Models for Teams

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INTRODUCTION

This is an A to Z guide and resource book of the best models for teams currently available for trainers, teachers, coaches, mentors and learning facilitators. Line managers interested in the further development of their staff will find the book of particular interest when helping groups reach their full potential. Students studying for qualifications in the training, coaching and teaching profession will also find the book a useful jargon buster and introduction to difficult concepts in team development and behavioural psychology. In fact, anybody interested in the exciting and intriguing world of team management will find the book a fascinating collection of team management and development models, and a source of information to be dipped into as the urge or need arises. You don't have to spend years delving into texts about learning psychology to acquire the information to meet your needs as a team manager. It's all in this book in an easily accessible and understandable form. In fact, this book required a major effort, though a labour of love, on the author's part, requiring thousands of hours of dedicated study, research, reading, and writing. It is also a reflection of the author's experience over many years lecturing, training and coaching in industry and academic colleges.

A total of 8 models are covered. The models range from Belbin's Team Roles to the Team Development Model. In between you will encounter many other models, some of which are critical to a good understanding of team management training and development. The topics It took this eclectic source of information to reveal the secrets of team management.

The models will team leaders to improve their team management skills. The models will help trainers and managers grasp some seemingly daunting and esoteric topics and will enable them to build the models into appropriate sessions as core concepts, making them enjoyable and understandable for learners.

Mnemonics in the form of acronyms have been used throughout the text as a memory aid to make some of the models more memorable. The acronym SPECIFIC will help readers recall the vital roles that Belbin maintains are necessary for a successful team.

Most of the models will be of interest to OD consultants and line managers interested in the development of their staff. Each model is accompanied by an illustrative diagram and appropriate quotation. The diagrams will help users to grasp the key concepts behind the model quickly and easily. A conclusion is reached on each model showing its strengths and weaknesses and relevance to learning. Each model is discussed in a user-friendly manner making them more accessible to line managers, trainers, coaches, mentors, teachers and students alike. This will enable these professionals to incorporate the models into their training sessions as appropriate. Detailed references are provided to enable users to research the topics in more depth if they wish.

Good luck in your quest for excellence in the learning, training and development, coaching, mentoring and teaching areas.

Samuel A Malone November 2018

1 BELBIN TEAM ROLES

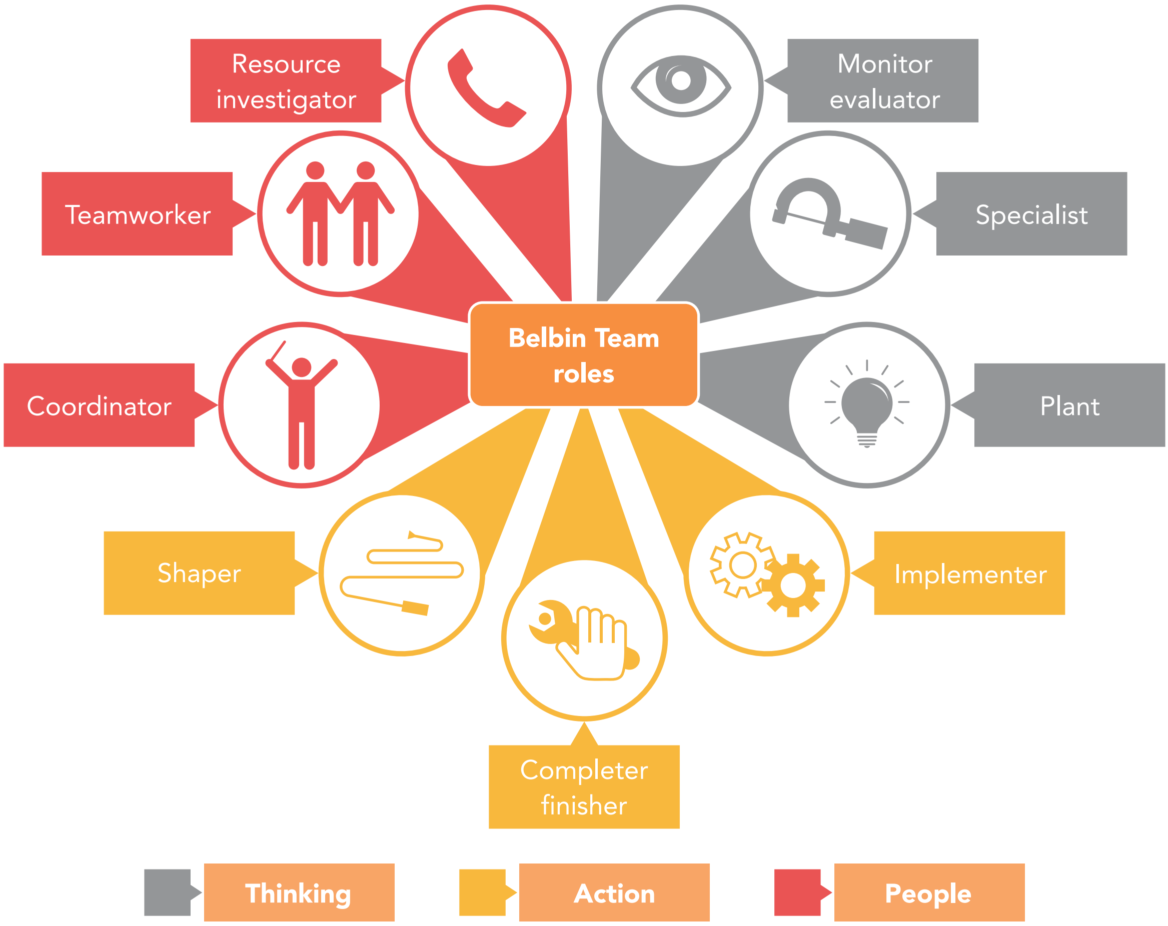

Fig. 1. Belbin Team Roles

The following group roles are based on the work of Dr. Meredith Belbin. These roles determine group effectiveness. In practice, team members can adopt multiple roles. The acronym **SPECIFIC** will help you recall the key roles:

- **S**haper. The shaper shapes the way the team effort is applied, imposing a pattern on group discussion. The shaper directly influences the decisions and thinking of the team.
- **P**lant. The plant provides the creative ideas for the team. They may be intellectually dominant, solving problems and putting forward new strategies. Their concern for ideas may overshadow their sensitivity to other people's needs.
- **E**valuator. The evaluator is rational and analytical. They stick to the facts. Whereas the plant if good at ideas the evaluator is good at assessing their practicality.
- **C**ompany worker. These are the pragmatists. The get the general ideas and convert them into action plans and programmes.
- **I**nvestigator of resources. The person looks for ideas and resources outside the group to support the team's work. These people are good at networking.

- **F**inisher. They focus the energies of the group on completing the task. They make sure the job is done on time and to a high standard.
- **I**deal team worker. They are good at maintaining the cohesiveness of the group. They have excellent interpersonal relationship skills, are sensitive to group member's needs and support the group process.
- **C**hairman. The manager of the group. Gets work done through others. Controls and co-ordinates group activities. Has strong leadership skills. Inspires the group with vision and mission statements.

Conclusion

Belbin's roles are a comprehensive list of the key roles needed in a successful team. Creative teams need a balance of all these roles with complementary characteristics to one another. Belbin claims that good examples of the eight types would prove adequate for any challenge, although not all eight types are necessarily needed. Other members may be welcome for their sense of humour and good interpersonal relationship skills, but experience suggests there is no other team-role that would be useful to add. The role adopted by a team member is not fixed but may change according to circumstances.

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2 BENNE AND SHEAT'S GROUP ROLES

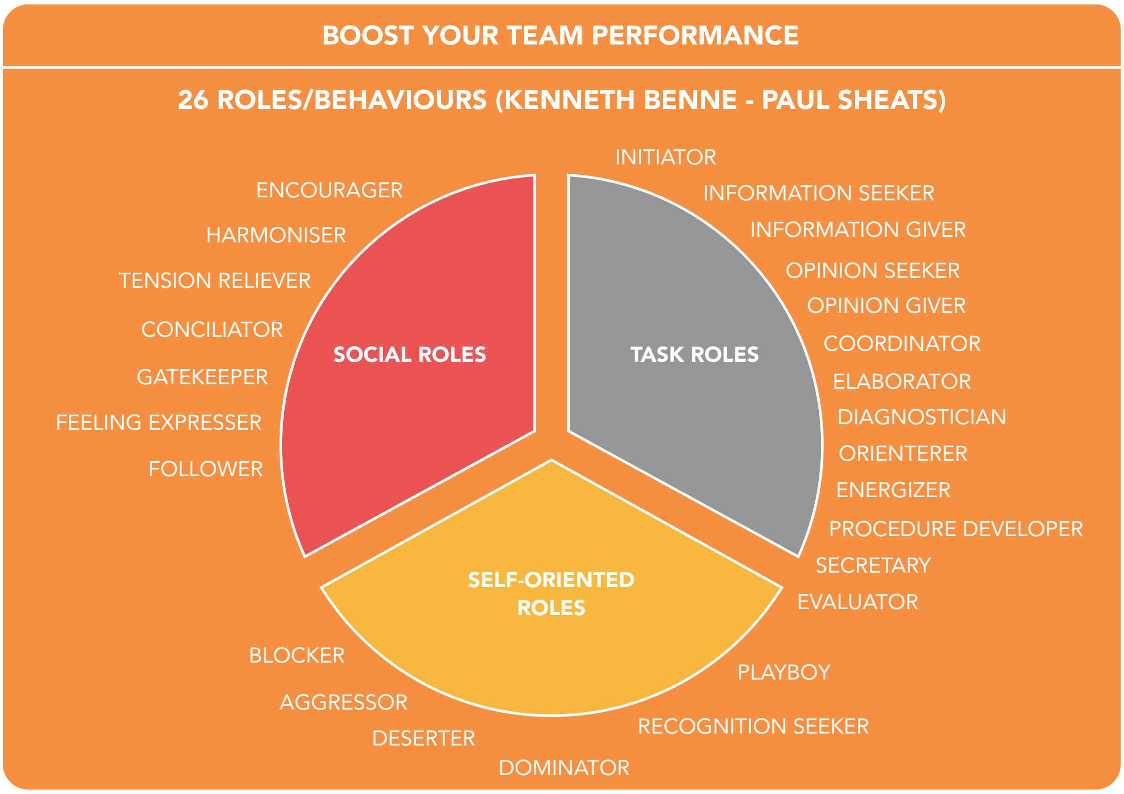

Fig. 2. Benne & Sheat's Group Roles

> "Individual commitment to a group effort – that is what makes a team work, a company work, a society work, a civilization work."
>
> – Vince Lombardi

As private citizens each of us performs many roles in life – as parents, partners, accountants, volunteers, part-time students and members of sporting organisations. Within the organisations we work for we also perform many roles. Each role requires a different perspective and different talents to perform satisfactorily. Some people may even have the aptitudes to perform many roles in a satisfactory manner at the same time. This flexible approach means that the talents of the team members are utilized to the full.

So, it's not surprising that Kenneth Benne and Paul Sheats developed a model of team roles as shown above in 1948. While there have been many other popular models of group development since then, the Benne and Sheats model remains a useful, persuasive and interesting way of looking at team processes and interactions.

They divided their model into three broad categories – task roles, social maintenance roles and dysfunctional/self-oriented /individualistic roles. The task roles are needed to coordinate and facilitate the group and get the job done. The social roles are needed to maintain interpersonal relationships, communication and sustain harmony within the group. Both task and social roles are critical to the team achieving its goals. On the other hand, the dysfunctional roles are negative and disruptive and do not help the team achieve its goals. Therefore, they must be managed and discouraged so that the work of the group is not sabotaged. These categories are further divided as shown in the diagram above. For simplicity and clarity, I have diverged slightly from the diagram above and combined some roles which I deem to be somewhat similar.

The task roles are:

- ***Initiator.*** The initiator is the ideas person and is good at generating and exploring ideas. He is a great person for coming up with alternatives and recommending what the best option is based on the facts involved.
- ***Information seeker/giver.*** This person ascertains what we know and what we don't know. In relation to what we don't know this person is a good researcher and well able to find out what the group needs to know. He may suggest reliance on facts rather than opinions. He is a good communicator and likes clarifying issues. He is looked upon as an authority figure and role model with a good grasp of knowledge in his area of expertise. He is therefore in a position to offer facts to the group and is not slow to give views, opinions and share his beliefs with others.
- ***Opinion seeker/giver.*** This person asks for information and inputs from others with a view to developing different perspectives. He loves to win the approval of significant others in the group. At the same time, he is not slow to give his own views and opinions and share his beliefs with others about what the group should do. He encourages others to speak by giving them opportunities to do so.

- ***Coordinator.*** This person is good at demonstrating the relationship between ideas by linking and associating them with other relevant information. He is good at getting to the crux of issues, showing contradictions and knows how to summarize, integrate, and pull ideas together so that and they are meaningful and useful to the group.
- ***Elaborator.*** He is good at explaining, elaborating and considering issues. He does this by supporting them with facts, data, examples, demonstrations and illustrations. This helps the group grasp issues quickly.
- ***Diagnostician.*** He is good at identifying problems, looking at them in a systematic way and offering solutions. Like a good scientist his views are evidence based and supported by research. He is a great asset to the group as every group needs someone who will get to the crux of issues and solve problems.
- ***Orienter.*** He may shift the direction of the discussion in order to get it back on track or target, if discussions are missing the point or irrelevant. Keeping discussion on track means that meetings are focused on the business they need to do so that they are more productive and effective.
- ***Energisor.*** This person's great energy, persistence and commitment are contagious and prod the members to action. This keeps the group passionate about the task and motivated to get it done.
- ***Procedure developer/secretary.*** This person organizes all the resources needed to run the meetings such as stationery, accommodation, resources and equipment. Without his assistance tasks would not be performed as efficiently and effective. The secretary is the administrator and does the paperwork such as issuing agendas, maintaining the order of business and keeping the minutes of the meetings.
- ***Evaluator.*** He is the critic of what's going on and provides positive and negative feedback as appropriate. He sets standards and measures actual results against the standards so that performance standards are kept up and progress maintained.

The social maintenance roles are:

- ***Encourager.*** This person affirms, praises, and supports the work of the group. He is a morale booster, and his positive attitude and warm personality is contagious, and helps the group to feel good about themselves. His contribution should not be undervalued as he assists the group to keep going when faced with difficulties, frustrations and disappointments.
- ***Harmonizer/tension reliever/conciliator.*** This person is the peacemaker and helps the group attend to the business in a calm, cool and civilized manner. He is good at compromising on issues and meeting people half-way. He has excellent mediation skills, and through appropriate humour at the appropriate time, can help to reduce tension and avoid potential sources of conflict and in-fighting.

- ***Gatekeeper.*** The gatekeeper keeps communication channels open. He encourages the participation of all within the group. He facilitates open conversations and provides opportunities for everyone to speak. He particularly encourages the shy and diffident ones to speak while discouraging the talkative ones and those who monopolize the conversation.
- ***Feelings expresser.*** He is an observer and commentator on how the group is doing and provides appropriate feedback both good and bad. He is good at expressing the mood of the team.
- ***Follower.*** The follower follows rather than leads and warmly accepts others' ideas. He is quite willing to take direction from others and is an excellent listener. Leaders need followers for credibility, support, survival and success.

Dysfunctional roles are:

- ***Blocker.*** The blocker is hostile to others' ideas and basically disagrees with everybody within the group. This discourages communication and debate and creates feelings of dissatisfaction, unhappiness and ill-will within the group. This person not only blocks other peoples' ideas but also belittles their feelings and undermines their status with insulting comments. This may hinder the cohesion, productivity and effectiveness of the group.
- ***Aggressor/deserter.*** The aggressor has a condescending manner and is good at knocking others down with his demeaning and insulting remarks. The aggression hides an unfulfilled ambitious which the aggressor does not know how to meet. The deserter feels helpless and inadequate and is loyal to himself rather than others and so is no use to the group.
- ***Dominator.*** The dominator acts like he is the boss. He likes to pull rank and to be in charge. He is a manipulator and monopolizer of events if given scope to do so.
- ***Recognition seeker.*** This person is an egotist and wants to always be the centre of attention. He has an air of self-importance and loves to boast about his accomplishments.
- ***Playboy.*** The playboy avoids work, wastes time and loves to be having fun all the time. This type of behaviour can be quite disruptive to people in the group with a more serious disposition who want to get things done and achieve results.

Conclusion

Leaders of groups want to optimize performance and group development by assigning roles in the most productive way. A familiarity with the Benne and Sheats model should provide the leader of a group with a tool for diagnosing problems within the team. At a basic level he knows that personality and attitude play a huge part in how a team performs. Some people are suited to certain roles depending on their unique talents and strengths and weaknesses. They are helpful and supportive and focused on getting the job done. On the other hand, some are not suitable because of their dysfunctional personalities and negative attitudes which cause friction, disharmony or discord within the team. This means that it is important to pick the right people for the right roles if you want to maximize the performance of the team.

In addition to the personalities of the group members, the leader must also consider the physical setting, the nature of the group's task, his style of leadership and the group's motivation to perform the task. The leader must at all times encourage productive behaviours within the team and discourage dysfunctional or destructive ones. Coaching should be provided if necessary to eliminate the behaviours counterproductive to the success of the team.

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3 COG'S LADDER OF GROUP DEVELOPMENT

Fig. 3. Cog's Ladder of Group Development

"Teamwork – coming together is a beginning
Keeping together is progress
Working together is success."

– Henry Ford

The ladder of group development was first proposed by George Charrier, a Proctor and Gamble manager in 1972. Although published in 1972 it is still as relevant today as it was then. Charrier was interested in the natural progression of evolutionary stages that a team went through. He identified the five stages as polite, why are we here? power, co-operation and esprit. These stages are somewhat similar to Tuckman's stages of forming, storming, norming and performing. The five stages of Cog's model in more detail are:

1. ***Polite.*** When people get together first they are shy, reserved and suspicious of each other's intentions. They are inclined to make judgements about other people's personalities, and this may lead to the creation of stereotypes for understanding the different types of characters and ease of reference. Because at this early stage they do not trust each other, they are reluctant to share personal information about

their backgrounds and interests. At the same time, their natural curiosity suggests that they are eager to find out about one another, get acquainted and make friends. The best way to make friends is to reveal something personal about yourself in the hope that others will return the favour and do likewise. They also want to gauge what their individual strengths and weaknesses are. They like to create a friendly non-threatening atmosphere and win approval so that people will feel relaxed and comfortable in each other's company. This will lay the foundations for what is to come and make the transition to a team easier. Even at this early stage people with common concerns form into cliques for support.

2. ***'Why are we here?'*** People want to know what their purpose and goals are. There should be no hidden agendas. A good clear agenda from the start will help the process along. It is important that this is agreed at an early stage. At this early stage people are still operating as individuals and a group identity is still far off. In the meantime, people want to fit in, form structures such as chairperson and secretary and identify roles for the members which will help them get down to business. Roles will naturally be defined and evolve from interaction and discussion determined largely by people's strengths and weaknesses.

3. ***Power.*** Competition is a natural trait of human beings and as a group evolves into a team there will follow a jockeying for recognition, influence and power. There is a lot of pent up energy and latent hostility to be released. Conflicts may emerge which means that very little constructive business will be achieved. This is where a good chairperson comes into play to monitor and control proceedings, making sure that important business is got through and conflict is resolved quickly. Members should get an equal chance to make their opinions known and the reserved ones should be given extra support and encouragement to express their views.
4. ***Co-operation.*** This is also known as the constructive stage. At this stage the power struggles will have calmed down, interpersonal conflicts will have been settled, and teamwork improved. There are more acceptances of new ideas, opinions and points of view. People are more tolerant of each other and personality clashes are few and far between. The group identity is beginning to emerge, cliques have dissolved and feelings of camaraderie, co-operation and collaboration have developed. People now frequently ask questions and actively listen to one another. Members realise that they have a right to have different value and belief systems, and therefore there is more acceptance of different viewpoints. There is more respect, trust and tolerance between the members of the emerging team.
5. ***Esprit.*** The esprit de corps stage has been reached with feelings of loyalty, respect, belonging, pride and shared purpose by the group. They consider themselves different and privileged from other people in a special way. They feel like a cohesive harmonious family, with high levels of trust and productivity. They are ready to take on the world. Morale and motivation are high in the group. They are now united in their approach to common issues facing the team and levels of creativity and collaboration are at exceptional levels. Disharmony within the team is no longer an issue and members at this stage respect each other and just agree to disagree.

Conclusion

Team development follows a determined evolutionary cycle of polite, where are we now? power, co-operation and esprit. This is similar to other cycles of team development proposed by other authors such as Tuckman with his stages of forming, storming, norming and performing. Team development takes time and the team becomes more productive and more effective as time goes by. The cycle of development has proved to be a powerful tool to help managers understand the nature of teams and predict and monitor their development.

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4 COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

Fig. 4. Community of Practice

> **"Communities of practice are groups of people who share a concern or passion for something they do and who interact regularly to learn how to do it better."**
>
> **– Etienne Wenger**

Communities of practice (CoP's) can be traced back to classical Greece as 'corporations' of metalworkers, masons and other craftsmen. During the middle ages, these communities gradually evolved into guilds or trade unions that set and maintained standards to protect the interests of their members. They are made up of people who trust each other and are informally bound together by shared interests, expertise and a passion for what they do. They have a common purpose and share tacit and implicit practice and knowledge and tricks of the trade.

They develop around things that matter to people. They are self-organizing, self-sufficient, self-selecting, and inherently self-sustaining. Nevertheless, they can benefit from the use of resources, such as outside experts, travel, meeting facilities and communication technology. A CoP has been defined as a group of professionals informally bound together through exposure to a common class of problems, common pursuit of solutions, and thereby themselves embodying a store of knowledge.

CoPs have become associated with knowledge management as people have begun to see them as ways of developing social capital, nurturing new knowledge and expertise, stimulating creativity and innovation, or sharing existing tacit and explicit knowledge within an organisation. It is now an accepted part of organizational development (OD) and an important part of the learning organisation. CoPs should not be confused with teams, focus groups, clubs, a community of interest, or networks of connections between people. Members of a CoP are practitioners. They share resources, stories, experiences, tools and techniques, routines, and problem-solving approaches. They address common issues, which takes time and sustained interactions. CoPs focus on people and on social structures enabling them to learn effectively with and from each other.

CoP's are everywhere and come in various sizes and shapes. We all belong to a number of them at work, at school, at home, and in our hobbies. Some are quite small, while others are very large. Some are local and some are international. Some meet face-to-face, while some meet online. Some are within a single organisation, while others include members from various organisations. Some are from the same department, while others cross departmental lines. Some are formally recognized with a budget allocated to them, while others are completely informal and invisible. Some meet formally, while others get together serendipitously on an informal basis during water cooler chats or other such casual events.

A CoP in a company is a group of people who have, and who share, special knowledge about a particular function or service within the organisation. The group need not be made up of personnel from the same department or indeed from different companies, and the special knowledge may be shared informally either in person or through e-mail networks. For example, in fast-moving industries engineers who work for suppliers and buyers may form a community of practice to keep up with constant technological changes. In fact, within companies the sharing of knowledge is often done while simply chatting during casual meetings in the corridor or dining room and during coffee breaks. Membership is self-selected, as those who join know they have a common purpose, a common store of knowledge and expertise, and thus something to share and give.

For example, customer service representative who repair photocopiers might share experience during informal meetings over breakfast, lunch and coffee. The group might swap stories about malfunctioning machines. The knowledge shared often goes beyond the codified knowledge in the repair manual. These informal exchanges are often worth more than several hours of formal training. Such tacit knowledge is created out of the experience of work and constitutes a type of social capital. Similarly, those who work in finance have a common purpose and source of expertise and may meet occasionally to swap stories and developments in their areas.

It is a combination of the following elements that make a CoP. The three key characteristics of a community of practice are:

1. *The domain.* CoPs share a defined common expertise and interest. They share a common mission or objective. This shared competence distinguishes it from other people. They develop their identities through their work and unique expertise and these distinctive identities often trigger their membership in a CoP. Even members of a youth gang may develop a shared competence of how to survive on the streets and learn from each other. They often develop a common philosophy, culture, language and identity. Few people outside the gang would recognize and value their expertise.
2. *The community.* In pursuing their common interest members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other solve problems, and share information and unique experience. They build relationships, interact, cooperate and learn from each other. They need not necessarily meet on a daily basis. The Impressionists, for instance, used to meet infrequently in cafes and studios to discuss the style of painting they were inventing together. This is an example of a CoP even though they painted alone.
3. *The practice.* Members of a CoP are practitioners. They share unique experiences, tools and techniques, a technical language, and common approaches to problem solving. Engineers in an auto plant who share similar jobs may meet occasionally to discuss the tricks of the trade which they have acquired through experience. They may troubleshoot each other's most difficult problems and design challenges. Nurses who meet for lunch in the cafeteria may discuss stories about patient care not realizing that this is an important source of knowledge and expertise about how to look after patients.

Over time members of CoPs develop group knowledge and generate intangible assets by generating and transferring knowledge and creating innovative solutions to problems. For instance, in 1999 the World Bank had over 100 CoPs around the world. These communities are in the process of connecting with each other to improve the quality of their knowledge base. The vision of the World Bank is to share knowledge about development so that all interested people can use the Internet to access information.

Some people make the distinction between 'know-what' and 'know-how.' Know-how includes the ability to put know-what into practice. HRM should put in place the conditions for creating and sustaining CoPs. This is not easy to do because such groups tend to be self-selecting and informal.

The stages of development or life cycle of a CoP are as follows:

1. Potential. People face similar situations without the benefit of a shared practice. They come together when they realise they have much in common.
2. Coalescing. Members come together and recognize their potential to share information and learn from each other. They connect together, define what they want to achieve and negotiate the way they will operate.
3. Active. Members actively engage in developing a CoP. They do this by engaging in joint activities, create tools and techniques, adapt to changing circumstances, and renew interest, commitment and relationships.
4. Dispersed. Members no longer engage very intensely, but the community is still alive as a force and a centre of knowledge. They stay in touch by seeking advice, communicating and holding reunions.
5. Memorable. The community is no longer central, but people still remember it as a significant part of their identities. They may still exchange stories and share tools and techniques.

Conclusion

Many organisations are turning to CoPs as a key way to improve their performance and competitiveness. They can be found in business, government, education, health, professional bodies, charities, development projects and civic life. The concept has been readily adopted in business because the management of knowledge has been accepted with budgetary support as a key resource in a successful business. Members share a common concern or a passion, for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly and share information.

Management must understand the advantages, disadvantages and limitations of CoPs. For example, because they are so loosely defined it may be very difficult to identify where they exist when a problem needs to be solved within the organisation. To solve this problem some companies are mapping where their CoPs are situated in the company. Another issue is the problem of transferring and combining knowledge across the company. This may require the employment of cross-functional teams to leverage knowledge from different areas, apply it, learn from it, and distribute the new knowledge back into the individual members' communities.

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5 LENCIONI'S 5 TEAM DYSFUNCTIONS

Fig. 5. Lencioni's 5 Team Dysfunctions

> **"Great teams do not hold back on one another. They are unafraid to air their dirty laundry. They admit their mistakes, their weaknesses, and their concerns without fear of reprisal."**
>
> **– Patrick Lencioni**

The Five Dysfunctions of a Team is a business book by consultant and speaker Patrick Lencioni published in 2002. It describes the many pitfalls that team members experience as they seek to develop a team. The book has been particularly popular in the sports area. The book's lessons have been applied successfully to the teams of the National Football League in the United States. As illustrated in the diagram the five dysfunctions of a team are:

1. No trust. A team cannot prosper and survive without trust, respect and honesty. If people can't trust each other they feel vulnerable to threats, criticism and manipulation when in the company of others. These feelings can be emotional and psychological in nature and can undermine the confidence of the person involved. These feels of vulnerability prevent the building of trust within the group. People like to work in an environment where they feel psychological and physically comfortable and secure and safe from threats, otherwise they will not learn at their optimum level. People like to be in control of their own destiny and pride self-reliance. To overcome these problems, they need to understand themselves and the personalities of the other team members and be familiar with their views and opinions. They thus need to invest time in getting to know, understand and empathise with the other team members, get inside their heads and appreciate their perspectives. The worst thing a team can do is to waste time and energy in defensive self-preserving behaviour rather than focusing on achieving the objectives of the group.

2. Fear of conflict. Most people prefer a quiet life and try to avoid conflict at any cost. This focus on harmony and maintaining good interpersonal relationships often means that sources of conflict and tension are hidden, avoided and stifled. It should be realised that healthy debate, discussion and disagreement can lead to new novel ideas and perspectives which will help the team to make better thought through decisions and achieve optimum results. People need to feel that they can express their opinions openly, as otherwise inferior decisions may be taken. Therefore, there is a need to strike a balance between harmony and disagreement. A certain amount of tension within a group is good and results in better decisions.
3. Lack of commitment. There is a need to win the hearts and minds of the members of the group and to win their loyalty and respect. People will support a decision that they contributed to, and be loyal to a cause that they sincerely believe and commit to and trust people that they admire. They must have a common identity with common objectives which meets their needs. Productive teams are confident that they have the support of each other. Their personal objectives and the team's objective must be in harmony as otherwise they will not be singing from the same hymn sheet. This will result in irreconcilable differences and disagreements, which will inevitable destroy the group.
4. No accountability. To create a common purpose and identity the group must focus on agreed goals which each member of the team has bought into. Members of the team must be held accountable for the achievement of results and so high standards must be maintained. Equitable standards of measurement must be agreed and accepted by all the team members so that progress can be measured in a fair way. Every member of the team must be committed to the agreed course of action, and have a personal stake in the project's success, and feel individually and collectively that they own the project.
5. Inattention to results. The emphasis must be on winning and getting the desired results for the team and forget about their own selfish needs. Personal status, inappropriate behaviours, ideas, aspirations and goals must be put to one side and subsumed to concentrate on the common goals of the team. Behaviours and actions that contribute to the success of the team should be the main focus of the team and be rewarded. The leader of the group should act as a role model for the achievement of results. He will do this by encouraging debate and conflict, making responsibilities and deadlines clear and telling team members that having feelings of vulnerability is natural.

Conclusion

Knowing the five team dysfunctions will help a leader and team members to avoid the issues that will hinder the success of the team. In practice it is much easier to spot the dysfunctions of a team and much harder to correct them. Developing tangible solutions, approaches and techniques to address the situation can be quite difficult. Most organisations are now team based and so effective teams will help you be more competitive and productive in a volatile marketplace. In particular the approach has successfully been applied to teams in sport.

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6 REVIEW – BEFORE AND AFTER ACTION

Fig. 6. Review – Before and After Action

> **"The Army's After-Action Review (AAR) is arguably one of the most successful organizational learning methods yet devised. Yet, most every corporate effort to graft this truly innovative practice into their culture has failed because, again and again, people reduce the living practice of AARs to a sterile technique."**
>
> **– Peter Senge, author of the Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organisation**

Some organisations are finding ways to incorporate reflection and experiential or practical learning into their regular activities to review and learn from past experiences and mistakes, and apply the lessons learnt to future ongoing processes, projects and events. One approach sees reflection as a powerful before, during and after-action tool for understanding the drivers of success and failure. The US Army is well known for its before action reviews (BAR) and after-action reviews (AARs). The technique is said to have been developed during the Vietnam War in extremely challenging and volatile conditions, and has been adapted since to civilian environments. Companies like Shell Oil, Colgate-Palmolive, and Harley-Davidson use BARS and AARS to identify best practices which they want to adopt, and mistakes which they want to avoid in the future. The technique can be used successfully to develop best operating standards in recurring work situations.

It is all about feedback – comparing the actual output of a process or project with the intended outcome, and then taking appropriate action based on the feedback. The feedback should be timely – done as soon as possible after the event. Lessons will be remembered better and be more likely to be implemented if this is done.

The primary goal of BAR is to make sure that everybody is singing from the same hymn sheet as regard intention and outcomes, considering shared experiences, past lessons and ideas, and awareness that there will be an AAR to reflect on results. It ensures there is a plan for achieving outcomes in the face of predicted problems, challenges, opportunities and contingencies. The BAR turns work into a deliberate learning experience. However, the BAR goes beyond the 'plan on paper' and asks 'what else will it take to become better?' and 'what else can we try?' It is a way of conducting a walkthrough rehearsal, and can be considered part of a due diligence process (due diligence is the process of anticipating problems in the future by preventing or pre-empting them).

The following are the typical steps in conducting a BAR:

1. What is expected to happen? Review the goals for the initiative launched. Without clear goals it will be difficult to compare intent with actual results, highlights shortcomings and apply the lessons learnt to future events.
2. How can we measure success? This can be done using quantitative or qualitative data. Quantitative can be in the form of meeting deadlines, production targets, budgets, cost standards, quality standards and so on. Qualitative can be in the form of giving everybody involved an opportunity to express their views and deciding who will do what, when, where and how. The more quantitative the metrics the easier it will be to conduct an AAR.
3. What are the challenges that we are likely to face? Likely problems, bottlenecks, lack of resources and resistances should be planned for. Make sure you win the cooperation and support of people that are vital to the success of the project.
4. What are the lessons from the last AAR? This could include lessons from previous projects or similar projects done in other organisations. You don't want to waste time by reinventing the wheel all over again! Those who forget the lessons of the past are likely to repeat the same avoidable mistakes over and over again.
5. What is likely to make us successful this time? Consider the improvements that are likely to make the biggest difference to results. These should form part of your planning process.

An effective AAR is used to reflect on results and involves comparing what actually happened with what should have happened, and then diagnosing the gap – be it positive or negative. This should result in follow-up action to implement the lessons learnt. The primary purpose is to learn from the experience, and if necessary take corrective action to improve the outcome of the project or initiative.

The following are the typical steps in conducting an AAR:

1. What did we expect to happen? This will have been agreed in advance by the BAR, so that it should be easy to find out and restate what you agreed in advance.
2. What actually happened? Compare your actual results with what actually happened – the reality. Do we consider that we had a successful outcome or could we have done better? If not, the results should be debated using the question 'why?' Make sure that all interested parties are involved in the review particularly those who did the work, and are thus in the best position to know what actually went on. Because of their direct stake in the work they are the most committed and motivated to carry out improvements in the future.
3. What was the root cause of our results? We should analyse the situation so that we develop a deep understanding of the causes. It might be useful to develop a timeline so that we know precisely who did what, when, where and how. By covering actions in the sequence, they took place; participants are in a better position to recall what happened. Some key insights may be generated in this way from thinking about what happened. Sometimes it's because we didn't do what we said we would do at the BAR stage. If so it is perfectly valid to ask 'why not?' Would it have made a difference and how can we ensure that we carry out the intended action the next time.
4. Take lessons from the successes as well as the failures. The natural tendency is to concentrate on the failures – what went wrong. Discussing successful outcomes are just as important as discussing failures as these are the actions and behaviours you are trying to replicate in the future. Focusing on what went right is a great opportunity to reinforce successful behaviours and procedures. When a failure or mistake is identified, determine what should have happened, and secondly what didn't happen. Actions rather than personalities should be highlighted and the blame game should be avoided.
5. What lessons can we learn for the future? Sub-standard performance may be an indicator that further training is required in the future. Consider the three best ideas that can be taken away from the experience. This makes the prospect of using them more feasible, and likely rather than rely on pages of recommendations which are destined to lie forgotten in the drawers of a desk somewhere. Consciously looking forward to the next opportunity strengthens the link between planning and reflection so that we are involved in continuous learning and improvement.

A similar approach called debriefing may be taken by students and business managers. Debriefing may take the form of group discussion, critical analysis, questioning, review and debate. It may also take the form of a learning reflection journal, which forms a permanent written record of questions, ideas, analysis, sources, findings and conclusions, for review and reflection. Debriefing will help students and business managers alike identify knowledge and comprehension gaps.

During debriefing, they should be encouraged to question and review what they have learnt from the perspective of "what happened?" "What is the significance of what happened? And how do we apply what we've learned from the learning experience?" A simple question "what else?" can open the mind to a myriad of previously untapped alternatives and possibilities. Use the question "Why?" which has guided scientists and philosophers to discover insights and discoveries over centuries that have changed the world.

The benefits of review – BAR and AAR:

1. It gives individuals and teams an opportunity to acquire a more complete knowledge of both the technical, human, economic and social problems encountered. It provides the relevant parties an opportunity to assess what happened and why. This enables them to develop plans and make recommendations for concrete changes and improvement when confronted by similar problems in the future. For example, you could review a training session to see if you could improve it the next time you run it. Similarly, after changing a manufacturing system you could review the process after making 100 units instead of waiting until the entire run was done – at that stage it may be too late to put things right!
2. Individuals and teams acquire more rounded comprehensive experience because their behaviour and actions are constantly being evaluated for quality and fit. This approach supports and encourages a continuous learning and improvement culture, and how the team can work together to produce better results.
3. Individuals and teams are facilitated to make more realistic and achievable performance goals in the future. Communication, teamwork, problem solving, collegiality and interpersonal relationships also come under scrutiny with a view to improvement.
4. Individuals and teams gain more confidence and self-esteem when they know that corrective action will be taken when problems present themselves, and that they are involved in a continuous learning and improvement cycle before, during and after the event. They know that actions rather than personalities will be assessed. It is not about blame and undermining people, but about learning and creating and reinforcing a learning culture.

5. Individuals and teams develop a common vocabulary and perspective regarding the successes or problems that were encountered. This provides them with a common reference and starting point that they can build on in the future. BARs and AARs are used to identify weaknesses, correct deficiencies, improve strengths, and focus on improved performance of specific tasks, projects, processes, activities, events or programmes.

In a study situation without active review, such as self-testing, there is the danger of the *fluency illusion* – where you passively review material a few times and because of this you feel confident that you know the material. This gives you a false sense of security; to be shattered abruptly when you sit an exam and try to retrieve the information you confidently thought you knew but cannot do so. Studies show that highlighting and rereading text is among the least effective way for remembering the content of what you have read. The proven most effective way is self-testing, reflection and review.

This is why unless you actively self-test you will never really know how well you have learned the material. It is only by self-testing that you highlight the gaps in your knowledge, and thus become aware of what you need to do to make the knowledge permanent and retrievable. You also make the learning your own by thinking it through and constructing your own meaning based on your experience and interpretation of the information. Remembering is not merely a passive act of retrieval from memory. It is an act of *active reconstruction*. We actively figure things out for ourselves when we remember, link and associate rather than retrieve a fixed record of a past event. This is influenced by our surroundings, past knowledge and experience, coloured by what we are thinking and feeling at the time we retrieve the information.

Conclusion

Review – before and after action (BAR & AAR) is a simple and flexible tool that has been used by the army, public bodies, commercial companies and charities to improve performance and social outcomes. In practice many organisations only hold an AAR at the end of projects to determine the lessons learned, and apply them to future events – combining both approaches are a better practice. They can also be held to improve health and safety issues, staff meetings, training programmes and the production of monthly accounts. One of the advantages of using AAR is there is still an opportunity to correct and change course and improve the outcome of the project provided the review is done before the project is totally finished. An AAR depends on honesty, trust, transparency, confidentiality, a commitment to learning and the value of feedback. They are not opportunities to critique, evaluate or shame and blame.

The role of a good facilitator is very important to the success of the process. The discussion should lead to an assessment of which processes need to be kept and which need to be improved. The facilitator must make sure that lessons learned are shared, acquired, and integrated into future training plans and standard operating procedures of the organisation. Unless this is done, the whole exercise is futile.

If you don't know where you're going you are likely to finish up somewhere else. BAR ensures that this does not happen and turns the event into a deliberate learning experience. It demonstrates the importance of reviewing beforehand, during, rather than leaving it to the end. Reviewing at the start shows that it is an important part of the cycle of continuous learning and improvement of learning before, during and after. Learning during an event is a type of just-in-time learning, while learning after the event is a timely reminder to apply the lesson to future events. In addition, you are likely to have more energy at the start so that the process will get more attention. The same people involved in the BAR should be involved in the AAR.

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7 SIMULATIONS

Fig. 7. Flight Simulator

> **"The best simulator for spacewalking is underwater – it allows full visuals and body movement in 3D. Virtual reality is good, too, and has some advantages, like full Station simulation; they have parts that are wrong and misleading: an important thing to remember when preparing for reality."**
>
> **– Chris Hadfield**

Simulations are learning activities designed to replicate real-world situations. They are artificial representations of real problems. Simulations provide opportunities for trial-and-error solutions in a risk free, cost effective and safe environment where people can repeatedly practice until they become proficient. Any mistakes that arise are a great source for learning, reflection and insight into the consequences of actions and the need to 'get it right.' In health and safety situations mistakes can cost lives.

In a college context, students will discover how the world around them operates through amazingly realistic virtual experiences. History can be made come alive with recreations of important political events, battles, speeches, and so on. Students may have access to real information sources that allows them to experience current events first-hand. The focus of teachers will shift from teaching to creating learning tasks that challenge students to develop higher-level thinking and problem-solving skills through discovery.

Companies such as BTS, a management training consultancy firm, have been using simulations with management teams for years. This allows senior executives to get practice managing a complex business. As markets become increasingly complicated and specialised, it is difficult for an executive to see the whole picture. A management simulation gives managers an opportunity to innovate, take risks, and practise until proficiency is achieved, in a safe environment.

Controlled simulations can be immediately followed by videotape supported debriefings or other action reviews that provide a rich detail of what happened. This is great feedback for learners and helps instructors through discussion and reflection target necessary improvement.

Simulations as a way of learning are not new. Simulations involving games such as chess were developed thousands of years ago. The Prussians developed war-game simulations in the early 1800s. The war games became very popular and were adopted for military training throughout the world. Today simulations using computer technology and artificial intelligence make soldiers combat ready and battle wise quickly and efficiently.

A well-designed simulation can provide safer, more efficient and cost-effective training than the use of the actual equipment, while avoiding unacceptable risk. For example, truck drivers can develop and practise their driving skills in challenging situations using simulators before taking to the roads. Under EU legislation, lorry drivers across Europe must be retrained every five years to conform to the same standards.

Simulators used in training adults

Simulations are used in many industries such as business, healthcare, aviation, spaceflight, nuclear power, shipping, motor transport and the military. Best-known examples include business games, case studies, flight simulators, driving simulators, power-station operation simulators and even class room simulators. Combat pilots are trained in flight simulators mimicking the complex environment in which they will fly and engage the enemy in dangerous and challenging circumstances.

Police officers learn 'seek and search' techniques in simulated streets and houses. Soldiers learn how to fire missiles in simulated battle conditions. Bank officials learn cashier techniques at simulated counters with real people. Salespeople learn about their products and how to sell and negotiate dealing with real people role playing as customers. Paramedics learn how to deal with road traffic accidents and other emergency situations in simulated conditions. Doctors and nurses may rely on computerised mannequins that perform dozens of human functions realistically in a healthcare setting, such as an operating theatre or critical care unit that is indistinguishable from the real thing.

Fire brigade personnel learn how to deal with fires in simulated disaster situations. The police learn advanced driving skills and accurate pistol firing skills under simulated conditions. The army and police practise in simulated conditions to prepare for wars and potential terrorist threats. The emergency services practise response methods in simulated conditions. Accountants use case studies and what-if and cost benefit analysis with spreadsheets to simulate financial situations. Barristers perfect their skills in mock trials and courtrooms. Doctors practise their operation and resuscitation skills on robots. Motor car manufacturers, such as Ford, use simulation models to streamline and improve their production processes.

Multimedia courseware enables employees to explore safely the operation of expensive and potentially dangerous equipment in a risk-free environment. Modern computer technology and advanced software systems now enable the creation of virtual reality so technically perfect as to simulate surgery, and is creating further extraordinary opportunities for the use of simulation in training medical procedures. In healthcare, advances in computer science, robotics, bioengineering, and design has met demands from all stakeholders including patients for safer, more effective and efficient ethical healthcare.

Even the teaching profession uses simulators in training. University of Central Florida has developed a simulator called TeachLivELab – a simulator system developed in 2009 not unlike those used by surgeons and airline pilots. The simulator allows teachers to understand the environment of an actual classroom with a full range of teacher experiences and every imaginable student antic. It allows teachers-in-training to try out techniques to cope with disruptive behaviour and learning differences, so that they can practise their skills and work on their weaknesses before the go before a live class.

The Open University has a virtual science laboratory. Here students can carry out experiments safely. Expert systems are computer programs that mimic expertise in a particular area of knowledge such as medicine or taxation. As with any model, however, a simulation is only as good as its underlying assumptions. If these assumptions are incorrect, the model will not reflect real-life conditions.

Dangers of simulations

Dangers of using simulations include:

- Course participants may reject them as unrealistic or irrelevant. Simulations must be directly related to the task that learners need to know and be as realistic as possible.
- Participants may not be aware of the purpose of the simulations and the significance of the learning outcomes involved. In addition, it may take considerable time before the effects of the training are realised and the causes of the productivity or performance improvement may be difficult to pinpoint.
- They may go on for too long, leaving participants with the feeling that the value of the exercise is not proportionate to the trouble and time spent.
- Simulators and associated equipment may be an expensive alternative to discussion, role play, case studies, spreadsheets and computer video games.

Conclusion

Simulators are a good way to practise skills until you are proficient in a safe, controlled and risk-free environment. Computers and robotic systems now enable a vast range of simulations to be done and competency to be achieved. Virtual reality is a type of simulations which provides a three-dimensional real life feeling to events expanding the range of sensory experiences. Simulators are now used in a broad range of training activities giving learners a more interesting and engaging realistic experience of what they are likely to face in a real-life work situation.

Traditionally, scientists have assumed people gain new skills through direct experience. However, the existence of mirror neurons means you can gain skills through observation and indirect experience supporting the use of games, case studies and simulations. Mirror neurons are a type of brain cell that fires when you do an action or when you simply observe somebody else doing an action – so we can learn simply through observation!

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8 TEAM DEVELOPMENT MODEL

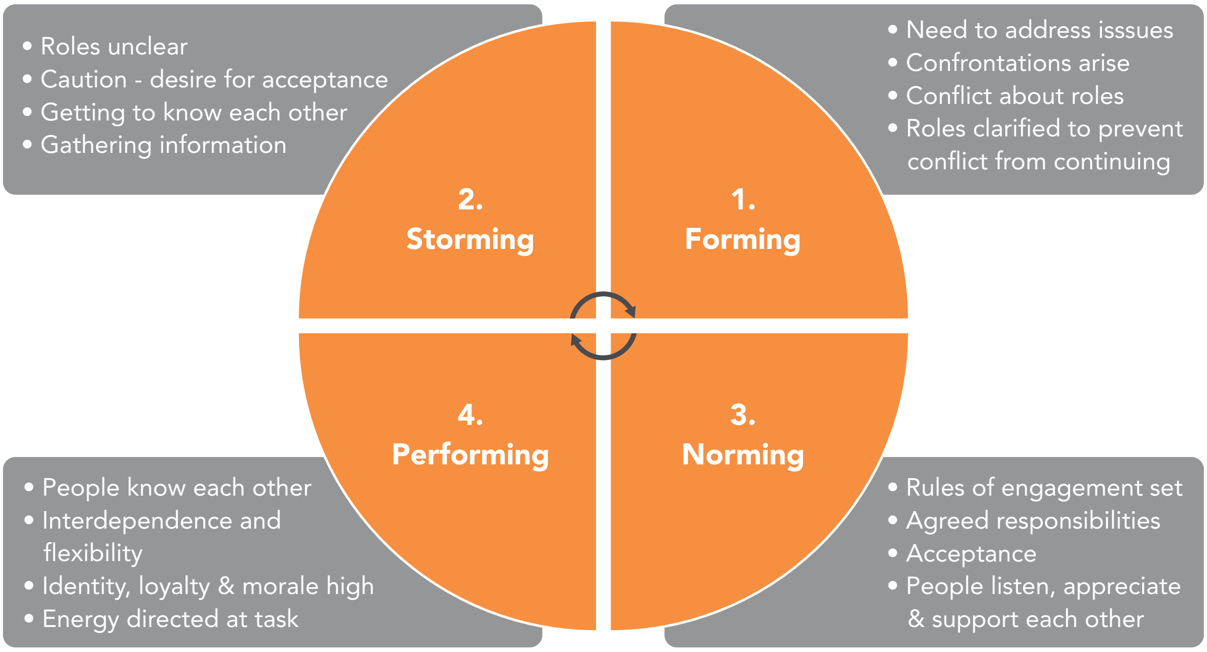

Fig. 8. Tuckman's Team Development Model

> **"Teamwork is the ability to work together towards a common vision; the ability to direct individual accomplishments toward organizational objectives. It is the fuel that allows common people to attain uncommon results."**
>
> **– Andrew Carnegie**

The development of teams happens over five stages. Bruce Tuckman (1965), a Princeton University education psychologist, identified these as forming, storming, norming and performing. In 1977 he added a fifth stage called adjourning. The five stages are:

1. ***Forming.*** Sometimes referred to as the 'honeymoon period.' This is the stage of coming together and building the team. There is concern about structure, direction, support, timetables, resources, routines and goals. People want to know the terms of reference for the team, their roles within it and how it is going to function. They are trying to get used to each other by finding out about backgrounds, experience, interests, idiosyncrasies, and competences. They want to know who the leader is going to be and what are the expectations for team members. They are trying to get to grips with the task they have been given to do and how they are going to do it. They will want to know who does what and where team meetings will be held. At the forming stage there is suspicion, uncertainty, anxiety and hostility, hidden agendas, and a certain amount of testing the waters to ascertain each other's tolerance limits and personalities. People have a desire to be accepted by others and wish to avoid conflict and controversy. Investing time at this stage helps teams become comfortable with each other and move forward.
2. ***Storming.*** This marks the end of the 'honeymoon period.' This stage is often characterized by confusion and aggression and is sometimes called the infighting stage. Debate, dissent, disagreement, personality clashes, minor confrontations and competition for power and influence fuel the conflict. There is open and hidden hostility and resentment between members of the team. Cliques and factions may form and there may be power struggles. The storming stage can be an unsettling and traumatic period for members with a need for conflict resolution to calm things down. Teams that ignore and avoid managing conflict constructively may drive it underground and build up resentments and problems for the future. The source of the conflict may refer to roles and responsibilities within the group. This stage is quite normal and most teams will work their way through it by compromising and making rules to prevent the conflict from persisting before proceeding to the next stage. Once the status of each member is determined, the group is ready to move beyond the storming stage. If the team fails to resolve differences it will not progress to subsequent stages and cease to exist.
3. ***Norming.*** If the team gets past the storming stage it will enter the norming stage. At this stage standards or norms of behaviour are being established and it is often called the getting organised stage. In other words, the 'rules of engagement' have been established and the scope of the group's tasks and responsibilities are clear and agreed. Norms are rules to be drawn up to resolve contentious issues, make decisions, complete tasks and facilitate consensus. Plans are formulated and agreed and work routines and standards put down. People are settling in and roles for each member are being identified, having regard to unique abilities, skills and needs of the team. Group identity, loyalty and morale are all high and trust is established between the members of the team with co-operation, collaboration, cohesiveness

and commitment between team members. At this stage members share a common sense of purpose. The norming stage is a stage of productivity, shared mental models with norms made explicit so that they can be reviewed and renewed as needed. Failure to do so may result in negative norms being established frustrating the goals of the team.

4. ***Performing.*** Interpersonal relationship problems have been resolved with roles, rules and behaviour norms agreed and structures in place. At this stage interdependence and flexibility is achieved. There is synergy between members as their unique competencies are blended and their energies directed towards the task. Roles and responsibilities change seamlessly in accordance with the needs of the task. People get on with each other; rapport has been built up and members now get down to achieving their goals. People are highly motivated to get things done. The leader empowers the team and then lets them get on with the job. Consequently, there is a high level of morale, satisfaction and productivity in the team. Performing teams function as a unit rather than a loose group of individuals. A team is not fully effective until it reaches the performing stage. Performing is not the end of team development. Changes in the membership of the team and large-scale changes in the external environment, can lead the team back to an earlier stage. This means that the performing stage can last a long time.
5. ***Adjourning.*** The task has been successfully completed and the team celebrates their accomplishments. The team should reflect on what it has learned from the process. At the same time, there is a sense of grieving for lost friendships or letting go as the members disengage from the tasks and from each other, and contemplate going back to their old jobs or to the next team. Although groups with well-defined deadlines and clearly designated life spans adjourn quickly, groups with broad responsibilities and complex goals tend to adjourn gradually. Project teams tend to reach this stage naturally as they are only set up for a fixed period – even permanent teams may be disbanded through organizational restructuring.

Conclusion

The model is particularly popular with human resource development practitioners, managers and academics. Although each team has unique characteristics, teams learn and grow along a predictable path, although the amount of time taken to complete the cycle will vary considerably between groups. The model proved to be a useful discussion point and guide for managers and trainers who wanted a practical model to understand how groups evolve, develop and form. Although it has its limitations, it is praised for its practical perspective, easy to understand format and common-sense approach. Other models of team development have been developed, but Tuckman's model remains the most influential and is often the foundation on which others are built.

Some limitations being that it was developed mainly in relation to psychotherapy groups rather than organizational settings, and it considered groups as closed systems rather than be open to outside influences. The model gives a general understanding of team development, but all teams do not follow Tuckman's model throughout their life. There is always the danger that group think will develop in the team affecting its originality so that it never becomes a high performing team. This can be guarded against by introducing new members with fresh perspectives.

Nevertheless, the model is considered to be accessible, easy to understand, and flexible enough to apply to many different contexts including quality circles, project teams, developing new products and processes, and change teams. Many organisations use team structures and consider them to be a key competitive advantage. For those who want to identify what stage of development their team is at, there are a number of evaluation tools available on the internet.

In addition, teams are a great way for developing staff and a force for productivity in organisations. As a member of a team you learn interpersonal relationship skills – a most important skill if you want to progress in management. Other skills you may learn include leadership, problem solving, decision making, presentation, time management and the process of creative thinking.

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9 THOMAS – KILMAN MODEL FOR HANDLING CONFLICT IN TEAM

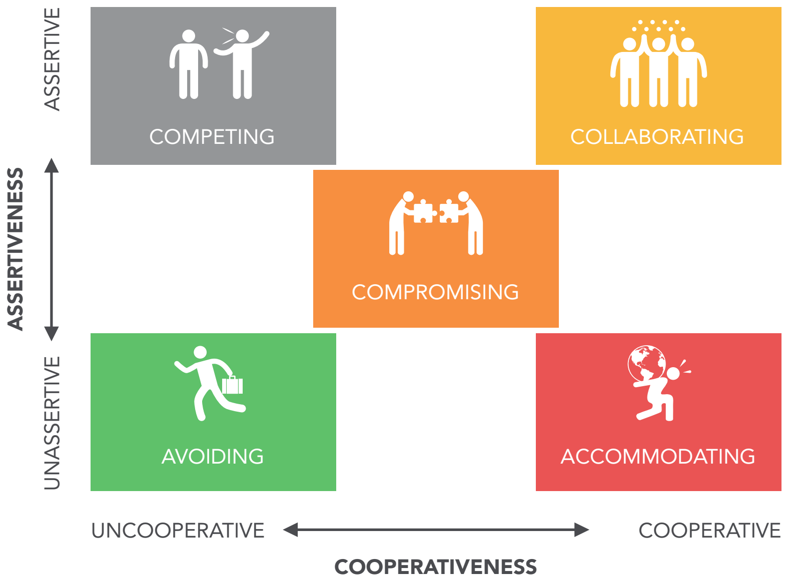

Fig. 9. Thomas-Kilman for Handling Conflict in Teams

The five styles of resolving conflicts are:

1. ***Competing.*** This is an assertive and uncooperative style. It is a win-lose style of management. There may be a lack of common goals between the opposing sides. The manager decides that he must win at all cost or is convinced that he is right and is not prepared to entertain the views of others. Managers with this style use their formal authority, power, threats and coercion to get their way. It may be a suitable style where success is vital, and the manager is working under time pressure and possesses the knowledge and expertise to do what is required. However, it is almost certain to lead to further conflict because the other party will feel resentful and seek retaliation in the future.
2. ***Accommodating.*** This is an unassertive but cooperative style. This is a type of appeasement, where common goals are stressed and differences played down. It is altruistic to the extent that one party puts the other party's interest first for the sake of peace and harmony in the workplace. The manager may feel the other party is right and wants to maintain good relationships or build up goodwill for the future. Also, the issues involved may not be of critical importance and the manager is prepared to concede.

3. ***Avoiding.*** This is an unassertive, passive and uncooperative style. This style of management tries to sweep the problem under the carpet hoping that it will go away. It is a type of withdrawal and suppression. It is merely a short-term solution, as the problem is likely to fester and raise its ugly head again in the future. At this stage it may become more urgent and difficult to resolve. This style may be effective when dealing with trivial conflicts to build relationships but otherwise it is not recommended. It may be appropriate to adopt when it is the wrong time to deal with the conflict.
4. ***Compromising.*** This is a middle of the road style. It is fair but does not achieve the aims of either side. If one party gives ground on a particular issue, the other yields something of equivalent value in return. Thus, both parties finish up with less that they originally desired. It is often the style adopted when negotiating with trade unions on wages and working conditions of employment. It suits a lot of situations such as negotiations on price with customers and suppliers.
5. ***Collaborating.*** This is an assertive and cooperative style. Through a win-win approach it achieves the common goals of both sides. Both achieve what they want to achieve and the relationship is strengthened at the same time. This style of management emphasises openness, trust, spontaneity and genuineness. Differences are clarified and the full range of alternatives to resolve the issue are considered before a meeting of minds is achieved.

Conclusion

There are five styles of resolving conflict: competing, accommodating, avoiding, compromising and collaborating. Ways of managing conflict include aiming for win-win solutions and implementing a fair negotiating process for the allocation of budgetary resources. Whatever style is used to resolve conflict it is important that it is not ignored. The objective should be to resolve the conflict as quickly as possible and not to let it fester. Remember team members do not have to like each other but it is important that they tolerate and get along with each other. The advantages of conflict resolution include better relationships with unions, staff, suppliers and customers and improved performance.

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The author's latest books have been published online by bookboon.com in 2018 namely:

- The Role of the Brain in Learning
- How Adults Learn
- Learning Models and Styles
- Experiential Learning
- Learning with Technology
- The Ultimate Success Factor
- Series of Books on People Skills for Managers
- Series of Books on Creativity Skills for Managers.