

# Group Work Primer

Dr. Bean - Stat 5100

## 1 How groups form

Understanding the Tuckman (1965) phases of group work, as summarized in Cullen and Calitz (2015) (see Figure 1), helps to articulate how groups develop.

- Form
  - Desire for acceptance
  - Reliance of group leader
  - Largely superficial interactions
- Storm
  - Competition and conflict among group members as task functions organize
- Norm
  - Group members acknowledge contributions of others
  - Group cohesion develops
- Perform
  - Group members truly interdependent on each other
  - Group produces successful outcomes
- Adjourning
  - Group member relationships end (in the group setting capacity anyway)

How many of you have been in groups that never made it past the “storm” phase?

Why do so many groups never make it to the “perform” stage?

## 2 Potential Group Member Roles

- Fearless Leader
  - Assigns tasks (with the consent of the group) and organizes meetings
  - Makes sure the group keeps momentum through regular communication
- Programmer Extraordinaire
  - Keeps track of all SAS (or other) code that group members write
  - Ensures that the submitted code is well documented (informative code comments), clean, and organized
- Editor-in-Chief
  - Synthesizes the writing contributions of each member into a document with one, consistent voice
  - Should be the owner of the master file of the paper and be aware of all edits made to this file
- Data Guru
  - Manages a copy of the master dataset
  - Understands the meaning of each variable
  - Ensures that the data description in the report and presentation are accurate
- Articulate Ambassador
  - Conducts all communication with instructor regarding the project
  - Is the person in charge of turning in all group assignments

## 3 Next Steps

Each group should

- Establish roles and expectations for each member
- Decide when you will meet next (be aware of final project deadlines)
- Decide on a group name and send this to Dr. Bean ASAP

## References

- Cullen, M. and Calitz, A. P. (2015). Social team building for mba study group cohesion. In *9th International Business Conference (IBC 2015), Victoria Falls, Zambia*, pages 1–21.
- Tuckman, B. W. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological bulletin*, 63(6):384.

## Stages of group development

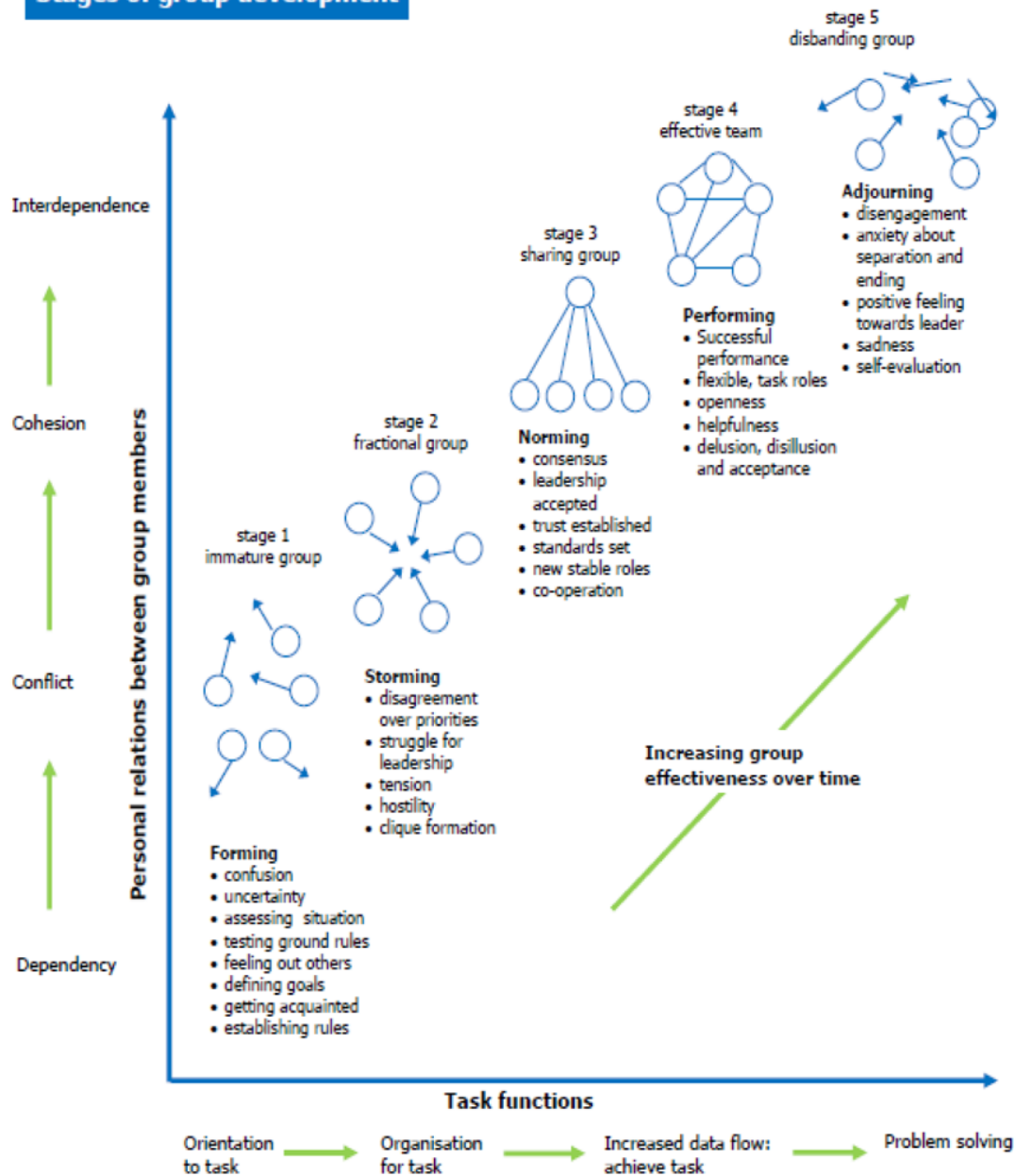


Figure 1: Tuckman's stages of group development (image taken from Cullen and Calitz (2015)).