

The Five Stages of Teams Model

Stage 1 – Forming

The _____ Stage (We're Playing Nice!)

Think about a time when you were leading a group of new employees (or even just one!). Make a list of things that were happening for you as the leader of this department or team

I was trying to figure out _____

I noticed that others were _____ to the new employee(s).

I tried to get them involved with others by _____

We're in Stage 1 when these observable team behaviors are occurring:

Politeness, tentative joining in, orienting with others personally and professionally, avoids controversy, cliques may form, need for safety and approval, attempts to define tasks, processes, and how it will be decided here, discussion of problems not relevant to the task.

We're in Stage 1 when these observable team feelings and thoughts are occurring:

Many feel excited, optimistic, and full of anticipation; others may feel suspicious, fearful, and anxious working with others; pride in being chosen for the group. What is expected of me? Why are they here? Uncertainty and apprehension.

When your team is in Stage 1, what can you do to successfully lead them onto the next stage?

Stage 2 – Storming

The _____ Stage (We're Playing Nasty!)

Think about a time when you were leading a group of employees that were struggling for power, vying for leadership roles, and involved in lots of conflict. Make a list of things that were happening for you as the leader of this department or team.

I was trying to figure out _____

I noticed that others were _____ to the new employee(s).

I tried to get them involved with others by _____

We're in Stage 2 when these observable team behaviors are occurring:

Arguing among members; vying for leadership; differences in points of view and personal style are evident; lack of role clarity; team organizing itself; power struggles and clashes; lack of consensus-seeking behaviors.

We're in Stage 2 when these observable team feelings and thoughts are occurring:

Feel defensive; confusion, loss of interest; resistance to tasks; fluctuations in attitude about the team; unsure if I agree with team's mission and purpose; question the wisdom of others; increase in tension and jealousy.

When your team is in Stage 2, what can you do to successfully lead them onto the next stage?

Stage 3 – Norming

The _____ Stage (We're Synergizing!)

Think about a time when you were leading a group of team members creating new ways of doing and being together. The group is developing cohesion; team members find they trust one another. Make a list of things that were happening for you as the leader of this department or team.

I was trying to figure out _____

I noticed that others were _____ to the new employee(s).

I tried to get them involved with others by _____

We're in Stage 3 when these observable team behaviors are occurring:

Processes and procedures are agreed upon; comfortable with relationships; focus and energy on tasks; effective conflict resolution skills; sincere attempt to make consensual decisions; balanced influence, shared problem solving; develop routines; sets and achieves task milestones.

We're in Stage 3 when these observable team feelings and thoughts are occurring:

Sense of belonging to a team; confidence is high; many feel a new ability to express criticism constructively; acceptance of all members in the team; general sense of trust; assured that everything is going to work out okay; freedom to express and contribute.

When your team is in Stage 3, what can you do to successfully lead them onto the next stage?

Stage 4 – Performing

The _____ Stage (We're Productive!)

Think about a time when you were leading a group of employees that is flexible as individuals adapt to meet the needs of other team members and customers. Make a list of things that were happening for you as the leader of this department or team.

I was trying to figure out _____

I noticed that others were _____ to the new employee(s).

I tried to get them involved with others by _____

We're in Stage 4 when these observable team behaviors are occurring:

Fully functional teams; roles are clear, interdependence; team able to organize itself; flexible members function well individually, in subgroups or as a team; better understand each other's strengths and weaknesses and insights into group processes.

We're in Stage 4 when these observable team feelings and thoughts are occurring:

Empathy for one another; high commitment; trusting friendships; fun and excitement; lots of personal development and creativity; general sense of satisfaction; continual discovery of how to sustain feelings of momentum and enthusiasm.

When your team is in Stage 4, what can you do to successfully keep your team functioning in this stage?

Stage 5 – Adjourning

The _____ Stage (We're Ending!)

Think about a time when you were leading a group of employees that are leaving and/or there is significant change to the team structure, membership, or purpose, and the team is experiencing change and transition. Make a list of things that were happening for you as the leader of this department or team.

I was trying to figure out _____

I noticed that others were _____ to the new employee(s).

I tried to get them involved with others by _____

We're in Stage 5 when these observable team behaviors are occurring:

Visible signs of grief, crying, withdrawn, anger; momentum slows down; picking up trivial projects; rehashing old issues; absence from meetings; restless behavior; bursts of extreme energy sometimes followed by lack of energy.

We're in Stage 5 when these observable team feelings and thoughts are occurring:

Sadness; humor (that to outsiders could appear cruel); others feel frustrated at not being recognized; underappreciated; increased discontent; general hilarity.

When your team is in Stage 5, what can you do to successfully lead your team in reforming them?