></li> <li>• team is creative</li> <li>• more individual motivation</li> <li>• team gains commitment from all members on directions and goals</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• team members feel very motivated</li> <li>• individuals defer to team needs</li> <li>• no surprises</li> <li>• little waste-very efficient team operations</li> <li>• team members have objective outlooks</li> <li>• individuals take pleasure in the success of the team-big wins</li> <li>• “we” versus “I” orientation</li> <li>• high pride in the team</li> <li>• high openness and support</li> <li>• high empathy</li> <li>• high trust in everyone</li> <li>• superior team performance</li> <li>• OK to risk confrontation</li> </ul>

Action Steps “Forming” to “Storming”	Action Steps “Storming” to “Norming”	Action Steps “Norming” to Performing”
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• set a mission</li> <li>• set goals</li> <li>• establish roles within the group</li> <li>• recognize need to move out of “forming” stage</li> <li>• identify the team, its tools and resources</li> <li>• leader(s) need to give direction</li> <li>• figure ways to build trust (not demand it)</li> <li>• define a reward structure</li> <li>• take risks</li> <li>• bring group together periodically to work on common tasks</li> <li>• assert individual power</li> <li>• decide once and for all to be on the teams</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• team leader(s) should actively support and reinforce team behaviour, facilitate the group for wins, create positive environment</li> <li>• leader(s) must ask for and expect results</li> <li>• recognize and publicize team wins</li> <li>• agree on individuals’ roles and responsibilities</li> <li>• buy into objectives and activities</li> <li>• listen actively to each other</li> <li>• set and take team time together</li> <li>• everyone works actively to set a supportive environment</li> <li>• have the vision “we can succeed!”</li> <li>• request and accept feedback</li> <li>• build trust by honouring commitments</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• keep up the team wins</li> <li>• maintain traditions</li> <li>• praise and support each other</li> <li>• self-evaluate without fuss</li> <li>• recognize and reinforce “synergy” team behaviour</li> <li>• share leadership role in team based on who does what the best</li> <li>• share rewards for successes</li> <li>• communicate all the time</li> <li>• share responsibility</li> <li>• delegate freely within team</li> <li>• commit time to the team</li> <li>• keep raising the bar/new, higher goals</li> <li>• be selective of new team members; train to maintain the team spirit</li> </ul>

adapted from the Instruction Skills Workshop participant guide by CCTT (1991) B



## Shared Leadership

In Cooperative Teams, Leadership is a shared responsibility. The group must deal positively with both the task functions and group relation functions within the team. The more members of the team take on and share these roles when the team needs them, the more smoothly the team will work.

### Task Functions

#### *Initiating*

- propose tasks or goals
- define a group problem
- suggest a procedure or ideas for solving a problem

#### *Information or Opinion Seeking*

- request facts
- seek relevant information about group concerns
- ask for suggestions or ideas

#### *Information or Opinion Giving*

- state a belief
- provide relevant information about group concern
- give suggestions or ideas

#### *Clarifying*

- elaborate, interpret, or reflect on ideas and suggestions
- clear up confusions; indicating alternatives and issues before the group
- give examples

#### *Summarizing*

- pull together related ideas
- restate suggestions after group has discussed them
- offer a decision or conclusion for the group to accept or reject

### ***Consensus Testing***

- send up trial balloons to see if group is nearing a conclusion
- check with group to see how much agreement has been reached

### **Group Relations Functions**

#### ***Encouraging***

- be friendly, warm, and responsive to others
- accept others and their contributions
- regard others by giving them an opportunity for recognition

#### ***Expressing Group Feelings***

- sense feelings, mood, relationships with the group
- share one's own feelings with other members

#### ***Harmonizing***

- attempt to reconcile disagreements
- reduce tension, get people to explore their differences

#### ***Modifying***

- when own idea / status involved in conflict, offer to modify position, admit error
- discipline oneself to maintain group cohesion

#### ***Gate-Keeping***

- attempt to keep communication channels open
- facilitate the participation of others
- suggest procedures for sharing opportunity to discuss group problems

#### ***Evaluating***

- evaluate group functioning / production; express standards for group to achieve
- measure results
- evaluate degree of group commitment

Both task and group relations need to be attended to, to keep the team working.

## SECTION FIVE PROBLEM SOLVING

### Why Things Do Not Get Done!

Once upon a time there were four people named **Everybody**, **Somebody**, **Anybody** and **Nobody**. There was an important job to be done and **Everybody** was sure that **Somebody** would do it. **Anybody** could have done it, but **Nobody** did it.

**Somebody** got angry about that, because it was **Everybody's** job. **Everybody** thought **Anybody** could do it, but **Nobody** realized that **Everybody** didn't do it. It ended by **Everybody** blaming **Somebody**, when actually, **Nobody** could accuse **Anybody**.

### Effective Problem Solving Negotiating

- Agree on a definition of the conflict.
- Describe your feelings.
- Listen carefully to other person's wants and feelings.
- Jointly define the problem as a mutual problem.
- Jointly define the conflict as being small and specific.
- Describe what you want and your interests.
- Make personal statements.
- Be specific about your goals and needs.
- Put the problem before your answer.
- Be concrete but be flexible.

- Acknowledge the other person's goals as part of problem solving.
- Be hard on the problem, but soft on the other person.
- Look forward, not back.
- Focus on the long-term cooperative relationship.
- Exchange reasons for positions.
- Express cooperative intentions for now and the future.
- Present your reasons, listening to other's reasons.
- Focus on wants and needs, not positions.
- Differentiate before integrating.
- Empower the other person.
- Understand the other's perspective.
- Check your perceptions.
- Paraphrase.
- Invent options for mutual gain.
- Avoid obstacles.
- Invent creative options.
- Reach a wise agreement.
- Meet the legitimate needs of all participants.
- Be viewed as fair.
- Operate on principles that can be justified on objective criteria.
- Ensure that agreement and process strengthen ability to work together cooperatively in the future.
- Try, try again.

## ***PLAYING FAIR***

**How everyone can win:**

***Be willing to fix the problem.***

***Say what the problem is for you.***

***Listen to what the problem is for them.***

***Attack the problem, not the person.***

***Look for answers so everyone gets what they need.***

## ***FOULS***

*Name Calling*

*Put Downs*

*Sneering – Blaming*

*Threats – Hitting*

*Bringing up the past*

*Making Excuses*

*Not Listening*

*Getting Even*

## **Troubleshooting in the Team**

- Check to see that everyone is clear on the team goals.
- Make sure you have sufficient and correct information.
- Review the contract/guidelines for the group.
- Look at the process that is happening.
- Use the problem solving techniques for the group process problem.



## SECTION SIX

# RECOGNIZING EFFECTIVE TEAMS

### What Does an Effective Team Look Like, Sound Like, And Feel Like?

1. Members do not ignore seriously intended contributions.

Each member needs to know the effect of his/her remarks if they are to improve the way they participate in the team. When other members do not respond, the speaker cannot know whether:

- they did not understand her remark,
- they understood it and agreed with it,
- they understood it but disagreed with it, or
- they understood it but thought it was irrelevant.

When this principle is followed, the discussion is cumulative and the group moves together. When it is not followed, the discussion becomes scattered, the same points are made over and over and members feel no progress occurring.

2. Members check to make sure they know what a speaker means before they agree or disagree with the contribution.

First ask, *What is it?* Follow with the question, *How do we feel about it?* Understanding should come before evaluation. Thus, group members frequently use paraphrase, perception checks, and provisional summaries to clarify their assumptions of what others are saying and feeling.

3. Each member speaks only for themselves and lets others speak for themselves.

Each member states his/her reactions as his/her own. They do not attribute them to others or give the impression they are speaking for others.

Each member reports his/her own reactions honestly. Group members recognize that unless they are true to themselves, the group cannot take their feelings into account.

4. All contributions are viewed as belonging to the group, to be used or not as the group decides.

A member who makes a suggestion does not have to defend it as his/hers against the others. Instead, all accept responsibility for evaluating it as the joint property of the group.

5. All members participate, but in different and complementary ways.

When some members fulfill task functions, others carry out interpersonal functions. While some members are providing information, others are making sure it is understood and organized, or identifying points of agreement and disagreement.

Each member does not always participate in the same way. Instead, each one fulfills whatever function is appropriate to the group task, according to the information each has, and in line with the behaviour of other group members.

6. Whenever the group senses it is having trouble getting work done, the members try to find the reason.

Some symptoms of difficulty include excessive hair-splitting, repeating points over and over, not considering suggestions, conversing privately in subgroups, two or three people dominating the discussion, members taking sides and refusing to compromise, ideas being attacked before they are completely expressed, and participating apathetically.

When such symptoms occur, the group shifts easily from working on the task to discussing its own interpersonal process.

Discussing interpersonal process prevents pluralistic ignorance. For example, each member of the group is confused but thinks they are the only one.

7. The group recognizes what it does is what it has chosen to do. No group can avoid making decisions; it cannot chose whether to decide, only how to decide. Thus, an effective group makes decisions openly rather than by default.

When a group faces an issue, it must make a decision. It may agree openly to take action. It may agree openly to take no action. It may decide by default to take no action. Deciding by default not to act has the same impact on the problem as openly agreeing not to act.

However, decisions by default are felt as failures by group members and create tensions among them. A group grows more by openly agreeing not to act than by not acting because they could not agree.

The group views each decision as a provisional trial that can be carried out, evaluated, and revised in light of experience. The group is aware each decision need not be everything or nothing, and need not last forever.

When the group makes a decision that it does not carry out, it recognizes the *real* decision was one not to act, although the *apparent* decision was to act. The group openly discusses why the apparent and real decision were not the same. They try to learn why some members agreed with the decision although they felt no personal commitment to carry it out.

The group makes decisions in different ways depending upon the kind of issue and the importance of the outcome. The group may vote, delegate the decision to a special subgroup, flip a coin, or require complete consensus. The crucial factor is the group has agreement on the way it makes decisions.

8. The group brings conflict into the open and deals with it.

The members recognize conflict as inevitable. They know the choice is theirs as to whether the conflict will be open (subject to group control) or disguised (out of control).

9. The group looks upon behaviour that hinders its work as happening because the group allows or even wants it; not just as the result of a “problem member”.

A person who continually introduces irrelevancies can change the topic only if other members follow his/her lead. Instead of labeling them as the problem, the group considers this tactic a group problem. They determine why they all let it happen. Perhaps the other members

welcome this digression as a way of avoiding the open conflict that would occur if they stayed on the topic.

Likewise, the person who talks too much ... jokes too much ... continually attacks others ... or never participates, is a sign of a problem shared by the total group. The group needs to discuss it openly as “our problem” to eliminate the disruption. The group gives helpful information to individuals about the impact of their actions on the group. It does not, however, analyze, dissect, or work them over.

(adapted from material developed by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory, Oregon)

## Teamwork Lessons from Geese

1. As each bird flaps its wings, it creates an uplift for others behind it. There is 71 per cent more flying range in V-formation than in flying alone.  
**Lesson:** People who share a common direction and a sense of common purpose can get there more quickly.
2. Whenever a goose flies out of formation, it quickly feels drag and tries to get back into position to take advantage of the lift of the birds in front.  
**Lesson:** It’s harder to do something alone than together if we are all headed in the same direction.
3. When the lead goose tires, it rotates back in the group and another goose flies in front.  
**Lesson:** Shared leadership and interdependence give us each a chance to lead as well as support.
4. The geese in formation honk from behind to encourage those up front to keep up their speed.  
**Lesson:** Make sure your honking is encouraging to others rather than discouraging!
5. When a goose gets sick or wounded and falls, two geese fall out and stay with it until it is able to fly, or dies. Then they catch up or join another flock.  
**Lesson:** Stand by your colleagues and team members in difficult times as well as in good ones.

## Quality Team Checklist

### ***Timelines***

Punctual. All work presented on time as assigned and / or agreed upon

### ***Cooperation and Teamwork***

Willing to work, courteous, able to get along with group members

### ***Responsibility***

Able to complete work agreed upon, good interpersonal skills, willing to accept extra work

### ***Adaptability and Versatility***

Able to adjust as needed to suit changing group needs and timelines.

### ***Quality of Work***

Accurate and consistent standard of work produced, good ideas and research.

### ***Initiative***

Individual saw what needed to be done, initiated improvement, did good research.

### ***Dependability***

Able to work well with minimum supervision, always on time, trustworthy

### ***Attendance***

Was punctual, gave advance notice of absence, attended all meetings

### ***Communications***

Able to express ideas clearly and engage in positive and fruitful discussions

### ***Contribution***

Able to make high quality contributions to the group's effort

## **APPENDIX A**

# **EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS CONFERENCE BOARD OF CANADA**

## Employability Skills Profile

### *The Critical Skills Required of the Canadian Work Force*

#### **Personal Management Skills**

The combination of skills, attitudes and behaviours required to get, keep and progress on a job and to achieve the best results.

*Canadian employers need a person who can demonstrate:*

#### **Positive Attitudes and Behaviours**

- self-esteem and confidence
- honesty, integrity and personal ethics
- a positive attitude toward learning, growth and personal health
- initiative, energy and persistence to get the job done

#### **Responsibility**

- the ability to set goals and priorities in work and personal life
- the ability to plan and manage time, money and other resources to achieve goals
- accountability for actions taken

#### **Adaptability**

- a positive attitude toward change
- recognition of and respect for people's diversity and individual differences
- the ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the job done creatively

#### **Teamwork Skills**

- Those skills needed to work with others on a job and to achieve the best results.

*Canadian employers need a person who can:*

#### **Work with Others**

- understand and contribute to the organization's goals
- understand and work within the culture of the group
- plan and make decisions with others and support the outcomes
- respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group
- exercise "give and take" to achieve group results
- seek a team approach as appropriate
- lead when appropriate, mobilizing the group for high performance

**In consultation with today's employers, the Conference Board of Canada has developed this profile. It can help Canadians identify the skills they have and those they need to find and keep a job in today's competitive workplace.**

*Reprinted with the permission of the Conference Board of Canada.*

#### **Academic Skills**

- Those skills which provide the basic foundation to get, keep a progress on a job and to achieve the best results.

*Canadian employers need a person who can:*

#### **Communicate**

- understand and speak the languages in which business is conducted
- listen to, understand and learn
- read, comprehend and use written materials, including graphs, charts and displays
- write effectively in the language in which business is conducted

#### **Think**

- think critically and act logically; evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions
- understand and solve problems involving mathematics and use results
- use technology, instruments, tools and information systems effectively
- access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields (e.g., skilled trades, technology, physical sciences, arts and social sciences).

#### **Learn**

- continue to learn for life



## **APPENDIX B**

# **EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS FOR B.C. FROM *JOB FUTURES***

## Skills Most Sought by Recruiters in Small and Medium Sized Organizations\*

SKILL SET	SPECIFIC SKILLS AND QUALITIES
Knowing the business	Act with <i>common sense</i> in the work context. This means acting in a way that is sensitive and responsive to customer expectations and needs, dealing effectively with customers; talking and writing in a way this is relevant to the organization through knowledge of the business and its activities, identifying with the company.
Exploiting information technology	Be willing to learn new uses of information technology.
Behaving appropriately	Act ethically and with integrity; be productive, co-operative, accountable, responsible, flexible and positive (especially about change).
Speaking and listening	Receive, comprehend and interpret complex instructions; talk with, provide to and seek and clarify information from co-workers, customers, clients and those in authority, in person and by telephone.
Writing	Write clearly, concisely and to the point, consistently conforming to grammatical conventions and using correct spelling.
Maintaining personal standards	Be concerned with personal well-being; maintain standards of hygiene and dress which conform with an organization's expectations.
Handling numbers	Extract and record numerical data and carry out calculations with high levels of accuracy, involving addition, subtraction, multiplication, division and the use of percentages.
Responding to problems	Be alert to what is happening around one and be able to identify, investigate, evaluate and report (concisely and with clarity) orally and in writing, potential and actual problems.
Continually learning	Take responsibility for own learning, learn through working with others, from manuals and from mistakes.
Planning	Manage the use of time; master, plan and undertake a number of activities which are inter-related or overlap in time.
Working in teams	Work within and contribute to the effectiveness of a team, respecting differences; take responsibility and be willing to make decisions.
Using equipment	Set up and operate equipment that can require selection from options or different settings.
Reading	Read to extract information and to interpret instructions from short notes and prose.
<p>*Skills selected by 50% or more of respondents</p> <p>SOURCE: Employability Skills for British Columbia</p>	



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