



Unit I

Working with Groups

Group

Development

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Organization Development

In order to become a highly productive student organization, there are a number of developmental stages that a group must go through. While the content of an organization differs, the process of going through these stages is similar. Organizations that are aware of these stages tend to have less confusion and difficulty in proceeding through them and becoming high functioning.

Tuckman's Model of Group Development

- Tuckman and Jensen (1977) categorized groups into **five stages**:
 - Forming Stage: Members determine their place in the organization, go through a testing or orientation process, and are more independent.
 - Storming Stage: The organization has members who react negatively to the demands of whatever tasks need to be accomplished, conflicts rise, and there is a high level of emotion.
 - Norming Stage: In-group feelings and cohesiveness develop. Members accept the rules of behavior and discover new ways to work together.
 - Performing Stage: The group is very functional in dealing with tasks and responsibilities. They have worked through issues of membership and roles, and focus their efforts to achieve their goals.
 - Adjourning Stage: Groups bring finality to the process.

The following are activities/ways to assist the executive board and members during each stage.

Forming

- Develop icebreakers to help members get acquainted
- Coordinate a retreat or workshop
- Review the mission and purpose with the membership
- Identify expectations of members and officers
- Share organizational history and tradition with officers
- Provide information about institutional policies and procedures
- Talk about meeting management, planning programs, and team building with officers
- Provide an initial “to-do” list for officers

Storming

- Provide mediation resources when needed
- Teach confrontation/communication skills
- Hold a roundtable discussion on issues
- Review the mission statement, purpose, and expectations to redefine the group's action plans
- Conduct a group decision-making activity
- Discuss/review officer roles
- Develop a “rebuilding” team activity
- Remind everyone that this stage is a natural part of the formation of the group

Norming

- Schedule a more in-depth team-building activity
- Have members design t-shirts, pins, etc. for group identification
- Assist in starting a new program to create tradition
- Review/establish new goals for the organization
- Maintain relationships to avoid reverting back to the storming stage
- Encourage organization to apply for awards

Performing

- Ensure the organization and members have a task
- Give feedback about what is going well/what can be improved upon for next year
- Step back and allow the organization to perform
- Encourage organization to apply for awards

Adjourning

- Develop a closure activity to help members determine what they have learned/how they have benefited
- Conduct an assessment/evaluation of the past year
- Develop transition reports for new executives
- Ensure that a plan of recognition is in place; coordinate awards, statements or expressions, or gifts, of appreciation
- Encourage out-going officers to assist the in-coming officers with transition
- Identify how the organization contributed to the history or tradition of the organization
- Ensure minutes, reports, etc. are stored/maintained
- Record contact information for departing/graduating members

Conclusion

- The stages are not clearly divided steps through which groups readily progress
- The stages are more continuous, slowly blending into one another
- It may become more difficult for group members to readily detect in which stage they currently exist
- Groups do not necessarily go through the stages in sequence
- Groups may fluctuate between the stages during their time together.
 - For example, a group that has just moved into the Norming Stage may suddenly find itself back in Storming Stage rather than progressing to the Performing Stage.
 - When new members are added to the group, the organization needs to remember to go back to the Forming Stage to make sure everyone is on the same page.
- Lastly, groups that have a well-defined task prior to their inception may move through the initial stages more quickly, as the goal of the group has already been established and provides initial structure.