

yourmembership[®]
.com

INDUSTRY TRENDS
GROWING YOUR TEAM

Growing Your Team

Written by Cynthia D'Amour, MBA

Regina was frustrated. At the chapter's leadership retreat, everyone seemed committed to making a difference. It felt good to be in the room. Two months later, people are now bickering about turf - and nothing seems to be getting done!

Where did the love go? The new leadership team is simply following the normal life cycle for teams - they just don't realize it. As a leader, it's important for you to understand the phases of team development so you can guide your team through it. The four phases of team development were originally identified by Bruce W. Tuckman in the mid-1960's. They still hold true today.

The four phases are:

- Forming
- Storming
- Norming
- Performing

Forming is what happens at your leadership retreat or first meeting.

Everyone comes with company manners and is nice to each other. You might do the bonding games or talk about all you'll achieve together. You walk out (hopefully) pumped up and feel almost like this is a fresh love. Then reality hits. At the next meeting, the turf wars begin. Members jockey for acknowledged expertise in an area.

- Marvin knows how it's always been.
- Bettina dominates marketing discussions.

The meeting may feel uncomfortable. You may wonder what you were thinking when you agreed to serve on the team! The storming process has begun. Teammates are diligently working to identify who does what and knows what. There will be pressure on how the team works together and challenges to how the team accepts diverse opinions around the table. The bright light at the end of what may be uncomfortable is the establishment of group norms.

Once a team makes it through storming the world becomes a better place again.

You polish the norms resulting from the storm, trust grows and progress picks up speed. When norms are clear, performing becomes much easier to do.

- Jill is the detail queen.
- Max asks lots of questions.
- Sam has fabulous contacts.
- Pam knows what volunteers want.
- And so forth.

It's almost as if you can read everyone's mind.

Your team is high-performing and life is good.

Of course, there are some challenges to the process. Many teams never get beyond storming.

- Leaders may not understand what is going on.
- They allow things to get personal.
- Motivation drops and volunteers disappear.

INDUSTRY
TRENDS

Growing Your Team

Written by Cynthia D'Amour, MBA

- Little gets done.

Teaching your new team the four phases can help members move through the storming phase - without destroying the team.

Another challenge...

Any time a new member joins the team or someone drops from the team, the process usually kicks back to the storming phase. In a volunteer environment, team members can change frequently. You need to be extra aware when new people join your team or others disappear. Notice what happens. Give your members the tools they need to survive the storming process and work through to norming. Awareness of what's going on in your team and what phase you are in can smooth the growth of your team - and keep volunteers engaged.

- Do all of your leaders understand the phases of team development?
- What phase is your board and various committees currently in?
- How do you know and what is your leadership team doing to help the teams move forward?

About the Author

Cynthia D'Amour, MBA, is the author of *The Lazy Leader's Guide to Outrageous Results*, founder of the Chapter Leaders Playground, and is a frequent speaker at leadership conferences. Follow Cynthia on Twitter @CynthiaDAmour or on her blog. Join Cynthia live by attending one of the Get More Volunteers Now! Workshops across America this year. Click [here](#) for more information or to register.

INDUSTRY
TRENDS