

Activity Introduction: Forming Teams

Why?

This section explains why you are doing this activity.

This semester you will frequently do in-class activities in teams. This activity introduces the activity format and helps you establish your team.

Learning Objectives

This section lists the overall goals the activity is intended to help you master.

- Understand how in-class activities work
- Understand what a team is and how teams are established

Success Criteria

This section explains what you ought to be able to do once you have mastered the material in this activity.

- Be able to explain what a team is, what roles are, and how teams form
- Be able to form a team and assign roles to team members

Resources

This section lists what you will need to do the activity.

Your past experience working on teams and the Reading below.

Vocabulary

This section lists the terms you should master during this activity.

Team, forming, storming, norming, performing, role

Plan

This section explains exactly what you and your team should do to complete this activity.

1. Study the Reading selection below individually.
2. Answer the Key Questions individually, and then evaluate the answers as a team.
3. Do the Exercises, Problems, and Assessment as a team.
4. Turn in a list of team members and their roles and answers to the Assessment questions as your team deliverable (a **deliverable** is something that you deliver, that is, turn in to the instructor).

Reading

This section contains material you need to read to complete the activity. Often this section is not needed; sometimes it is a Case Study.

A **team** is a group of people sufficiently committed to achieving common goals that they are willing to alter their values, habits, and preferences to achieve the group's goals.

Team effectiveness depends on two factors:

- The capabilities of individual team members and
- The ability of team members to work together effectively.

Teams can increase their ability to work effectively by developing skills in listening, trusting, decision-making, conflict-resolution, negotiating, meeting facilitation, effective meeting skills, and avoiding team-damaging behaviors.

A group of people becomes a team over time. The following stages are a common process for developing a strong team.

Forming—Team members get to know and trust one another.

Storming—The team turns to its task and begins to work on solutions to problems.

Norming—The team achieves some success in accomplishing its goals and establishes effective cooperative processes.

Performing—The team has achieved stable structures and processes and works at its maximum effectiveness.

A **role** is an organized set of beliefs and behaviors associated with a position in a team. Roles may include job functions, attitudes, values, interaction styles, responsibilities, and authority. Roles are present whether we are aware of them or not, and it is probably better to choose and assign roles than to just let them happen.

Assigning roles is part of the Forming stage of team development.

Key Questions

This section lists questions that all team members should be able to answer when they have studied the Resources.

1. What is the difference between a group and a team?
2. What team development stage is your team in right now?
3. What is a role?

Exercises

This section has one or more questions that the team works on to practice problem-solving and design skills and to extend the application of the material in the activity.

1. How long do you think a team might spend in each stage of team development?
2. Name five roles that might be present in a team.

Problems

This section has one or more questions that require the team to analyze problems, apply abilities or knowledge to new situations, or synthesize materials in a new way.

1. Define roles for your team. Make sure you have a role whose duties include writing the team deliverable, and a role whose duties include making sure the team finishes on time.
2. List the team members assigned to the roles you have defined.

Assessment (Deliverable)

This section has one or more questions aimed at helping the team to improve its performance or the instructor to improve the activity.

1. What did your team do especially poorly or well?
2. How could you improve your team's performance next time?