Team Development and Management 9

Executing the activities resulting from an enterprise business alignment requires a diverse mix of individuals who must be integrated into effective sets: groups and teams (for example: project teams, workgroups). These sets are formed to ease the work pressure on the individual and achieve the alignment activities within the desired time frame. An effective set often outperforms individuals within in an enterprise, because high performance within an enterprise business requires multiple skills, judgments, and experiences. Of course, there are certain tasks at which individuals will always outperform a group or a team; for instance, where talent or experience is the critical performance factor required to achieve an activity. Our purpose in this chapter is to provide guidelines for building a cohesive team.

9.1 Defining a Team

A group within an enterprise business usually comprises a three or more people who recognize themselves as a distinct unit, department, or function, but who actually work independently of each other to achieve their organizational goals. For example, an enterprise business unit may have a client services group, with one person focusing on local clients, one person focusing on regional clients and a third person assisting those individuals.

Within enterprise businesses, groups tend to be permanent fixtures with ongoing goals or responsibilities to sustain businesses. With group work, members have a shared knowledge of the group's objectives, but specific tasks or responsibilities are assigned to different individuals. By separating work into groups – such as one devoted to marketing, one devoted to finance, one devoted to legal and procurement, one devoted to engineering, etc. – individuals within those groups are able to maximize their expertise on a long-term basis.

In today's culture, the word "team" has come to mean many different things. In some fields, a team is an entity merely because it exists, regardless of how well it performs. In business settings, the use of the word "team" implies some level of

exemplary performance. If we are going to invest a significant amount of energy and effort into building a high performance team, we should better be clear about what we are building. We shall define a team as:

A group of three or more people committed to a common purpose and working interdependently to produce exceptional and synergistic results for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.

Working interdependently demands cooperation. Note the prefix "co-" in cooperation and collaborate. Co means "with," "together," or "jointly." The prefix "syn" in synergy also means together. Synergy is the product of cooperation. In an interdependent relationship, the individual members have come to understand that achievement of their personal goals can only be sustained by serving a common purpose, which delivers benefits to themselves and many others. Here, each of the individual members respect and value the uniqueness of the other, as well as appreciating how their individual skills, talents and resources can combine to achieve an overall result that is better than they could achieve by themselves as independent individuals. When inter-dependence exists, the individual members are able to harmonize their efforts so as to achieve synergies (creative cooperation) of the highest order. The results are enriching to each of the individual members and the group sustains itself into the future through positive reinforcing cycles.

The purpose of any team is to accomplish an objective and to do so at exceptional high levels of performance. A team comprises three or more people who may come from different functions or departments within an enterprise business unit, but they collaborate together over time to achieve some set purpose, goal or project. For instance, before a business creates a new product, it may organize a team composed of people from all departments – engineering, manufacturing, finance, legal, marketing, etc. – to consider all aspects of the potential new product to avoid costly surprises down the road. Collaboration between individuals that form the team is not an end in itself but rather a means to an end. Therefore, a team must ultimately be judged by its results.

The primary difference between a team and any other type of group is the synergy circumstances from which the outcome of the team effort results. With a team, individuals recognize the expertise and talents of others needed to achieve the team's goal and they work interdependently and cooperatively. Many groups have a common purpose; most even see some level of cooperation. But in true team, the combination of factors and the intensity and consistency with which they are applied allows a team to experience results on a regular basis.

Enterprise businesses form teams to tackle specific – and usually temporary – goals or projects with the intent of leveraging the collective expertise of a variety of individuals. Because experts from various departments are involved, teams can avoid potential problems early on in projects. For instance, a team of only engineers may create a new product but may not understand whether it's affordable until someone with a finance background completes a "return on investment" or ROI analysis on its feasibility. Having a finance member involved in the team from the beginning will help the engineers to create an affordable product in the first place,

saving time and resources. Teams can be very productive because involving individuals with different talents provides teams with increased opportunities to work more efficiently.

As an enterprise business moves towards a "Continuous Improvement" stage of maturity, it uses teams as the load-bearing beams of its organizational structure. They differ in terms of the tasks that they are aiming to accomplish. Within an enterprise business, the tasks of a team can be classified into three categories: production, idea-generation, and problem-solving:

1. Production tasks are those tasks designed to transform tangible inputs (raw materials, semi finished goods, or subassemblies) and intangible inputs (ideas, information, knowledge) into goods or services.
2. Idea-generation tasks are those tasks designed to generate, develop, and communicate new ideas, which are abstract, concrete, or visual, during all stages of a thought cycle: from innovation, to development, to actualization.
3. Problem-solving tasks involve goal-directed thinking and action in situations for which no routine solutions exist. A problem-solving task has a more or less well defined goal, but it is not immediately obvious how to reach it and the incongruence of goals and admissible operators constitutes the problem. The understanding of the problem situation and its step-by-step transformation, based on planning and reasoning, are the essentials of Problem-solving tasks.

As an enterprise business executive, a project manager or team leader, you rarely inherit a fully fledged and effective team at onset of a project or an operation work. More often than not you will likely inherit one that is already misfiring or you will have to start by building your team from scratch. The practical constraints that you will encounter when assembling your team will make this a challenging task. Some of the following might sound familiar to you:

1. Budget constraints preventing much-needed recruiting. Or conversely a generous budget fuelling unrealistic expectations of a fast ramp up.
2. Projects being used as a dumping ground. Other colleague managers using your new team as a convenient home for staff that they are not really sure what to do with.
3. Selfish colleague managers who monopolize the best staff. They hold onto the enterprise business star performers even when their skills and experience are desperately needed elsewhere.

All this is invariably against a setting of an acute sense of urgency to get a team up and running for an improvement intervention. Building and developing the right team – as far as it is realistic – is one of the factors critical to the success of any project.

To maximize the performance of groups and teams within an enterprise business, it is important to understand how they develop and how their dynamics impact the overall performance. Groups and teams both have their own importance and social relevance within enterprises. In a group, people may work independently; taking responsibility for assigned tasks. But real synergy is accomplished when people work interdependently as a team.

9.2   Team Development: The Challenge of Building Teams

A weak, uncooperative team is not just unproductive for the enterprise business; it can make your work a daily grind of frustration as well as resentment. People burn out, blow up, or quit their employment because of negative interpersonal dynamics on teams. Conversely, many people cite the strength of a team or their terrific teammates when recounting how they survived a project when everything seemed to go wrong.

Getting a team to take shape is a difficult task. To the novice it can seem mysterious, the result of good fortune, and certainly unpredictable. But the productivity and joy that come with a high-performance team are too important to rely on good fortune. In reality, every team faces two central challenges, two obstacles to becoming a high-performing team:

1. Teams are formed to accomplish specific tasks, and individual team members must accomplish those tasks together.
2. Teams are temporary and so team members must learn to work together. Not only are teams temporary, but the trend toward teams that cross functional, corporate, and even national boundaries increases the likelihood that a new work requiring a new project team will be made up of people who have not worked together previously.

Understanding these two challenges reveals why some teams work while others never do. Developing trust, respect, effective communication patterns, and the ability to maintain positive relationships despite disagreements takes time. Most important, it takes a conscious effort by the team leader to move a team from a loose collection of individuals to a cohesive unit. Teams that learn to work together to produce effective decisions with efficiency become increasingly bonded and productive throughout the course of accomplishing their specified work.

Several models of group development have been proposed in the literature (Tuckman, 1965; Tuckman & Jensen, 1977; Smith, 2001; Tubbs, 1995; De Dreu & Weingart, 2003a, b; Katzenbach & Smith, 1993; Welins, Byham, & Dixon, 1994; Cannon-Bowers & Salas, 2001; Hackman, 1976; Parker, 1994; McGrath, 1984; Wheelan, Davidson, & Tilin, 2003; Wheelan, 1990; Wheelan, 1994a, b).

The most widely and solidly established such model is Tuckman's "Forming, Storming, Norming, and Performing" model. First published in 1965 and revised in 1970 with the addition of a fifth stage – Adjourning. Tuckman's model explains the necessary and inevitable stages through which a group of individuals must grow before they can function as a cohesive and efficient tasks focused unit. The model has become the basis for subsequent models of group development and team dynamics and management theories frequently used to describe the behavior of existing teams. It has also taken a firm hold in the field of experiential education.

Tuckman's group development model provides a framework for building high-performance teams. High-performance teams are more than merely highly productive. A team composed of experienced, capable people can be very productive until those people hit an obstacle or are confronted with an unexpected challenge. This is the point at which the team either shows its strength or reveals its limitations.
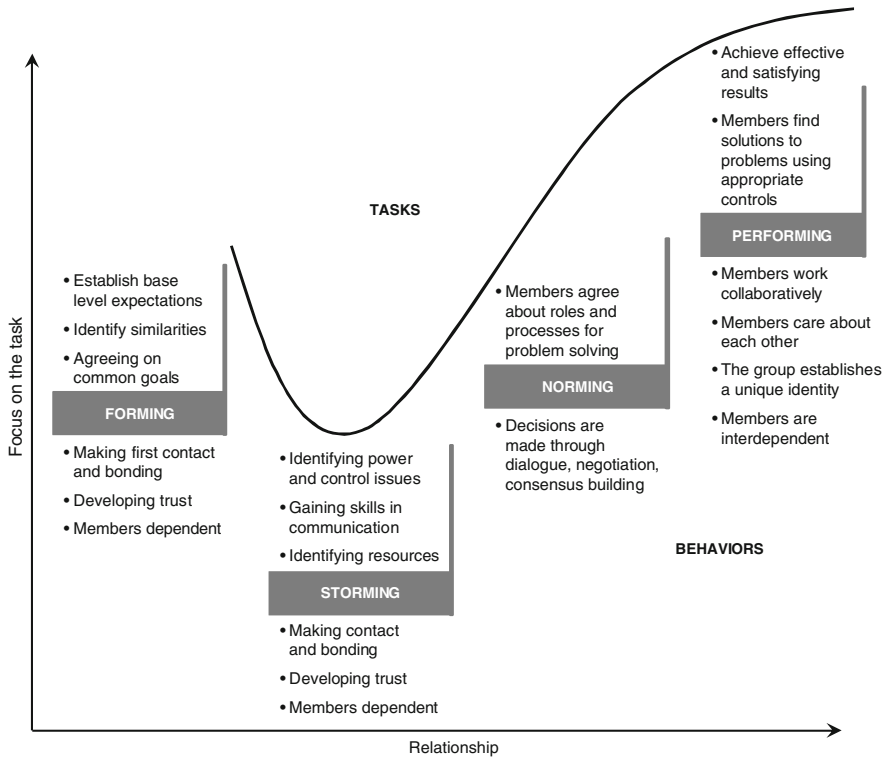
Fig. 9.1 Tuckman's group development model

Tuckman's group development model is best illustrated in Fig. 9.1, which shows the link between group relationships (the horizontal axis) and task focus (the vertical axis). The optimal or "performing" stage is reached when relationships have developed within the group and it has started delivering results with a clear focus on the task.

The model also clearly indicates that it takes time to reach the "performing" stage, and it is normal for groups of individuals to go through ups and downs as they develop relationships, particularly in the early period. As a group of individuals develops maturity and ability, relationships establish, and the leader changes leadership style. Beginning with a directing style, moving through coaching, then participating, finishing delegating and almost detached. At this point the group may produce a successor leader and the previous leader can move on to develop a new group.

Envision the goal of your team as getting from the "Forming" stage to the "Performing" stage. For simple tasks, you could simply grab a handful of people, drop them onto the tasks, and they will somehow get from "Forming" stage to the "Performing" stage without a lot of special attention to team building. That works fine for simple tasks, but if the team has to hold up the weight of a complex undertaking, it must be strong. That is the purpose of Tuckman's group development model – to provide the framework that supports the team for its development.

9.2.1 Forming

When individual people first come together the most fundamental question they look to receive an answer is: "What are we really here for?"

The objective of the team leader at this stage is to establish a clear, compelling "Common Purpose." It is the most important key factor for the success of a team. The purpose of the team is the critical ingredient around which the team will form; it is not only the motivation for its existence, but, like glue, holds the team members together during the inevitable turbulence the team will experience on its journey. It defines the team, the goal of which is to accomplish a specific objective at exceptional levels of performance. Without such a bond of individual team members, the centrifugal force of individual interests would pull the team apart. Ill-defined team purpose sows the seeds of confusion and conflict. Team members assigned from different functions or departments become confused between their departmental priorities and those of the team.

When forming a new temporary team, the team leader is normally interested in the technical and interpersonal skills of potential members that are relevant to the group's tasks, the power distribution of selected members, and whether or not selected members adequately represent relevant constituencies. The key to creating an effective new, temporary team is balance in the attributes of team members, and the presence of needed resources to achieve stated goals. For example, in problem solving and implementation teams, the team leader must make sure that critical enterprise business people with relevant power are selected as team members. Therefore, when decisions are made, non-participating members cannot easily resist. Similarly, the team leader wants to ensure that the required expertise and knowledge exists within the group. This increases the probability of creative problem solving and outcome acceptance by non-members.

At this "Forming" stage, members are positive and polite. Some members are anxious, as they have not yet worked out exactly what work the team will involve. Others are simply excited about the task ahead. The team leader plays a dominant role: he directs and must be prepared to answer quite a lot of questions about the group purpose, objectives and external relationships. Other members' roles and responsibilities are less clear. This stage is usually fairly short, and may only last for the single meeting at which people are introduced to one-another. At this stage there may be discussions about how the team will work, which can be frustrating for some members who simply want to get on with the task.

9.2.2 Storming

Once the "common purpose" has been established, the second fundamental question that individual team members look to receive an answer is: "What is our task?"

The objective of the team leader at this stage is to establish "Clear Roles." High performance teams are also characterized by crystal clear roles. Every team member is clear about his or her particular role, as well as those of the other team

members. Roles – functional, specific and general expectations we place on any member of a team if we hope to achieve our objectives at exceptional levels of performance – are all about how we design, divide, and deploy the work of the team. Role issues are invariably one of the top three problems teams face (ineffective processes and communication represent the other two major team problems).

Achieving role clarity is challenged both by old paradigms and new business practices. While the role concept is compellingly logical, many teams find it very challenging to implement in practice. There is often a tendency to take role definition to extremes or not take it far enough. But when they get it right, team members discover that making their combination more effective and leveraging their collective efforts is paramount to achieving synergistic results.

The synergy that team members experience as a team depends in large measure upon three factors (MacMillan, 2001):

1. How the team leader divides the task;
2. How the team leader manages attitudes that can shape how individual members approach their roles and those of others; and
3. How to blend and leverage the different roles on the team against the collective work product.

No amount of team spirit can overcome the wasted motion and energy of poorly designed tasks or survive the frustrations of unclear roles.

This "Storming" stage is characterized by conflict and polarization around interpersonal issues, with concomitant emotional responding in the task sphere. These behaviors serve as resistance to team influence and task requirements, and often results in loss of performance or focus on the task, as the Fig. 8.1 illustrates.

At this stage, the patterns of working start to be defined and some members may feel overwhelmed by how much there is to do, or uncomfortable with the approach been used. Some may react by questioning how worthwhile the goal of the group is, and by resisting taking on tasks. This is the stage when many teams fail, and even those that stick with the task may feel that they are on an emotional roller coaster, as they try to focus on the task in hand without the support of established processes or relationships with their colleagues. The team leader coaches and clarity of purpose increases but plenty of uncertainties persist. The team leader must keep the team focused on its goals to avoid becoming distracted by interpersonal issues. Compromises may be required to enable progress.

9.2.3   Norming

Having established the "common purpose" and clarified roles, the third fundamental question that individual team members look to receive an answer is: "How much autonomy and power do we really have?"

The objective of the team leader at this stage is to establish an "Accepted Hierarchy" and "Accepted Leadership Roles" by providing just the right amount of structure in a likely unstructured environment. Too much and the collaborative spirit will be stifled; too little and the team will flounder and become frustrated.

It is important to stress at this stage that it is often necessary to establish a set of boundaries to the hierarchy. Clear limits need to be established in giving individual team members enough autonomy or encouraging them to assume leadership role. People can slip into irrational behaviors when given freedoms they cannot handle. In this sense, encouraging individual team members to assume leadership roles is not the absence of structure – letting them go off and do whatever they want – but rather a clear structure which enables people to work within established boundaries in an autonomous and creative way.

In addition to the "Clear Roles" established at the "Storming" stage, it is important to establish at this "Norming" stage the necessary ground rules and boundary conditions under which individual team members will be working: what can they decide, what can't they decide? Without the right amount of structure, groups often flounder unproductively, and the members then conclude they are merely wasting their time. The fewer constraints given a team, the more time will be spent defining its structure rather than carrying out its task.

The established hierarchy and leadership roles must be accepted by all individual members of the team, not demanded. As Pat MacMillan reminds us (MacMillan, 2001), being assigned a formal hierarchy or leadership role in a team does not guarantee that the individual members in the team will loyally line up behind you. To be effective, the hierarchy and leadership roles must be accepted by all individual members of the team, and such acceptance is earned, not demanded. When hierarchy and leadership roles are accepted, people are more responsive, more involved, more supportive, and quicker to take initiative.

Gradually, as the group settles into the "Norming" stage, an accepted hierarchy and leadership roles are established. Resistance is overcome in this third stage in which in-group feeling and cohesiveness develop, new standards evolve, and new roles are adopted. In the task realm, intimate, personal opinions are expressed, and the performance of the team gradually improves. At this stage, the team leader facilitates and enables as agreement and consensus are largely formed among members. Critical decisions are made by team agreement. Less critical decisions may be delegated to individuals within the team. Commitment and unity is strong within the team.

At this stage, the team may engage in fun and social activities. It also discusses and develops its processes and working style. Team members come to respect their leader's authority as a leader, and others show leadership in specific areas. They are able to ask each other for help and provide constructive criticism. Team leaders start to view their responsibility as a role rather than a position. They act more as facilitators, networkers, provider of resources, and boundary managers. They are attuned to the needs of the team and serve those needs willingly, knowing that the real "boss" of their team is the task to be accomplished.

The team develops a stronger commitment to the aligned goal, and good progress start to be made towards it. There is often a prolonged overlap between "Storming" and "Norming" behavior: as new tasks come up, the group may lapse back into typical "Storming" stage behavior, but this eventually dies out.

9.2.4 Performing

The objective of the team leader at this stage is to establish "Effective Work Processes" and build "Effective Relationships." Work processes are the "how" the team goes about achieving the "what" in its purpose. They are a sequence of step-by-step actions designed to produce a desired outcome.

9.2.4.1 Establish "Effective Work Processes"

High performance teams are very intentional about both their work and thinking processes. They are clear about what processes they need and then they map and master them. A team can be no more effective than its work processes and the ability of the team to execute them well. Most teams have two basic types of processes – work processes and thinking processes. Work processes (e.g. Work Coordination, Communication, Team cohesion, Decision making, Conflict management, Social relationships, Performance feedback, etc.) are the core processes that accomplish the team's primary mission. For example, sell the product. Thinking processes are process frameworks that facilitate the thinking and discussion of the team as they resolve issues. Too often teams overlook the existence and importance of thinking processes, which need to be addressed with the same degree of deliberateness that the team invests in their work processes.

"Work Processes," like any other dimension of organizational life must be addressed with a determined intentionality. Too often there is too little "design" in work processes within a team. We are often quick to equate any activity with process with little thought about which might be the best activities and what might be the best sequence of step-by-step actions to be performed. In many situations the activities are relatively unconnected with the results we really seek and the result is often a lot of activity but little accomplishment.

It is generally not possible simply to maintain some work processes effective unless preventive measures are set in place. As a consequence of the second law of thermodynamics, we know that a process will tend to erode no matter what, even if a standard is defined, explained to everyone affected, and posted. This is not because of poor discipline by individual team members affected, but due to interaction effects and entropy, which says than any organized process naturally tends to decline to a chaotic state if we leave it alone over time as circumstances change. Interaction effects and entropy continually acts upon all processes to cause deterioration and decay, wear and tear, breakdowns and failures.

When this happens, traditional work processes cease to fit current realities, roles drift out of alignment, relationships become strained, miscommunication occurs, and soon business results suffer.

The pressure to get work done in this no-time, high-urgency world tends to eliminate any thought of taking a few moments to ask, "What processes should we be using? How are we doing and how can we do better?" Team leaders have the power to create time for evaluation by reminding every individual team member that it is okay to call time out to ask those questions.

9.2.4.2 Build "Effective Relationships"

The diversity and differences among the individual team members will most likely preclude close friendships. However, individual team members must be able to withstand the jolts and turbulence of day-to-day interaction, misunderstandings, dropped balls, disagreements, and bad hair days. Building effective relationships by developing mutual trust and understanding of the ways that individual members interact with one another is the cornerstone of teamwork. Effective team relationships provide the climate needed for high levels of cooperation and are characterized by: trust, acceptance, respect, understanding, courtesy, and accountability (MacMillan, 2001).

Trust

As indicated in Chap. 4, we can think of trust as:

> *Expectancy held by an individual or group that promises will be kept and vulnerability will not be exploited.*

It is an "expectation" of dependability and benign intentions typically viewed as a characteristic of personal relationships. Trust is a function of four distinct behavioral characteristics that together form the criteria for its assessment. These are:

1. Being honest (authenticity, forthrightness, veracity, sincerity)
2. Being dependable (reliability, consistency, follow-through)
3. Exercising judgment (ability, capability, capacity, decision making, wisdom), and
4. Generating partnership (Mutual Support, Shared Values and Concerns, Collaboration, Alliance Building).

Trust is the essential quality of building any effective team relationship. Being able to fully trust another (whether or not that trust is ever verbalized) and trust in those processes and values that the team has established in order to achieve its purpose is a function of being genuinely satisfied with each of these four behavioral characteristics. To whatever degree trust is lacking, the source of the gap can always be traced to one or more of these four dimensions.

The development of trust involved being accountable for deviations from the expected performance. So long as those trusted behaved in line with expectations, trust would be reinforced as a result of experience and built progressively over time. It does not need to involve belief in the good character or morality of the individuals and groups involved, merely it needs their conformance to agreed action. It follows our acceptance of an assumed truth about another person or thing.

The development of trust continues and is sustained and enlarged only as future experiences confirm that early perception of expectations to be, in fact, correct. That is, trust builds as experience proves the essential truth of our initial perceptions. Trust diminishes by the reverse; as those trusted do not behaved in line with expectations, we withdraw our trust. Team members will not work interdependently with anyone they do not trust. And without interdependence, there can be no effective division of the task, no leverage of the gifts and skills of

individual team members, and, therefore, no synergy. When team members do not trust one another, issues that need to be resolved in meetings become personal, not task oriented. In fact, some team members may not even fully participate due to the fear of conflict. As a result issues are never resolved effectively or efficiently. Without trust, there is no relationship, and there is no team.

In a team relationship, as in any relationship, we trust people because we are comfortable with their character and competence that promises will be kept and vulnerability will not be exploited. By character, we mean our perception of another person's motives, values, honesty, or moral fiber. Competence, on the other hand, refers to the capability, knowledge, and skill of a team member in general and specifically as it impacts his or her assigned role. If we do not trust both the character and competence of a team member, it is unlikely that we will put our desired goals, performance appraisal, compensation, or career into that person's care.

Understanding

Even though team members don't need to know each other all that well personally, they do need to develop a mutual understanding and knowledge of each other's role and potential contribution. Each individual member of the team has his own cognitive understanding and knowledge of the team common purpose and established roles. Team members interact, thereby confirming or sharing their understanding and knowledge of each other's role and potential contribution. This shared mutual understanding and knowledge helps them coordinate their individual knowledge structure within those of the other team members in working through complex problem-solving processes. The deeper the level of understanding and knowledge, the greater the potential for effective collaborative effort, particularly in the less structured, ambiguous circumstances confronted by most management or cross-functional teams. This notion of coordinated shared mutual understanding and knowledge is commonly referred to as a shared mental model (Craik, 1967; Stout, Cannon-Bowers, & Salas, 1996; Brannick, Salas, & Prince, 1997; Stout, Cannon-Bowets, Salas, & Milanovich, 1999; Letsky, 2008; Gettman, 2001; Bergiel, 2006).

Shared mutual understanding and knowledge is a key step to developing trust, and trust is a key element for interdependence and team effort. In the typical cross-functional team, members are generally not performing the same technical task over and over. Team members have no certification as to the competence of other team members. Thus, getting to know and understand each other plays an important role in developing trust.

Shared mutual understanding and knowledge can be expedited by creating opportunities for team members to get to know each another. Because trust is so foundational to any team effort, it is crucial to generally build such opportunities as early as possible. With a little creativity you can find many ways to jump-start members into action.

Acceptance

To accept is to approve of someone, even though that person may be very unlike us. It is easy to accept someone who's like us, but accepting those who are different in values, experiences, manner, and gifts is more difficult. Acceptance is the bridge that connects such differences. It relates to valuing individual differences and is fundamental to the team success. We must accept the fact that there are differences among us in order to motivate our people and build strong teams. Team leaders place a high value on being able to see things through different lenses. Successful problem solving teams and project teams value individual differences as the means of arriving at innovative ways to meeting their goals.

The keys in valuing differences as fundamental to the team success involve two dimensions: internal and external dimensions.

The internal dimension relates to the ability and willingness of qualified individual team members to value differences and share their unique perspectives. This internal dimension requires the following from individual team members:

1. *Recognition of the importance of synergy* – The conviction that the power and strength of the team is greater than the power of any single individual. In business terms, this means that the return on an investment is greater than the contributions made to that investment.
2. *A willingness and eagerness to share knowledge with others and the communication skills to do so* – Willingness implies a positive attitude to other members of the team, a readiness to reply to colleagues kindly. Willingness to share is related to a somewhat passive way of knowledge sharing. Individual team members are willing to contribute to the collective intellectual capital, but they do not have an internal drive to do so.

   Eagerness, on the other hand, implies a positive attitude to actively donating knowledge. We use eagerness to indicate a proactive way of sharing knowledge. People are eager to show what they know, because they themselves consider it valuable and expect their individual performance to be appreciated.

   So for individual team members, who are willing to share their knowledge, the norm of reciprocity is important – they expect others to contribute as well. Therefore, individual team members who are willing to share their knowledge seek to attain a balance between donating and collecting knowledge.

   Eager people, on the other hand, have a strong internal drive to communicate their knowledge, regardless of the team's goals or any directly tangible benefits they can expect from it.
3. *An attitude and belief in plenty* – plenty of opportunity for contribution, plenty of recognition for participation, plenty of reward for accomplishment.
4. *The optimism and conviction that the answer to most team challenges is right around the corner* – Getting around that corner requires looking at things differently.

The external dimension – the overall team dimension – relates to the team's ability to encourage, listen to and use the differences of individual team members to arrive at solutions and processes that far exceed in value and impact that any one member could provide. Conflicts are inevitable in team development. There is no

learning without conflict. The ability to focus such conflicts constructively is the highest order of skill in a team. The external team dimension requires three critical elements to maximize the value of individual differences:

1. Clear unambiguous structure focused on the goals of the team. Clear goals, sufficient resources, and effective team composition that recognizes cross functional contribution are all crucial to team success.
2. An investment in team development of communication skills and the development of an understanding and acceptance of different behaviors, values and skills as essential to the best possible outcome.
3. It is crucial that sponsorship of teams be assigned to the top line enterprise business executive who will directly benefit from the team's contribution, as the means of keeping focus on results.

Respect

Respect, or rather the lack of it, seems to be an ongoing concern in many workplaces. Ask anyone in your workplace what treatment they most want at work. They will likely top their list with the desire to be treated with dignity and respect. Lack of respect spells havoc at work. It translates into debilitating costs you may not see on any balance sheet. Apart from fuelling resentments, resignations and absenteeism, it poisons people's experience of work, deprives them of vitality and feelings of self-worth and resilience and drains their purpose and productivity.

Respect is a component that is connected to all characteristics of effective team relationships. Tackling issues of respect therefore has a strong impact. But what does respect actually mean? What do people working in teams mean by respect, and how does respect manifest itself in a team? What drivers or hurdles exist in a team with a tangible influence on respectful teamwork? What methods, tools and strategies can be used to enhance mutual respect within a team and how does one nurtures such an attitude culture (in the long term)?

Respect often seems like sand in the hand – hard to grasp, hard to retain and it all too easily slips through our fingers. Yet ephemeral and slippery as it may be, respect is still critical for constructive relationships, productive teamwork and inspirational leadership. Respect can be perceived as an attitude, a person's ability to see other as equals and acknowledge their values and personal nature. When dealing with colleagues or co-workers, this attitude is reflected in certain situations by the way people observe certain manners. One generally has to consider the fact that people often revert to different behavioral patterns which are dictated by the situation. In today's business environment, people often experience a great deal of stress – with organizational pressures, heavy workloads and vastly differing tasks. How each individual deals with stress, depends on the nature of the person. Consequently when people react to stress, they revert to certain behavioral patterns that they have developed at different stages of the "socialization process."

"Behavioral patterns" is a technique for organizing how one reacts and deals with situations. People revert to a particular pattern of competences they have acquired in the course of their life in order to react appropriately to a given situation. Respectful behavior taps into a variety of personal competences

(integrity, self-respect, value-neutrality, authenticity, and helpfulness), social communication skills (ability to communicate, team skills, cooperative skills) and action-based skills (initiative, ability to cope with pressure).

Individual members of a team do not always manage to engage these skills when things become difficult. Conveying respect can be interfered with by organizational and socio-cultural influences. So situations can arise in which it is difficult to communicate one's respect for someone and people are pushed to the limit (e.g. under stress, or when faced with socio-cultural differences).

To respect someone in a team setting means to show honor and esteem for his or her contribution. We must acknowledge that we need each other and we must show equal concern for every member. If one member suffers, we all suffer. If one member is honored, we are all honored. Regardless of whether the team members like one another, they can still treat one another in a respectful manner at work. Maintaining an atmosphere of respect is possible only if the team sets the proper standards and the team follows suit.

Reinforcing respectful behavior brings about several benefits, including improvements in individual team members' loyalty and appeal, satisfaction, ability to change, image enhancements, etc. Improving people's respect for one another at work is not a short-term task. Team leaders should keep in mind the importance of respect in everyday situations and continuously reinforce established fundamental ethical standards and suitable mechanisms to develop respectful behavior. Specific actions can then be planned. Finally, success can be measured with surveys on respect or more informal analytical tools.

The following basic principles serve as guidelines that you can apply to all situations. These principles can help individuals at every level of an organization develop respectful behavior and work more effectively with others to accomplish results:

1. *Focus on the situation issue, or behavior, not on the individual person* – Focusing on the situation, issue, or behavior helps you remain objective when faced with challenges. You can solve problems more effectively, make better decisions, and maintain constructive relationships when you concentrate on the big picture and consider others' points of view with an open mind.
2. *Maintain the self-confidence and self-esteem of others* – Contributing fully is easier in an atmosphere of acceptance and approval. When people feel free to express their ideas without fear of ridicule or personal criticism, they are more willing to take risks and stretch their capabilities. By showing respect and helping others develop their abilities and reach their goals, you multiply your own efforts in the workplace.
3. *Maintain constructive relationships* – The best work comes about when co-workers support one another's efforts. This doesn't mean that you need to be friends with everyone you work with. Your work interactions will go more smoothly, however, if you approach everyone with a positive attitude and communicate support for others. By sharing information, acknowledging problems, and sorting out conflicts, you create strong relationships based on mutual respect. This leads to strong partnerships that will help the team face any challenge that arises.

4. *Take initiative to make things better* – No matter what your role in the team, you can find ways to make things better. By surveying your own area and finding opportunities for improvement, you increase the team's chances for success. You also increase your personal satisfaction by taking control of your work and creating visible improvement. Knowing when to ask for help and when to offer help to others is also key to making things better. Initiative follows naturally when you stay informed and alert to changes and care enough to find solutions to problems.

5. *Lead by example* – As organizations face new challenges, everyone is expected to assume leadership role. Assuming leadership role also means setting a good example – even in the face of setbacks or reversals. Modeling the kind of behavior you want to see in others is the surest way to influence them. By actively honoring your commitments, admitting your mistakes, and staying receptive to new ideas, you will motivate others to do the same.

6. *Think beyond the moment* – For each action or decision, there are consequences. No matter what your role, considering how your actions and decisions will impact others and the team, and avoiding actions that bring personal benefit at the expense of others. When you set compelling goals, make thoughtful plans, and behave ethically, you increase your trustworthiness and dependability. Anticipating the future also helps you prevent minor, manageable problems from turning into organizational crises.

Courtesy

Courtesy is the showing of politeness in one's attitude and behavior toward others and one of the most visible indicators of team relationships. It is a way of acting with people which makes them feel valued, cared for, and respected. Courtesy means to think of how your behavior is affecting others and then do things properly so that they are comfortable. We use courtesy when we are trying to make a good impression.

It is important to show courtesy with individual team members, not just people we are meeting for the first time. We demonstrate courtesy by graciousness, consideration for one another, sincerity, listening, how we talk about teammates who aren't present, and the type of humor we use when jesting with one another.

Practicing courtesy makes every person feel important and acknowledged. No one feels taken advantage of or insulted. The next time they come in contact with you, they want to be around you and help you. Courtesy is like a magnet. It makes you attractive to others. When a person does not practice courtesy, people feel offended and may assume that the person is ill-mannered. They get the impression that the person just does not care about anyone or anything. Rude people are avoided. Others do not feel appreciated. They want to stay away.

Accountability

The final relational quality indispensable in a team setting is "accountability." We shall see accountability as:

> *A process by which all individual team members agree to be held responsible for the commitments that they have voluntarily made to each other, in addition to individual obligations to their specific roles, and fully accept the natural and logical consequences for the results of their actions.*

Accountability is enabled by performance measures. Indeed, accountability is really nothing more than "*measurable commitment.*" Performance measures tell you how well you and your team members are performing against commitments – the essence of accountability. As Dean Spitzer indicates (Spitzer, 2007):

> *…without performance measures, it is difficult to hold yourself – or anyone else – accountable for anything, because there is no way to determine that whatever it is you are supposed to do has actually been accomplished.*

Many employees do their best to avoid accountability because it has often been used as ammunition for blame or punishment. It is important to differentiate between "positive accountability" – an opportunity to perform and improve – and "negative accountability" – merely doing what is necessary to get rewards or avoid punishment.

Creating an environment where accountability is clear and fully accepted is a subtle and complex task. The environment of accountability tends to have a major influence on how it is perceived by employees and therefore how they respond emotionally to it. Even if people are not directly held accountable to the natural and logical consequences of the results of their actions, almost everyone feels strongly about accountability. And yet, very few people talk about it in much the same as with performance measures.

The purpose for which accountability is used is the single most powerful determinant of individual team members' reaction to it. Is it being used to provide real understanding, helpful feedback, and to foster learning and improvement – or for justification, reporting, judgment, control, and reward?

"Negative accountability" is when performance measures are used to force performance and punish nonperformance. Because of the flaws and subjectivity in measurement and distrust for those administering it, there is the constant fear that performance measures will be misused. When employees do not feel prepared, are poorly enabled, or view the performance measures as threatening, they will naturally be fearful of the accountability that these performance measures provide. In addition, performance measures will tend to expose those who have traditionally succeeded because of their ability to hide from, manipulate, or finesse the defective measurement systems.

The negative perception of accountability is deeply engrained in most enterprise business cultures. At work, people are typically being help accountable or measured against goals imposed upon them ("These are the targets you are responsible for hitting." "I will be measuring you on or holding you accountable on . . .") and forced into rating categories they feel they do not deserve. Most people in enterprise business teams are accountable for hitting targets. The reaction to hitting targets tends to be quite different from striving to improve one's contribution. Hitting targets leads to a command-and-control orientation and compliance, especially when there are rewards or penalties associated with it.

Managers and team leaders often get very angry, become overwrought or irrational when they see data points that fall below a particular level, and, instead of viewing this as a problem-solving opportunity, they take preemptive action, and sometimes cause heads to roll. Accountability targets (or performance measures) are used, often without being fully understood, to compare teams, or individuals; and employees react by following these performance measures – even if it means going against the common purpose.

In such an environment, everything is focused on hitting the desired target – often by whatever means are available, even if it means bending the established rules. Furthermore, there is a prevailing attitude among many of those accountable for the commitments that they have voluntarily made to each other, in addition to individual obligations to their specific roles, to try to extricate themselves from the responsibility. Because the level of commitment to the common purpose in most teams is very low, it is very tempting to want to delegate it. When this is done, it too often leads to failure to produce exceptional and synergistic results for which individual team members should hold themselves mutually accountable.

Accordingly, for most employees, accountability is viewed, at best, as a "necessary evil." At worst, it is seen as a menacing force that is greeted with about the same enthusiasm as a root canal in dental procedure! When most people think of accountability at work, similarly to performance measures, they tend to think of being watched, being timed, and being appraised. It only takes one snake-bite to make someone fearful of snakes for the rest of their lives – and many people have been bitten more than once by accountability at work. As a result, they tend to see accountability through the lens of negative associations.

In contrast to "negative accountability," there should be no fear of accountability, since it is really just the basis for sound management. It is an agreement to be held to account. It is more than mere commitment and not a judgment. We have established accountability as "measured commitment," because you cannot have accountability without performance measures. This is "positive accountability." Interestingly, the real fear is not of accountability, but of the visibility that measured commitment provides to people who are not accustomed to having to deliver on their commitments.

Accountability, as we have established it, is powerful, and – for better or for worse – what is measured, or held accounted, for tends to get managed. Most employees also seem to intuitively understand that performance measure, hence accountability, is important because their success, their rewards, their budgets, their punishments, and a host of other things ultimately are, directly or indirectly, based on it.

Accountability should actually be a nonjudgmental process. In fact, as soon as judgment is introduced into an environment, there will be almost inevitably some degree of defensiveness occurring. Because of the widespread use of evaluation in enterprise businesses, many people fear that any performance measure can be used against them. Because of previous experiences, people are often suspicions about

the motives behind accountability. What does this mean for me? How will they be using the data? In addition, as Dean Spitzer pointed out (Spitzer, 2007):

> *Evaluation has become inexorably linked with demotivating organizational processes and issues such as organizational politics, perceived unfairness, and internal competition for scarce resources.*

It is unfortunate that accountability, as performance measures, is more often viewed as an instrument of control than of empowerment.

Accountability tends to be much more positively embraced by the workforce when it is used as a steering tool, rather than as a grading tool. It will be perceived as a much more positive force – to enable "continuous improvement" transformation, rather than just monitor goal achievement that the target score was attained. If team members are not held accountable for their contributions in such sense, they are more likely to turn their attention to their own needs and advancement rather than collective results.

When effectively practiced, the way that we advocate here above, accountability can be very liberating for both the team and the individual team members. The climate will resound with the understanding that we are all in this together and will succeed or fail as a team. It creates the freedom for team members to proactively share ideas, needs, and to ask for help. In the case of the latter, effective and positive team accountability is like an early warning system that can alert the team if it is getting behind or off course when an individual team member gets stuck, overloaded, or over their head. It makes it easy for team members to yell for help. It also makes it more comfortable for team members to share ideas and suggestions to others outside of their area of expertise or responsibility.

"Positive accountability" does not come easily to people raised in an environment that values the rugged individualist and free spirit. Many view it as a constraint and imposition into their affairs, rather than a contributing element of effective teamwork. As a result, although the concept is often mentioned in team settings, it is seldom defined, and practiced even less.

9.2.4.3 Conclusion

At this "Performing" stage, the interpersonal structure of the team becomes the effective unit of executing task activities. Roles become flexible and functional, and team energy is channeled into the task at hand. Structural issues have been resolved, and structure can now become supportive of task performance. This is the final stage where increased focus on both the task and on team relationships combines to provide synergy. When the team reaches this stage, hard work leads directly to progress towards the shared vision of their goal, supported by the structures and processes that have been set up. Individual team members may join or leave the team without affecting their performance.

At this stage, the group has a shared vision aligned on the enterprise business intended strategy and is able to stand on its own feet with no interference or participation from the leader. There is a focus on over-achieving intended goals, and the group makes most of the decisions with respect to criteria agreed with the

leader. Disagreements may also occur but now they are resolved within the team positively and necessary changes to processes and structure are made by the team. The team is able to work towards achieving the enterprise aligned goals, and also to attend to relationship, style and process issues along the way. It functions and operates as a "rowing eights" cohesive unit! At this stage, the team leader is able to delegate much of the work and can concentrate on developing team members as the team is more strategically aware of what it is doing why it is doing.

9.2.5   Adjourning

In 1977 Tuckman and Mary Ann Jensen proposed an update to the popular model, again based on a literature review. They reported that 23 newer articles "tended to support the existence of the four stages" but also suggested a fifth stage. Tuckman and Jensen called this stage adjourning. Adjourning basically involves dissolution; that is, terminating roles, completing tasks, and reducing dependency. It is arguably more of an adjunct to the original four stage model rather than an extension – it views the group from a perspective beyond the purpose of the first four stages.

   The Adjourning phase is certainly very relevant to the people in the group and their well-being, but not to the main task of developing a team, which is clearly central to the original four stages. Indeed, teams exist only for a fixed period, and even permanent groups may be disbanded through organizational restructuring. Breaking up a group can be stressful for all concerned and the "Adjourning" stage is important in reaching both group goal and personal conclusions. The break up of the group can be hard for members who like routine or who have developed close working relationships with other group members, particularly if their future roles or even jobs look uncertain.

   The value of Tuckman's model is that it helps enterprise business executives and managers understand that groups and teams evolve. It also helps to consider the different problems that may be encountered at different stages of their development. The model also illustrates four main leadership and management styles, which a good leader is able to switch between, depending on the situation (i.e., the group maturity relating to a particular task, project or challenge).

9.3   Realizing Tuckman's Model

In the process of getting your team from the "Forming" stage to the "Performing" stage, critical tasks of the team leader are to:

1. Create an optimal environment for effective development of team members;
2. Develop cooperation or collaborative problem solving capabilities amongst team members;
3. Encourage team members to assume leadership role (as defined in a previous chapter).

9.3.1   Create an Optimal Environment

Relationships among team members, the way meetings are conducted, role and goal clarity – all these factors form the daily environment of the team. People can fight a hostile environment and still make progress toward an established goal, but who wants to? We would rather put our energy into accomplishing tasks than wrangling with uncooperative coworkers or spinning our wheels because the goals and roles are not clear.

The Team leader can influence the daily environment of its team members. He or she can set expectations for conduct during meetings and create opportunities for team members to know and trust each other. In short, the team leader can consciously put into place the attributes that contribute to an optimal environment.

When an optimal environment is established, amazing changes in attitudes, motivation, and performance are not only possible, they are probable. A positive environment promotes trust and respect among team members and increases performance through more productive work habits. Creating this environment requires four specific elements:

1. *Ground rules that describe the work patterns and values of the team*. Ground rules are explicitly stated expectations about personal behavior that reflect the team's values. As Tuckman's model shows, during the "Forming" stage the team wants structure. We meet that team need and begin establishing our work pattern by setting ground rules.

   Ground rules are explicitly stated expectations about team behavior and values. Making these expectations explicit accomplishes three things:
   – Team members understand what is expected of them as a member of an interdependent group.
   – The team has an opportunity to form and own its work pattern;
   – You meet the team's need for structure.

   Ground rules can cover a lot of territory, but generally fall into two categories:
   – *Team values*. Ground rules reinforce specific values by identifying behaviors or attitudes that support the value.
   – *Meeting behavior*. Setting expected meeting behaviors is a classic application of ground rules. Since we often brainstorm solutions, debate alternatives, assign new work among ourselves, and perform other creative work, it is essential that our behaviors demonstrate respect for each other and, at the same time, make productive use of the time we are together.

2. *A team identity built on 'genuine commitment' to a shared goal*. This commitment relies on goal and scope clarity, demonstrated support from the team sponsor, and understanding the strengths and contributions of all team members.

   Forging a team identity is a process that benefits from repetition and attention. As you, as team leader, work to build these elements into your team, recall Tuckman's stages of team development and adjust your style accordingly. The structure of your early attempts to clarify the goals and scope and provide a strong kickoff to the work will be welcomed when the team is "Forming." Likewise, initial attempts to build relationships may be embraced and may seem

productive, yet more attention may be necessary as the team reaches the "Storming" phase. If your investment in team identity pays off, you will find that your team progresses rapidly from "Norming" to "Performing."

3. *The ability to listen*. Problem solving demands an exchange of ideas, which is possible only if team members actually work hard to listen to perspectives that are different from their own.

When teams form around common challenges and overcome them with creativity and perseverance, strong communication skills are at work. In such a dynamic work environment, no communication skill is more important than listening, because it is through listening that we gain the value of another person's insight. In addition, effective listening builds trust and demonstrates respect during the give-and-take of creativity. As I work to understand your idea, I show you respect that builds trust and increases the likelihood that you will treat my ideas the same way.

Listening is a personal communication skill. The work of group problem solving requires that every team member have this. Therefore, it is the task of team leaders to model, teach, and coach this skill. Here we highlight some well-known guidelines you and your team can follow. As your team members develop this skill, it will contribute to the overall goal of building an optimal environment.

Effective listening is a habit that your entire team needs to develop. You can speed this development through several actions early in the work or tasks to be accomplished. The following are guidelines that you, as team leader, can put to use:

– Pay attention and be attentive of the skill level of the team. That will tell you how quickly and how formally you need to address the listening skills.
– Plan time to teach the listening skills. Over the course of the work to be accomplished, it is appropriate to spend some time attending to the team's effectiveness. Show a video, pass out and discuss a good article, or bring in a professional trainer to instruct the team.
– As the team leader, you can demonstrate effective listening, which teaches by example.
– Look for effective listening behaviors within the team. Point them out as you debrief a team meeting, emphasizing how active listening contributed to a better discussion.
– Add "active listening" as a desired behavior to your ground rules. Use the ground rules as a reminder during meetings if discussions start to degenerate into arguments.

Teaching the team to listen pays off rapidly. It is not a difficult skill, but it does take practice and a conscious attempt to improve.

4. *The ability to effectively manage meetings*. Much team work gets accomplished in meetings (or at least it should!). We gather and distribute information, coordinate activities, uncover new problems, assign tasks, and make decisions. Meetings also reinforce team identity, as we gather to make progress on common goals. Productive meetings demonstrate all the characteristics of a high-performance team and produce a result that is beyond what any team members working individually could achieve.

Broken into these four elements, we see that an optimal environment is not merely an abstract feeling; it is a set of observable skills that team leaders can instill. Further, this positive environment produces two important characteristics of the high-performing team:

1. *Personal ownership of the team goal*. Each team member interprets his or her own success in terms of the team's goal. When team success becomes a matter of personal and professional pride, this is a powerful source of motivation and determination.
2. *Strong interpersonal relationships based on trust and respect*. For those of us who have worked on high-performance teams, the friendship during the course of a specified work was far more satisfying than the act of achieving the goal. This element is the most essential and most elusive, because it creates itself. Trust builds trust and respect breeds respect. Trust and respect are essential for people working interdependently because they allow them to rely on one another, which is absolutely necessary if the whole is going to be greater than the sum of the parts.

9.3.2 Develop Collaborative Problem Solving Capabilities

A "problem" is any situation in which the state of affairs varies, or may in the future vary, from the desired state, and where there is no obvious way to reach the desired state. Problems also include situations where nothing has gone wrong yet, but where there is reason to believe that if some action is not taken, something may go wrong in the future. Unless anticipated ahead of time, a "something may go wrong" problem can easily become a "something has gone wrong" problem. Problem solving calls the deployment of strategies calculated to head off foreseeable future problems. It must ultimately eventuate in a decision; that is, a commitment to a course of action that is intended to produce a satisfying state of affairs.

Collaborative problem solving capabilities is the manifestation of teamwork, and the level of collaborative problem solving capabilities drives the level of results. It is important not to see "collaborative problem solving capabilities" as an on-off concept, but a matter of degree. Think of it as a relative concept that allows us to appreciate the dynamic between individual team members and the larger team itself. Team leaders must balance the tensions between the task, the team, and individual members on the team. Too much emphasis on one element at the expense of the others throws the team dynamic out of balance. In many respect, "collaborative problem solving capabilities" is a series of "decision making" patterns that set the pace and direction of the team dynamic.

We have established that teams are established to accomplish specific tasks and that they need to learn to work together to accomplish those tasks successfully. In the process of getting your team from the "Forming" stage to the "Performing" stage, team leaders should endeavor to build this collaborative capability by focusing on four team abilities:

1. *Problem-solving skills tied to an accepted problem-solving process*. A team made up of individuals with diverse skills and styles must agree on the process they will follow for working through problems, both large and small. A commonly accepted problem-solving process enables all team members to flex their styles because each understands and trusts the process.
2. *Understanding and applying multiple decision modes*. Some decisions are made solely by the team leader; other decisions are made by the entire team. These are only two examples of decision modes. Efficient decision making requires that a team understand the possible decision modes and consciously choose which are appropriate for any decision.
3. *Conflict-resolution skills*. Producing superior decisions demands creativity, which necessarily produces disagreement. Mature teams accept and value the inevitability of conflict. They have the skills to leverage conflict to achieve the best decisions while maintaining strong relationships.
4. *Continuous learning*. When innovation and breakthrough solutions are required, the team must embrace and take a certain amount of risk and have the ability to improve its own performance throughout the work been accomplished by learning from both success and failure.

Each of these capabilities can be developed by the team, though not all are simple. Together they create a truly synergistic result: decisions and products that are superior because they are developed by a team with diverse styles and talents.

9.3.2.1 Collaborative Decision Making

We shall think of "decision making" as the cognitive process of making a choice between alternative courses of action (which may also include inaction) in a situation of uncertain events. Decision making involves choosing a particular pathway across the context that lies between the actual and desired states of affairs. It stresses the gathering of information needed to take good decisions.

Making a decision implies that there are alternative courses of action to be considered, and in such a case we want not only to identify as many of these alternatives as possible but to choose the one that is most adequate and effective. Very few decisions are made with absolute certainty because complete knowledge about all the alternatives courses of action is seldom possible. Thus, every decision involves a certain amount of risk.

Our perception of the significance and nature of events leading to decisions after these events have occurred often leads us to make judgments about past choices. During the course of achieving the "common purpose" for which the team was established, individual team members often do not have the benefit of such retrospective information. They usually find themselves navigation in the dark, guided by their individual mental models, incomplete data, and the council of peers and experts.

Chances are that the decisions made by teams are less than adequate and effective. Still, teams can get closer to adequate and effective decision if they have a sound methodology for making decision and some understanding of common decision traps they can avoid. An adequate and effective decision is one that

satisfies, to the greatest extent possible, the broadest range of objectives, including constraints, implicated by the identified problem or opportunity for which the decision is called upon.

Decisions are difficult to take when they involve uncertain events, present many alternatives, are complex, and raise interpersonal issues that are difficult to measure but often determine the success or failure of the actions taken. Over the years, scholars have contributed several theories and methodologies to the field of decision making for dealing with these difficulties (Bridge & Dodds, 1975; McGrew & Wilson, 1982; Moody, 1983; Bell, Raiffa, & Tversky, 1988; March, 1994; Adair, 1997, 2009; Teale, 2003; Koehler & Harvey, 2004; Harvard Business School, 2006, 2008; Nutt & Wilson, 2010; Lim, 2010; Brest & Krieger, 2010; Lu, Jain, & Zhang, 2012).

To be an effective member of a team it is critical to understand the team decision making process. The satisfactory team decision process is characterized by a large number of inputs from each individual member upon which other members may build. It is therefore a series of interrelated sub-decisions leading to a final overall decision.

There are essentially two distinct, but complementary, models to decision making. One relies on rationality or reflection, the other on intuition. While intuition is pervasive, reflection is relatively rare because, among other things, it requires considerable cognitive energy. Reflective or rational decision making is informed by intuition at the same time as it corrects for the limitations and biases of pure intuition. Intuition can also be informed by reflection, as happens in the development of expertise. While the processes of intuition are largely opaque to the decision maker, reflection is transparent. For this reason, among others, we begin with a description of the reflective or rational model.

Making Rational Decisions

The rational decision-making model describes a series of steps that team members should consider if their goal is to maximize the quality of their outcomes. There are different types of rational models and the number of steps involved, and even the steps themselves, will differ in different models. An ideal rational model of decision making will consist of the steps or elements described below.

The process is non linear and recursive, beginning with the need to frame the problem in terms of the interests involved and to consider the interests in the context of the particular problem. After completing last step, it would be wise for the team to review the earlier steps, not just because it may have accidentally omitted something, but because the concreteness of positing solutions can reframe objectives and the team conception of the overall problem:

1. *State, or "Frame," the problem or opportunity* – The decision-making process can be triggered by either the observation of a problem or the observation of a unique opportunity that may have presented itself during the course of achieving the "common purpose" and that should be taken advantage of. It is the

observation of problems and opportunities, not their actual symptoms, which gets the decision-making process started. Problems and opportunities may exist all around us, but if they are not perceived and noticed, they do not initiate the decision-making process.

Framing the problem or opportunity for which the decision is called upon sometimes goes about making a wrong decision because the issues are not adequately stated or framed. The statement may mistake symptoms of a problem for the problem itself, or define the problem too narrowly, or define the problem in terms of a ready solution without taking account of the objectives that the team is are actually trying to achieve.

While the causes of some problems are perfectly clear, many others call for analysis or diagnosis. Just as a physician who misdiagnoses the underlying cause of a set of symptoms is likely to prescribe an unhelpful, or even harmful, treatment, so too may a team take useless or counterproductive decisions based on an inadequate analysis of the facts. One way that the team can avoid this is by identifying the problem or opportunity separately from their symptoms.

To clearly frame the real problem or opportunity, an individual team member should be concerned with three basic questions: (1) "What is the problem or opportunity?" (2) "Why should anything be done at all?" (3) "What should or could be happening?"

2. *Establish a context for success* – Every decision is made within a decision context, which refers to the circumstances that form the setting for events, statements, ideas, constraints, preferences, data, social climate, or human factors, and in terms of which it can be fully understood and assessed at the time of the decision. The decision context sets the tone by presenting the purpose of making a decision – achieve a meaningful objective. It reflects how the decision will be perceived by all people affected and therefore how they respond emotionally to it. The right context is critical to making successful choices.
The German philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche is reputed to have said, "To forget one's purpose is the commonest form of stupidity." The best context for a problem is the one that incorporates the broadest possible range of purposes, interests, objectives, and values implicated by the situation. For this reason, the second step in the rational decision model entails a thoroughgoing specification of all relevant interests, conditions, factors, and objectives necessary for success, not just those most readily brought to mind.

In most enterprise businesses, choices are often influences by factors that are antithetical to sound decision making: self-interest, antipathy between individuals, internal rivalries, and alliances based on personal benefits dominate the decision-making process. For example, within enterprise businesses at low maturity stages where command-and-control orientations are predominant, decisions are made in line with the preferences of most powerful individuals. No matter how well informed these powerful individuals may be, every decision is made ad hoc without a consistent approach to handling important choices.

In a positive (decision-friendly) context, that characterizes enterprise businesses at higher maturity stages, robust and rational dialogues take place and the competence of most powerful individuals to take decisions over knowledge workers became less feasible and less legitimate unless these decisions were taken in consultation with the relevant knowledge workers.

3. *Establish and weight decision criteria* – The rational decision-making model has important lessons for teams. First, when making a decision, team members may want to make sure that they establish and weight decision criteria before searching for all alternatives. This would prevent from liking one option too much and setting criteria accordingly.

For example, let's say that the team has started reviewing proposal for new cars models to be built by an automobile plant factory – ABC Automobile Inc. – before it decided the decision criteria. The team may come across a car model proposal that it thinks really reflects the sense of style shared by all individual team members and make an emotional bond with the proposal of the car model. Then, because of their affection for this car model, the team may say that the fuel economy of the car and the innovative braking system are the most important criteria. After developing and manufacturing it, the team may realize that the car is too small for the target customers friends to ride in the back seat when the front seat is occupied, which was something that the team should have thought about! Setting criteria before searching for alternatives may prevent from making such mistakes.

Criteria are the measures that we use to arrive at the most adequate and effective decision that best fulfills the purpose. Criteria should not be confused with purpose. The purpose is "what needs to be decided upon and why?" Decision criteria are used to achieve the purpose. The following questions can help the team establish the criteria: "What do we want to achieve in the decision?" "What do we want to preserve?" "What do we want to avoid as problems?"

4. *Generate a range of plausible alternative courses of action* – Once the frame, context and decision criteria have been set, the team should proceed to generates alternative courses of action that might result in goal attainment. This is the stage in the decision-making process that requires the greatest component of creativity and imagination. Ideally, the team should seek to generate as many alternatives as possible and should try to ensure that the set of alternatives is relatively diverse. In this way the team increases the likelihood that some good potential alternatives will not be excluded from further consideration in the decision-making process.

The team should remember at this step that the best problem or opportunity frame is not necessarily the first to come to mind, and this is true of potential decisions or courses of action as well. Decision making often benefits from a period of divergent thinking about different possible decisions, rather than from rapid convergence on the first seemingly attractive strategic option that sashays by. By generating a large number of alternatives that cover a wide range of possibilities, the team is likely to make a more effective decision in which it does not need to sacrifice one criterion for the sake of another.

There are many methods or procedures that can be used by teams to develop alternatives. Each is designed to improve the decision-making process in some way. Some of the more common group decision-making methods are brainstorming, dialetical inquiry, nominal group technique, and the delphi technique:

– Brainstorming involves team members verbally suggesting ideas or alternative courses of action. The "brainstorming session" is usually relatively unstructured. The situation at hand is described in as much detail as necessary so that team members have a complete understanding of the issue or problem. The team leader or facilitator then solicits ideas from all members of the team. Usually, the team leader or facilitator will record the ideas presented on a flip chart or marker board.

   The "generation of alternatives" stage is clearly differentiated from the next stage, as team members are not allowed to evaluate suggestions until all ideas have been presented. Once the ideas of the team members have been exhausted, the team members then begin the process of evaluating the utility of the different suggestions presented. Brainstorming is a useful means by which to generate alternatives, but does not offer much in the way of process for the evaluation of alternatives or the selection of a proposed course of action.

– Dialetical inquiry is a group decision-making technique that focuses on ensuring full consideration of alternatives. Essentially, it involves dividing the group into opposing sides, which debate the advantages and disadvantages of proposed solutions or decisions. A similar group decision-making method – "devil's advocacy" – requires that one member of the group highlights the potential problems with a proposed decision. Both of these techniques are designed to try and make sure that the group considers all possible ramifications of its decision.

– The nominal group technique is a structured decision making process in which group members are required to compose a comprehensive list of their ideas or proposed alternatives in writing. The group members usually record their ideas privately. Once finished, each group member is asked, in turn, to provide one item from their list until all ideas or alternatives have been publicly recorded on a flip chart or marker board.

   Usually, at this stage of the process verbal exchanges are limited to requests for clarification – no evaluation or criticism of listed ideas is permitted. Once all proposals are listed publicly, the group engages in a discussion of the listed alternatives, which ends in some form of ranking or rating in order of preference.

   As with brainstorming, the prohibition against criticizing proposals as they are presented is designed to overcome individuals' reluctance to share their ideas. Empirical research conducted on group decision making offers some evidence that the nominal group technique succeeds in generating a greater number of decision alternatives that are of relatively high quality.

– The Delphi technique is a group decision-making process that can be used by decision-making groups when the individual members are in different

physical locations. The individuals in the Delphi "group" are usually selected because of the specific knowledge or expertise of the problem they possess.

In the Delphi technique, each group member is asked to independently provide ideas, input, and/or alternative solutions to the decision problem in successive stages. These inputs may be provided in a variety of ways, such as e-mail, fax, or online in a discussion room or electronic bulletin board. After each stage in the process, other group members ask questions and alternatives are ranked or rated in some fashion. After an indefinite number of rounds, the group eventually arrives at a consensus decision on the best course of action.

5. *Evaluate alternatives or predict the consequences of the courses of action and assess their impact on the relevant interests or objectives* – Once a variety of potential courses of action have been generated, the team must proceed to evaluate them rationally. This is done by gathering information regarding each of the alternatives and their likely consequences. More specifically, the team must seek to learn as much as possible regarding the likelihood that each alternative will result in the achievement of the goals and objectives being sought. The team must predict the consequences of each plausible option, and then assess the consequences in light of the objectives for which the decision was called upon.

Assuming that the problem or opportunity for which the decision was called upon was well defined, evaluation of the adequacy and effectiveness of alternative courses of action should be relatively straightforward. The issue is simply to what extent each alternative alleviates the problem. Using the decision criteria and weights previously identified as important for judging success, the various alternative courses of action can generally be directly compared. However, in addition to simply measuring the end result, the team may also want to consider the consequences each course of action.

Organizations are made up of real people, with real strengths and weaknesses. A given course of action may require competencies or access to finite resources that simply do not exist in the enterprise business. In addition, there may be political considerations within the enterprise business that influence the desirability of one alternative over another. Therefore, the team may want to consider both the tangible and intangible benefits and costs of each alternative.

6. *Choose and Implement a course of action eventually* – the decision making process comes to a conclusion and a decision must be made. Quite often, this requires making trade-offs among competing interests. The team must select the course of action that optimizes the interests or objectives to be served; that is, make a decision.

7. *Implement, observe, and learn from the outcome of the decision* – Although, strictly speaking, the decision-making process has ended once a decision regarding the most adequate and effective alternative has been reached, it is also true that the decision-making process is no more than a mental exercise if the chosen

course of action is not implemented. Further, issues of implementation are frequently important factors in the choice of an alternative in the previous stages. As implementation of the selected most adequate and effective course of action progresses, it should be monitored, adjusted if necessary, and reviewed to see what can be learned from the experience of its selection and implementation. The decision-making cycle should not end until the team judges the extent to which the chosen alternative has succeeded in addressing the initial problem or opportunity and achieving the goals identified at the outset of the process. If such evaluation indicates success, then the decision-making cycle is concluded. Otherwise, the team must recycle through the decision-making process to generate new alternatives.

The rational decision making process combines elements of divergent and convergent thinking. Divergent thinking expands the range of perspectives, dimensions, and options related to a problem or an opportunity. Convergent thinking eliminates possible alternatives through the application of critical analysis, thereby eventually reducing the number of options that remain open. Divergent thinking conceives; convergent thinking critiques. Divergent thinking envisions; convergent thinking troubleshoots, fine tunes, selects, and implements.

Early in the process, when a problem is being framed, when interests and objectives are being identified, and when alternative solutions are being generated, divergent thinking can bring a great deal of value to the decision making endeavor. Divergent thinking enables us to conceptualize the problem or opportunity from a wide variety of perspectives, so as to permit consideration of the broadest possible array of potential solutions. Divergent thinking helps identify the full range of interests implicated by a particular decision. And divergent thinking inspires innovation in coming up with alternative courses of action. Later in the process, convergent thinking comes into play in analyzing causation, evaluating options, choosing which course of action to implement, and implementing and monitoring the choice.

Making Intuitive Decisions

Most of the time we make decisions without coming close to the conscious, step-by-step analysis of the rational decision making model. In fact, attempting to approach even a small fraction of the problems we encounter in a full, deliberative manner would bring our activities to a screeching halt.

Out of necessity, most of decisions made are intuitive. In contrast with the rational model of decision making, intuitive decisions rely on a process that somehow produces an answer, decision, or idea without the use of a conscious, logically defensible step-by-step process. Intuitive responses are reached with little apparent effort, and typically without conscious awareness. They involve little or no conscious deliberation.

The intuitive decision-making model has emerged as an important decision-making model. It refers to arriving at decisions without conscious reasoning. Nearly 90 % of managers surveyed admitted to using intuition to make decisions at least sometimes, and 59 % said they used intuition often (Burke & Miller, 1999).

When we recognize that team leaders and managers often need to make decisions under challenging circumstances with time pressures, constraints, a great deal of uncertainty, highly visible and high-stakes outcomes, and within changing conditions, it makes sense that they would not have the time to formally work through all the steps of the rational decision-making model.

Yet when team leaders and managers are asked about the critical decisions they make, seldom do they attribute success to luck. To an outside observer, it may seem like they are making guesses as to the course of action to take, but it turns out that they are systematically making decisions using a different model than was earlier suspected. The intuitive decision-making model argues that, in a given situation, experts making decisions scan the environment for cues to recognize patterns (Salas & Klein, 2001). Once a pattern is recognized, they can play a potential course of action through to its outcome based on their prior experience.

Due to training, experience, and knowledge, these decision makers have an idea of how well a given course of action may work. If they run through the mental model and find that the course of action will not work, they alter the course of action and retest it before setting it into action. If it still is not deemed a workable course of action, it is discarded as an option and a new idea is tested until a workable course of action is found. Once a viable course of action is identified, the decision maker puts it into motion. The key point is that only one choice is considered at a time. Novices are not able to make effective decisions this way because they do not have enough prior experience to draw upon.

9.3.3   Encourage Team Members to Assume Leadership Role

While team members focus on the near-term accomplishment of tasks for which the team was established, the team leader must maintain a steady focus on the final outcome of the work been performed and the path toward the goal and the impact on the enterprise business intended strategy. This requires the collective participation of every team member. Every team member must assume leadership role and contribute to the effort.

As we have indicated in a previous chapter, "*genuine commitment*" from any individual is of value only when it is voluntarily and genuinely chosen. We have also established leadership as the accomplishment of a "*common goal*" through the direction of people who are genuinely contributing their creative and productive energies to the process of moving the enterprise business to a higher maturity state.

Commitment of every team member and their involvement should be limited only by his/her analytical and creative capability, and not by his/her position level on the enterprise organizational chart. Leadership as we have defined in a previous chapter, and advocate in this book, is needed not just to make the "Continuous Improvement" transformation contextualized, focused, and interactive through the tasks for which the team was established – and so productive at new levels of effectiveness – but to apply systematically the critical resources needed to realize the rich potentials describes for the transformation of the enterprise business and empowerment of individuals.

9.3.4 Conclusion

In the process of moving the enterprise business from its current stage of maturity toward the "Continuous Improvement" stage of maturity, a key task of the enterprise business executives, its managers and leaders, therefore, is to develop groups and teams following the stages of Tuckman's model. Ironically during our consulting works, we have observed that this route is feared by many managers. However, enterprise businesses at the "Continuous Improvement" stage of maturity place an extremely high value on leaders and managers who can achieve this.

The survey form in Table 9.1 below can be used to assess or uncover common problems that a group or a team might be experiencing.

9.4 Team Management

Team management refers to the comprehensive set of activities followed to establish, implement and improve unity and coordination between the members of a group or a team working towards a common goal – achieve the activities resulting from the enterprise business alignment.

There are a number of different approaches to promote unity and coordination between the members of a group or a team, as well as overseeing or managing their ongoing function. As with many management strategies, there is no one ideal mode of team management that fits every situation and setting. There are few essential characteristics that play a role in any type of team management.

One of those aspects is the ability to accurately identify the strengths and weaknesses that every group/team member brings to the effort. Doing so makes it possible to arrange the essential tasks in a manner that allow people to utilize their skills in areas where they excel, thus moving the entire team closer to the ultimate goal. At the same time, being aware of areas in which different group/team members show some talent or ability makes it possible to cross-train group/team members to handle tasks normally performed by others.

This aspect of team management makes it possible to always have support resources to call upon if a group/team member is incapacitated or unavailable for a period of time. Even if someone is unable to perform assigned duties for a short period of time, tasks are still completed and the group/team continues to move forward.

As an enterprise business executive, a manager or a team leader, your aim is to help your team reach and sustain high performance as soon as possible. If you have opted for Tuckman's model for developing your team, then you will need to change your approach at each stage of the group/team development.

9.4.1 Forming

Direct the group/team and establish objectives clearly. A good way of doing this is to develop a team charter. Team Charters are documents that define the purpose of

Table 9.1 Group/team development questionnaire

#	Observation	Rating
01	My group/team is knowledgeable about the stages of development teams can be expected to go through	
02	Group/team members are provided with a great deal of feedback regarding their performance	
03	Group/team members are encouraged to work for the common good of the enterprise	
04	There are many complaints, and morale is low on my group/team	
05	Group/team members don't understand the decisions that are made, or don't agree with them	
06	People are encouraged to be good group/team members, and build good relationships	
07	Group/team members are provided with development opportunities	
08	Meetings are inefficient and there is a lot of role overlap	
09	Group/team members are encouraged to commit to the enterprise vision, and managers and leaders help them understand how their role fits into the big picture	
10	Group/team members are often given a chance to work on interesting tasks and stretch their knowledge and capabilities	
11	The group/team understands what it needs to accomplish and has the resources needed to be successful	
12	Conflicts, hostilities, or interpersonal issues between members are pervasive issues that do not seem to get better	
13	People feel that good work is not rewarded and they are not sure what is expected of them	
14	Group/team members balance their individual needs for autonomy with the benefits of mutual interdependence	
15	Working relationships across functions or departments is poor, and there is a lack of coordination	

Use the standard five-point rating scale:

5 = Strongly agree; 4 = Agree; 3 = Neither agree nor disagree; 2 = Disagree; 1 = Strongly disagree

Interpretation key:

Highest score is 75

46–75: You are a solid group/team member working well as part of an effective group/team. Lower scores in this range show that there is room for improvement, though. Read the group/team development stages described above

31–45: Your effectiveness as a group member/team player and your group/team's effectiveness are inconsistent. You are good at some things, but there is room for improvement elsewhere. Focus on the serious issues below, and you will most likely find that you and your group/team are soon achieving more

15–30: This is worrying. The good news is that you have got a great opportunity to improve your effectiveness as a group/team member, and the effectiveness of your group/team

the group/team, how it will work, and what the expected outcomes are. They are "roadmaps" that the group/team and its sponsors create at the beginning of the journey to make sure that all involved are clear about where they are heading, and to give direction when times get tough.

For groups/teams to get off "on the right foot," Team Charters should be drawn up when the group is formed. This helps to make sure that everyone is focused on the right things from the start. However, drawing up a Team Charter can also be useful if a group/team is experiencing difficulties and people need to regain their view of the "big picture." The precise format of Team Charters varies from situation to situation and from group/team to group/team. And while the actual Charter can take on many forms, much of the value of the Charter comes from thinking through and agreeing the various elements.

9.4.2   Storming

Establish process and structure, and work to smooth conflict and build good relationships between members. Generally provide support, especially to those members who are less secure. Remain positive and firm in the face of challenges to your authority, leader's role, or the set goal. Perhaps explain the "Forming, Storming, Norming and Performing" idea so that people understand why conflict is occurring, and understand that things will get better in the future. And consider teaching assertiveness and conflict resolution skills where these are necessary.

9.4.3   Norming

Step back and help the team take responsibility for progress towards the set goal. This is a good time to arrange a social, or a group/team-building event.

9.4.4   Performing

Delegate as far as you sensibly can. Once the group/team has achieved high performance, you should aim to have as "light a touch" as possible. You will now be able to start focusing on other goals and areas of work. Delegating responsibility and authority is one of the fundamental ways to motivate employees and group members. With more responsibility and authority, employees will begin to take ownership. More and more enterprises businesses are giving greater freedom to employees to take initiatives and make decisions.

For example, at one large automobile plant, employees have taken on traditional staff responsibilities for scheduling, quality, safety, hiring, and training. More informally, the final assembly department of the automobile factory tells its employees: "Rule number one is to use your good judgment in all situations; there are no additional rules."

9.4.5   Adjourning

Delegate as far as you sensibly can. Once the group/team has achieved high performance, you should aim to have as "light a touch" as possible. You will now be able to start focusing on other goals and areas of work. As an enterprise business executive, a manager or a team leader, the following steps will help ensure you are doing the right thing at the right time:

1. Identify which stage of the development your group/team is at from the Tuckman's model stages described in the previous section.
2. Consider what needs to be done to move towards the "Performing" stage, and what you can do to help the team do that effectively. Tables 9.2 and 9.3 below help you understand your role at each stage, and think about how to move the group/team forward.
3. Schedule regular reviews of where your group/teams are, and adjust your behavior and leadership approach to suit the stage your group/team has reached.

As an enterprise business executive, a manager or a team leader, you can reduce the difficulties that group and team members experience by understanding what they need to do as they moves through the development stages from Forming to Storming, Norming and, finally, Performing. Think about how much progress you should expect towards the goal and by when, and measure success against that. Remember that the group has to go through the "Forming," "Storming" and "Norming" stages before the team starts "Performing," and that there may not be much progress during this time. Communicating progress against appropriate targets is important if your members are to feel that what they are going through is worth while. Without such targets, they can feel that time has gone by and they have not yet move an inch. Not all teams and situations will behave in this way, however many will – use this approach, but do not try to force situations to fit it. And make sure that people don't use knowledge of the "storming" stage as a license for unprofessional behavior.

9.4.6   Resolving Conflict Rationally and Effectively

Conflict during group development refers to a "perceive divergence of interest, a belief that the parties' current aspirations are incompatible." Because no two individuals have exactly the same expectations and desires, conflict is a natural part of our interactions with others, and conflict is inevitable among individuals in a group development. It is a natural outcome of social interaction that begins when two or more social entities come in contact with one another in attaining their objectives. Relationship among individuals in a group may become incompatible or inconsistent when two or more of them desire a similar resource that is in short supply; when they have partially exclusive behavioral preferences regarding their joint action; or when they have different attitudes, values, beliefs, and skills.

The classical view of conflict within a group development is that conflict is detrimental to group efficiency and therefore should be minimized. This is often

Table 9.2 Summary of group development stages

Stage 1: "Forming"	Stage 2: "Storming"	Stage 3: "Norming"	Stage 4: "Performing"
Individuals are not clear on what they are supposed to do	Roles and responsibilities are articulated	Success occurs	Group members feel very motivated
The mission is not owned by the group	Agendas are displayed	Group has all the resources for handling the task	Individuals defer to group needs
Wondering where we are going	Problems solving does not work well	Appreciation and trust build	No surprises
No trust yet	People want to modify the group's mission	Purpose is well defined	Little waste. Very efficient group operations
High learning	Trying new ideas	Feedback is high, well received, and objective	Group members have objective outlook
No group history; unfamiliar with group members	Splinter groups form	Group confidence is high	Individuals take pleasure in the success of the group – big wins
Norms of the group are not established	People set boundaries	Leader reinforces group behavior	"We" versus "I" orientation
People check one another out	Anxiety abounds	Members self-reinforce group norms	High pride in the group
People are not committed to the group	People push for position and power	Hidden agendas become open	High openness and support
	Competition is high	Group is creative	High empathy
	Cliques drive the group	More individual motivation	High trust in everyone
	Little team spirit	Group gains commitment from all members on direction and goals	Superior group performance
	Lots of personal attacks		OK to risk confrontation
	Level of participation is at its highest or at its lowest		

done by prescribing group structures – rules and procedures, hierarchy, channel of command, and so on – so that group members would be unlikely to engage in conflict. This approach to resolving conflicts within groups is based on the assumption that harmony, cooperation, and the absence of conflict are appropriate for achieving group effectiveness.

However, conflict can also be seen as an instrument of social change and influence rather than a symptom of a breakdown in social relationships within a group development. This is the modern view of conflict within enterprises at the "Continuous Improvement" stage of maturity.

Table 9.3 Leadership action steps between group development stages

Action steps: "Forming" to "Storming"	Action steps: "Storming" to "Norming"	Action steps: "Norming" to "Performing"
Set a mission	Leader should actively support and reinforce group behavior, facilitate the group for wins, create positive environment	Maintain traditions
Set goals	Leader must ask for and expect results	Praise and flatter each other
Establish roles	Recognize, publicize group wins	Self-evaluate without a fuss
Recognize need to move out of "forming" stage	Agree on individuals' roles and responsibilities	Share leadership role in group based on who does what the best
Leader must be directive	Buy into objectives and activities	Share rewards and successes
Figure ways to build trust	Listen to each other	Communicate all the time
Define a reward structure	Set and take group time together	Share responsibility
Take risks	Everyone works actively to set a supportive environment	Delegate freely within the group
Bring group together periodically to work on common tasks	Have the vision: "We can succeed!"	Commit time to the group
Assert power	Request and accept feedback	Keep raising the bar – new, higher goals
Decide once and for all to be on the group	Build trust by honoring commitments	Be selective of new group members; train to maintain a positive context spirit

In this approach, conflict behaviors must occur from time to time in order to demonstrate the will and capacity of action. Conflict itself, especially when innovative alternatives are being analyzed and challenged, is a necessary ingredient in the creative process. Differences among group members are often the catalysts to vigorous debate and creative thinking.

A critical challenge for leaders and their group/team members is how to get the best from the inevitable differences and disagreements that arise during group/team development while minimizing the harm and discomfort routinely associated with conflict. Conflict during group/team development is considered legitimate, inevitable, and an indicator of effective group/team management within enterprises at the "Continuous Improvement" stage of maturity.

Within certain limits, conflict is essential to the group productivity. It can be functional to the extent to which it results in the formulation and creative solution to the right problems or the effective attainment of enterprise intended objectives that otherwise would not have been possible. Little or no conflict in a group may lead to stagnation, poor decisions, and ineffectiveness. On the other hand, conflict left uncontrolled may have dysfunctional outcomes.

Therefore, the more critical issue within enterprises at the "Continuous Improvement" stage of maturity is whether groups/teams are experiencing enough conflict. Too little conflict may encourage stagnancy, mediocrity, and groupthink, but too much conflict may lead to group disintegration. A moderate amount of conflict handled in a constructive manner, is essential for attaining and maintaining an optimum level of group effectiveness. The functional and dysfunctional outcomes of conflict in a group are as follows:

Functional Outcomes:

1. Conflict may stimulate innovation, creativity, mutual understanding, and change.
2. Organizational decision making process may be improved.
3. Alternative solutions to a problem may be found.
4. Conflict may lead to synergistic solutions to common problems.
5. Individual and group performance may be enhanced.
6. Improved self-knowledge.
7. Individual and groups may be forced to search for new approaches.
8. Individuals and group may be required to articulate and clarify their positions.

Dysfunctional Outcomes:

9. Conflict may cause job stress, burnout, and dissatisfaction.
10. Communication between individuals and groups may be reduced.
11. A climate of distrust and suspicion can be developed.
12. Relationships may be damaged.
13. Job performance may be reduced.
14. Resistance to change can increase.
15. Organizational commitment and loyalty may be affected.

There are two types of conflict that may appear during a group development: task and relationship conflicts.

A *task conflict (also referred to as cognitive conflict*[1]*)*, emerges when group members have differences of opinion but are able to stay focused on solving the problems caused by their differences. Their discussion of issues typically results in higher levels of creative thinking and better decision-making because the issues are more fully vetted (Chen, 2006). A task conflict often occurs during the early stage of decision making and it stimulates creativity.

A *relationship (also referred to as affective conflict)*, occurs when group members spend more time trying to assign blame than on figuring out how to solve problems. It is associated with poorer group productivity and lowered morale (De Dreu & Weingart, 2003). Even when group members try to effectively debate issues it is easy for their efforts to devolve into relationship conflict. Critiques of

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[1] Cognitive conflict here refers to conflict regarding the way a group approaches and attempts to solve problems encountered in the course of its development. Viewed most broadly, cognitive conflict is a conflict in way of seeing and thinking a perspective.

ideas can easily be perceived as personal attacks. When this happens, a task conflict can quickly morph into a relationship conflict, with undesirable results.

So the key question for an enterprise executive, a manager or a team leader becomes: "how can group members deal with their inevitable differences in ways which foster constructive forms of conflict while avoiding or lessening the emergence of destructive relationship conflict?"

Thus, conflict in a group has both positive and negative consequences. If the group is to benefit from conflict, the negative effects of conflict must be reduced, and the positive effects must be enhanced. If a conflict is not controlled and handled effectively, the results can be damaging. Conflicting goals can quickly turn into personal dislike and work breaks down. Talent is wasted as people disengage from their work. And it is easy to end up in a vicious downward spiral of negativity and recrimination.

9.4.6.1 Setting Norms to Manage Conflict Effectively

As an enterprise business executive, a manager or a team leader, if you are to keep your group or team working and resolving conflicts effectively through the group development stages, you need to create/reinforce a positive context within your group/team. Group members need to be able to discuss issues openly and candidly. They need to have a sense of mutual responsibility for resolving their problems. To achieve this, you must endeavor to develop the right climate to foster openness and collaboration. This requires the use of constructive communication skills and techniques to keep discussions heading in the right direction. Groups frequently focus on their substantive tasks without taking the time to address process concerns. If you want to keep conflicts from derailing efforts, an essential first step is to establish norms and processes for dealing with the inevitable conflicts your group/team will face.

What kinds of norms do you need to develop/reinforce in order to manage conflict effectively? Several elements are essential in establishing norms for addressing conflict. These include trust and safety, collaboration, and emotional intelligence. At the outset, you must address with the group members how the group will promote and support each of these elements.

Trust and safety – In order to feel comfortable enough to share thoughts and feelings openly and honestly, members of your group must trust each others. Trust develops when members make themselves vulnerable by being honest, open and willing to exchange fresh ideas. Group leaders can support the process of building trust by showing vulnerability themselves and ensuring that the group develops norms for interacting while under stress. A group can enhance the development of trust and safety through a structured disclosure, which enables members to share interests, insights, and experiences safely. In addition, we encourage teams to identify or predict potential "hot topics" to eliminate surprises.

Collaboration – It refers to behavioral integration of individual members. It occurs when members share information freely, make decisions together, and are recognized and rewarded collectively, group cohesiveness increases. When collaboration is practiced consistently, trust is reinforced, and members can debate issues more effectively. One technique we advocate is "preliminary perspective taking" during which members quickly and concisely state their starting views without interruption.

Perspective taking refers to our ability to relate to others. It is our ability to perceive someone else's thoughts, feelings, and motivations. In other words it refers to our ability to empathize with someone else and see things from their perspective. This is a powerful and effective tool for engaging conflict constructively. Most conflicts become more volatile and intense with the failure to acknowledge differences constructively. Simply put, when done well, perspective taking demonstrates a willingness to consider the views, positions and feelings of others. We also recommend periodic team training sessions to practice devil's advocacy, reframing, and brainstorming to build collaborative skills.

Emotional intelligence – Conflict by its very nature often ignites emotions. Negative emotions can easily spread among team members through a process called emotional contagion (Goleman, 2007). When team members are upset, handling conflict becomes very complicated. As defensiveness rises and openness wanes, if the negative emotions are not addressed effectively, destructive behaviors and dysfunctional outcomes soon follow. Individual members can improve their emotional intelligence by utilizing assessment tools that raise self awareness (Hughes & Terrell, 2008; Straw & Cerier, 2002).

For many people, conflict seems to spiral out of control in an instant. The speed and force with which conflict arises can be alarming. Taking the time to consider the type of situations that "set you off" is a great way to improve your readiness for conflict. When you are more mindful of your typical reactions, it's easier to recognize your emotions earlier during conflict. Such awareness enables you to restrain yourself. With self assessment results at hand, establishment of norms that address healthy emotional intelligence will provide a stable base for managing conflict.

9.4.6.2 Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument

Creating/Reinforcing and maintaining a positive context within a group cannot be accomplished unless group members choose to communicate in constructive ways. All too often when confronted with conflict, members behave or respond in destructive ways. Often destructive behaviors take the form of fight or flight responses. Some of the most common destructive types of responses include:

1. *Winning at all costs* – attempting to get "your way" no matter what.
2. *Avoiding* – withdrawing from the conflict and your conflict partner.
3. *Demeaning others* – devaluing others or using sarcastic language.
4. *Retaliating* – actively or passively trying to "get even."
5. *Yielding* – giving in to your conflict partner.
6. *Hiding emotions* – concealing one's true feelings.

Instead of engaging in destructive behaviors, group members must choose to respond in more constructive ways. Admittedly, in the heat of the moment, this may not be an easy task. As an enterprise business executive, a manager or a team leader, you should be able to measure people's behavior in conflict situations. This can be done using Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument.

Thomas-Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument describes an individual's behavior along two basic dimensions: (1) assertiveness, the extent to which the person

attempts to satisfy his own concerns, and (2) cooperativeness, the extent to which the person attempts to satisfy the other person's concerns. These two basic dimensions of behavior define five different modes for responding to conflict situations:

1. *Competing*: Competing is assertive and uncooperative – an individual pursues his own concerns at the expense of others. This is a power-oriented mode in which the individual uses whatever power seems appropriate to win his own position – his ability to argue, his rank, or economic sanctions. The individual stands up for his rights, defending a position which he/she believes is correct, or simply trying to win.
2. *Accommodating*: Accommodating is unassertive and cooperative – the complete opposite of competing. When accommodating, the individual neglects his own concerns to satisfy the concerns of the other person; there is an element of self-sacrifice in this mode. Accommodating might take the form of selfless generosity or charity, obeying another person's order when the individual would prefer not to, or yielding to another's point of view.
3. *Avoiding*: Avoiding is unassertive and uncooperative – the individual neither pursues his own concerns nor those of the other individuals. Thus he does not deal with the conflict. Avoiding might take the form of diplomatically sidestepping an issue, postponing an issue until a better time or simply withdrawing from a threatening situation.
4. *Collaborating*: Collaborating is both assertive and cooperative – the complete opposite of avoiding. Collaborating involves an attempt to work with others to find some solution that fully satisfies their concerns. It means digging into an issue to pinpoint the underlying needs and wants of the two individuals. Collaborating between two persons might take the form of exploring a disagreement to learn from each other's insights or trying to find a creative solution to an interpersonal problem.
5. *Compromising*: Compromising is moderate in both assertiveness and cooperativeness. The objective is to find some expedient, mutually acceptable solution that partially satisfies both parties. It falls intermediate between competing and accommodating. Compromising gives up more than competing but less than accommodating. Likewise, it addresses an issue more directly than avoiding, but does not explore it in as much depth as collaborating. In some situations, compromising might mean splitting the difference between the two positions, exchanging concessions, or seeking a quick middle-ground solution.

Each individual in a group is capable of using all five conflict-handling modes. No individual in a group can be characterized as having a single style of dealing with conflict. But certain people use some modes better than others and, therefore, tend to rely on those modes more heavily than others. Once you, as an enterprise executive, a manager or a team leader, understand these different styles, you can use them to devise the most appropriate approach (or mixture of approaches) for the situation in which your group is in.

9.4.6.3 Conclusion

Conflict management is not just for team leaders; it is a team skill. If your team breaks down when facing disagreement, then it is time to focus on building this skill. This is one topic that the team leader probably should not try to teach to the team. Unless you have been trained in this area, avoid the do-it-yourself approach. Most large enterprise businesses have human resources or organizational development professionals who are educated in conflict management. Invest in this skill early in the team development to reduce "Storming" and speed the transition from "Norming" to "Performing."

9.5   Conclusion

This chapter has emphasized that team members are challenged to work interdependently to accomplish specific tasks within an enterprise business. These tasks can be simple or complex, but every task is, essentially, a series of decisions to make and problems to solve. The greater a team needs to work interdependently, the more its members need to trust each other and the more they need the skills to work together. Since teams are temporary, team members must learn to work together.

The Tuckman's group development framework identifies the factors that must be present for a team to reach its synergistic potential: to deliver more as a team than the individuals working alone ever could. A team leader helps the team establish an optimal environment for daily interaction by setting ground rules for team behaviors, ensuring the team uses good listening skills, practicing good meeting management, and building team identity. To enable the team to face problem after problem together, the team leader should work to improve its collaborative capability, including teaching the team problem solving and conflict-resolution skills.