

It has been found that when a group forms there are specific phases that the group and members go through. Bruce Tuckman’s model of group development presents each of these phases—Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing, and Adjourning. Knowing and understanding the intricacies of how a group develops and works together will benefit your student organization and help it to reach effectiveness in no time!

This model is not a linear one. At times the organization may regress to the previous stage, especially if membership changes. Patience and diligence by the officers, members, and the advisor will keep the group moving in the right direction.

Stage of Development	Description	Examples of What this Looks Like	Role of Leaders
Forming	The group first comes together and begins to meet. The group establishes their base level of expectations, and begin to get to know each other and develop some initial trust.	Members may be feeling a combination of excitement and uncertainty. Everyone is guarded, as trust may not be fully formed yet. The group may be very dependent on the leader. Meeting may be unproductive. The group may struggle to make decisions together, and people may each be doing their own thing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing structure for the team. • Helping to clarify roles and responsibilities. • Encouraging all group members to participate • Facilitate the group learning about each other and how you prefer to work together. • Encourage open communication.
Storming	The group is working through how to problem solve and make decisions together, and may hit some stumbling blocks. These are commonly related to issues of power and control	Things start to get a little more real. Frustrations/tensions between leaders and/or members may arise. The group will start to examine processes and edit/improve those that are not working.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assist in leading the group through conflict resolution. • Consider involving the advisor in assisting with the process. • Provide space for members to share their concerns in a productive manner. • Help all leaders to get to a place where they are comfortable asking for help.

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Norming	The group strives for harmony, and works to improve communication, listening and empowerment of each other. There is greater agreement about the roles and responsibilities, and expectations are further clarified. This is where individuals start to really feel part of a team.	Communication is more open and honest. Trust is evident within the group. Individuals are giving and receiving feedback. Group members are willing to take on more responsibility. Planning becomes more proactive than reactive.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage consensus-based decision making. • Encourage feedback. • Delegate tasks and roles to team members. • Evaluate and review communication processes.
Performing	Members are committed to the team, and have found their stride in working together. The group is not only comfortable working with each other, they are also able to collaborate with other organizations effectively. Goals are being accomplished.	Members feel ownership of the organization and there is a strong sense of pride. Leaders are able to work without needing a ton of direction. They are multi-skilled and flexible, and willing to go above and beyond.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As a team, set challenging goals. • Develop opportunities for members to contribute and grow in their leadership. • Allow opportunities for members to shadow leadership positions.
Adjourning	The group concludes their time together. This may happen at the end of the academic year, as officer terms come to a close and new leaders are selected. The group assesses their accomplishments, celebrates, and prepares for transition.	The group completes its tasks. Some members may be leaving, while others are continuing. Those continuing should prepare for the cycle to begin again. Members may have a mix of emotions as the group concludes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Celebrate the accomplishments of the group. • Assist the group in determining new goals once current ones have been reached. • Ensure a successful transition between incoming and outgoing officers

Adapted from Officer Transition Workshop Handout

Revised May 13, 2015

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