

QUICK TIPS

Effective Group Practices

Members do not ignore seriously intended ideas or contributions.

Members check to make sure they know what a speaker means by their contribution before they agree or disagree.

Each member speaks only for him/herself and lets others speak for themselves.

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

All members participate but in different, complementary ways.

Whenever the group senses it is having trouble getting work done, it tries to find out why.

The group makes decisions openly rather than by default.

Though they may not always agree with the majority decision, members accept it and work together.

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



GROUP
DEVELOPMENT

TIGER BITS is a publication of the Center for Student Involvement. Copies available in the CSI, lower level rm. 014, FHSU Memorial Union, Fort Hays State University 628-4664.



CSI staff offer programs and consultation in these and other areas of personal and organizational leadership.

Information adapted from the Student Organization and Leadership Development Center at The University of Kansas

Group Development

Through understanding the stages of group development, leaders are able to assess the needs, plan the direction and prepare for the future of the group. Also, understanding the theory of group development aids leaders in determining realistic expectations about group behavior.

According to the Tuckman Model of Group Development, a group's growth is:

sequential - stages occur in a specifically stated order developmental - issues and concerns in each stage must be resolved in order for the group to move to the next stage

thematic - each stage is characterized by two dominant themes, one reflecting the task dimension and one reflecting the relationship dimension.

The four stages are FORMING, STORMING, NORMING and PERFORMING.

Initial stage: FORMING

Task behavior is an attempt to become oriented to the goals and procedures of the group.

Having plenty of information available is critical at this stage.

Relationship issues revolve around resolving dependency issues and testing, which can be sped up by making leadership roles clear and getting the group acquainted.

Second stage: STORMING

Involves resistance to task demands and hostility in relationships.

Members challenge the group's leadership. Leader should provide clarification about role.

Excessive storming leads to anxiety and tension whereas suppressed storming leads to resentment and bitterness.

Conflict resolution is often the goal, but learning conflict management is just as important because as new situations develop, the group may briefly return to this stage.

Third stage: NORMING

Characterized by cooperation.

Task themes include communication and expression while cohesion is the relationship theme.

Team building efforts increase group unity and increase shared responsibility.

Fourth stage: PERFORMING

Encourages cooperation.

Task theme is problem-solving is problem solving and the relationship theme is interdependence.

At this stage, the group is functioning efficiently to achieve group goals.

Group members will assume roles that are necessary to achieve goals, learning interdependence with interdependence.

It is beneficial to encourage a continued developmental theme for the group to stimulate new problems for their problem solving.

While some groups will try to jump from Forming to Performing to immediately accomplish a task, others will consistently revert to Storming after once being Norming. The thing to remember is that the stages are sequential, and even if the group jumps around, the leader can still encourage and help the group no matter what stage the group is in or back in.

After determining what stage the group is in, it would be good to meet with the officers and advisor(s) to make plans for group growth.

Check out the Tiger Bits on Icebreakers and Team Building for more ideas.