

**DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE TEAMS,
PART 3: GROUP DYNAMICS**

Participant's Manual

Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP)

State of Louisiana

***DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE TEAMS, PART 3:
GROUP DYNAMICS***

Comprehensive Public Training Program (CPTP)

Sponsored by the Louisiana State Civil Service

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DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE TEAMS, PART 3: GROUP DYNAMICS

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This class discusses strategies and techniques for developing effective teams. Participants will learn about the stages of team development, skills essential to working in a team environment, relationship-building roles, strategies for handling team conflict, and problem solving strategies. Discussion will emphasize building and maintaining a sense of community in the workplace.

JOB OUTCOMES

- Demonstrates cooperation and teamwork within the department, office, and work group.
- Participates in group problem solving and decision making.
- Demonstrates open communication with fellow team members.
- Demonstrates ability to effectively handle team conflict.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Apply the stages of team development to improve work group effectiveness.
- Apply basic skills critical to working in a team environment.
- Examine the task facilitating and relationship building roles of team members.
- Apply strategies to deal with team conflict.

INTRODUCTION TO DEVELOPING EFFECTIVE TEAMS, PART 3

Team defined: a group of people working together to achieve a common goal.

Team-building defined: the process of developing the ability of a team to work together.

Reasons to Have Teams

Organizations should always be searching for new ways to deliver services more efficiently and effectively. This requires the knowledge, skills, abilities, and experiences of many employees who must be brought together to solve problems, make good decisions, and deliver quality customer service. Research has consistently shown that teams outperform individual efforts when:

- ❑ the task is complex
- ❑ creativity is needed
- ❑ more efficient use of resources is needed
- ❑ fast learning is required
- ❑ high commitment is required
- ❑ implementing an action plan requires the cooperation of others

Individual Activity

What: Identifying team problems

How: In the space below, describe a problem that you have had as a team member at work, which has not been resolved to your satisfaction. Describe facts, behaviors, and problems, omitting individual team member names.

Examples:

Team members are too busy bickering with each other to focus on solving team problems; teams are involved in too much discussion about problems that are not relevant to the task; team members are involved in too much discussion with little or no action.

Notes:

IMPROVING TEAM EFFECTIVENESS

Using information from your Individual Assessment

In the CPTP course *Developing Effective Teams, Part 2: Understanding Individual Preferences*, you evaluated your preferences in communication, interaction, information gathering, and decision making. That course emphasized one of the keys to successful teams is recognizing and understanding differences among individual team members and being flexible in communicating with them. This class focuses on the interactions among team members and their development as a team.

Class Discussion

Topic: Where have you noticed your own preferences and/or the preferences of your team members with respect to the communication survey information provided in *Developing Effective Teams, Part 2*.

Notes:

Dimensions of Individual Preferences and How They Contribute to Team Development

Extraverted Types (E)

Maintain their networks,
take action

Sensing Types (S)

Know the facts, work
out the details

Thinking Types (T)

Logically discuss issues,
consider pro's and con's

Judging Types (J)

Provide organization skills,
can act with decisiveness

Introverted Types (I)

Look deeply into issues,
can understand core of a problem

Intuitive Types (N)

See the big picture,
explore new possibilities

Feeling Types (F)

Look at human side of
decisions, can help others
accept decisions

Perceiving Types (P)

Are open to new ideas, are
flexible if system breaks
down

Predictions About Teams

- ❑ The more similar the individual preferences are on a team, the quicker members will understand each other; the greater the differences among the individual preferences, the slower the process of understanding takes place.
- ❑ Groups that are similar will make decisions more quickly, but they may make more mistakes by not considering different viewpoints (common blind spots). Groups with different viewpoints may make better decisions, but it may take them longer to work through their differences to reach a decision.
- ❑ Team leadership roles may shift as the tasks require the skills of different preferences.
- ❑ Team members with very slight preference in one dimension can be “translators” for other members of the team who are opposite in that preference.
- ❑ A person who is the only representative of a preference may be viewed as different by the rest of the group (e.g., the only intuitive type).
- ❑ When teams recognize and understand different preferences, they tend to experience less conflict.

Good decisions will be made when basic facts and realities have been addressed (Sensor); when new possibilities have been discovered (Intuitor); when inconsistencies and consequences have been discovered (Thinker); and when important values have been recognized (Feeler).

Group Discussion

Topic: Evaluating team effectiveness

Discuss what would be the probable strengths and weaknesses of team effectiveness and team decision making if it was composed of mostly:

- Extroverts/Introverts
- Sensors/Intuitors
- Thinkers/Feelers
- Judgers/Perceivers

The instructor will assign one of these to your small group to discuss.

List possible courses of actions regarding the strengths and weaknesses of the preference your group discussed. Be prepared to share your work with the class.

Note: Refer to the Job Aids in the back of the manual for more information on individual preferences.

Notes:

THE STAGES OF TEAM GROWTH

An effective team may not come together quickly. Teams grow and mature just as individuals do. Being part of a developing team requires an understanding of this developmental process.

There are four stages of team growth. For each stage there are different interpersonal relationships, team member feelings, team member questions, and effective team member behaviors. The following is an overview of the four stages of team growth:

Forming: Team members become acquainted with one another; they want to know the team's purpose, and explore the boundaries of acceptable team behavior. This stage is a transition from individual to team member status.

Storming: As team members become more comfortable with each other, they are faced with disagreements. They start to panic when they realize the amount of work that lies ahead. They may challenge the leader and group norms.

Norming: Team members are beginning to understand and help one another as they reconcile their competing preferences.

Performing: The team's focus shifts from building the team to fostering change, continuous improvement, and innovation. The team now knows what is expected as members diagnose and solve problems.

The ideal is to move a team from one stage to another until it becomes a high performing team. The duration and intensity of each stage will vary from team to team. If issues are ignored, the team can get "stuck" in one stage.

Forming

Typical team member thoughts and feelings:

- ❑ excitement, anticipation, and optimism
- ❑ initial tentative attachment to the team
- ❑ suspicion, fear, and/or anxiety about the job ahead

Interpersonal relationships are often characterized by:

- ❑ silence
- ❑ self-consciousness
- ❑ being reactive (vs. proactive)
- ❑ superficiality
- ❑ uncertainty

Typical team member questions may include:

- ❑ Who are these other people?
- ❑ What is going to happen?
- ❑ What is expected of me?
- ❑ Where are we headed?
- ❑ How will I fit in?

Typical team member behaviors may include:

- ❑ attempts to define the task and how it will be accomplished
- ❑ attempts to determine acceptable team behavior
- ❑ attempts to decide how to deal with team problems
- ❑ lofty, abstract discussions, and for some, impatience with these discussions
- ❑ discussions about problems not relevant to the task
- ❑ complaints about the organization
- ❑ focuses on barriers to the task

Effective team member behaviors in the Forming Stage include:

- ❑ getting to know one another better in an attempt to try to build a foundation of trust
- ❑ seeking to clarify goals, roles, procedures, ground rules, and expectations
- ❑ reviewing information the team needs to get started on tasks
- ❑ learning to appreciate differences in individuals

Group Discussion

Topic: Discuss your experiences, as team members, when the team was in the Forming stage. For example, after reorganization, team members have been switched; an established team that loses several members and gets new members, etc.

Notes:

Storming

Typical team member thoughts and feelings:

- ❑ sharp fluctuations in attitude about the team's chance of success
- ❑ resistance to unfamiliar tasks and methods used to achieve tasks

Interpersonal relationships are often characterized by:

- ❑ formation of cliques
- ❑ polarization of team members
- ❑ competition among team members
- ❑ challenging others' points of view
- ❑ disagreement with the leader
- ❑ violation of the agreed upon team norms

Typical team member questions may include:

- ❑ Do we really need the leader?
- ❑ How will we handle disagreements?
- ❑ Do I want to be a part of this team?
- ❑ How can we make decisions when we are having all of these disagreements?

Typical team member behaviors may include:

- ❑ arguments among team members, even when they agree
- ❑ defensiveness and competition; factions and "choosing sides"
- ❑ concern over excessive work
- ❑ a perception of the leader's favoritism of some members, creating the potential for jealousy and a lack of unity

Effective team member behaviors include:

- ❑ being self-directed
- ❑ seeking the leader's support to resolve issues of power and authority
- ❑ encouraging equal participation
- ❑ seeking agreement about how decisions will be made (e.g., voting)
- ❑ being committed to the team
- ❑ working through conflicts
- ❑ using appropriate humor to relieve tension
- ❑ engaging in win/win thinking
- ❑ acknowledging others' contributions

Norming

Typical team member thoughts and feelings:

- ❑ a sense of team cohesion and common goals
- ❑ acceptance of membership in the team
- ❑ a belief that the goal will be accomplished

Interpersonal relationships are often characterized by:

- ❑ competitive relationships becoming more cooperative
- ❑ understanding and helping each other
- ❑ a commitment to a team vision

Typical team member questions may include:

- ❑ How can I best help the team?
- ❑ Who on the team has the expertise to help me with this task?
- ❑ How can we maintain harmony?

Effective team member behaviors include:

- ❑ being friendly, confiding in each other, sharing personal problems, and discussing the team's dynamics
- ❑ expressing criticism in a constructive way
- ❑ establishing and maintaining team ground rules (norms)
- ❑ utilizing each team members' skills, knowledge, and experience
- ❑ demonstrating respect for one another
- ❑ collaborating
- ❑ being accepting of established positive norms
- ❑ being supportive of the team
- ❑ obtaining feedback from measures of success and being accountable

Performing

Typical team member thoughts and feelings:

- ❑ a better understanding of each other's strengths and weaknesses
- ❑ satisfaction with the team's progress
- ❑ close attachment to the team

Interpersonal relationships are often characterized by:

- ❑ high degree of mutual trust
- ❑ strong commitment to the team
- ❑ self-sufficient, yet high concern for team members
- ❑ working to ensure every team member is learning, developing, and improving
- ❑ coaching and assisting one another

Typical team member questions may include:

- ❑ How can we continuously improve?
- ❑ How can we be more innovative and creative?
- ❑ What further improvements can be made in our work processes?
- ❑ How can we maintain a high level of performance?

Effective team member behaviors include:

- ❑ constructive adaptation to change
- ❑ preventing or working through group problems
- ❑ incorporating innovation and continuous improvement
- ❑ seeking feedback from management
- ❑ avoiding regression to an earlier stage
- ❑ documenting/acknowledging work progress and celebrating successes

Group Exercise

What: The Subarctic Survival Situation

How: Watch the video and read the situation in the booklet (handout). Assume that you and your group are in that situation. The instructor will have further steps for you to follow for this activity.

Notes:

TASK FACILITATING AND RELATIONSHIP BUILDING ROLES IN A TEAM

As a team works together, members begin to develop certain roles.

Roles defined: Shared expectations of how group members will meet the requirements of the position.

People develop their roles based on their own expectations, the organization's expectations, and the group's expectations. The roles fall into two categories:

Task Facilitating: What team members say and do to directly aid in the accomplishment of objectives.

Relationship Building: What team members say and do to develop and sustain interpersonal relationships and team dynamics (patterns of interactions).

In order to become a high performing team, both task facilitating and relationship building roles are required. Unfortunately, most people tend to contribute to one set of behaviors more than the other. A team member must assess which role is required in a given situation and display those behaviors.

Examples of specific task facilitating and relationship building roles are shown on the next page:

Task Facilitating Roles

Direction giver:	Identifies ways to proceed and clarifies goals.
Information and opinion seeker:	Asks questions; seeks facts, opinions, perspectives and ideas.
Information and opinion giver:	Provides data; offers facts and judgments, highlights conclusions.
Monitor:	Develops measures of success and maintains accountability.
Process analyzer:	Analyzes procedures to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
Coordinator:	Pulls ideas together and helps others examine one another's suggestions and comments; helps members work together.
Enforcer:	Keeps the team focused on the tasks at hand.
Summarizer:	Combines ideas and helps members understand the decisions that they have made.

Relationship Building Roles

Harmonizer:	Mediates differences and finds common ground in disputes.
Supporter:	Points out and praises contributions.
Tension reliever:	Uses humor to reduce tension and puts others at ease.
Energizer:	Motivates others toward greater effort; displays enthusiasm.
Confronter:	Challenges unproductive or disruptive behavior.
Facilitator:	Helps build solidarity and smooth interactions.

Process Analysis: Subarctic Survival Situation

Topic: Discuss group dynamics during the Subarctic Survival Exercise

- Focus:*
- Discuss the stage of team growth that your group experienced. How far did your group get? (*Give examples to back up what you say*).
 - From the lists of Task and Relationship Role Behaviors, which two or three Task Behaviors and which two or three Relationship Behaviors helped out your group the most (*not who did them, just which ones had the impact*).
 - Did your group have discussion about staying or going? Why or why not?
 - How did your group “decide to decide”?

Notes:

DEALING WITH TEAM CONFLICT

The Value of Conflict

When people work together, there are times when they disagree. Some degree of conflict should be expected within any group of people working towards a common purpose. How a team *manages its conflict* can ultimately help (or hurt) the team and the team's performance.

Class Discussion

Topic: What is the value of conflict in a team?

Notes:

Overcoming Common Problems in Teams

When a team is experiencing problems such as competing loyalties or failing to meet performance expectations, each team member is responsible for trying to ensure that the group gets along. Some problems, however, require a more structured approach. The following outlines typical team problems:

Floundering: The team is either unclear about its tasks or overwhelmed by them. This usually occurs in the Forming stage of team development. Planning is essential to minimize floundering.

Dominating Participant: A team members who talk a lot, consuming the team's time. He/She may or may not have specific expertise, but tend to tell long stories or give unnecessary detail.

Silent Participant: A team member who rarely speaks and if asked about his/her silence, may say, "I'm listening, when I have something to say, I'll say it." Group performance can suffer when a silent participant does not speak up when it would be beneficial. Some people, based on their individual preferences have different comfort levels speaking in a group (e.g. extroverts versus introverts).

Digression and Tangents: One team member describes a past situation relevant to the problem at hand. This triggers the memory of other team members, who begin describing similar situations at length. When the meeting is over, team members wonder where the time went because little was accomplished.

Rush to accomplishment: "Doing something is better than doing nothing." This belief may cause team members be impatient or rush through a project in order to reach a conclusion, when haste is inappropriate for the situation.

Discounting: One team member fails to give credit to another's ideas or ignores another person's contributions. A team member may begin to ridicule other team member's ideas or behavior. This can cause hostility and hurt feelings leading to unnecessary conflict.

Acceptance of Opinion as Fact: A team member makes statements with such confidence that other team members are reluctant to question the validity of the statement, even when it is clearly an opinion rather than factual data. (See Dominating Participant)

Feuding Team Members: You may need to act as a mediator when this occurs. Unresolved conflict, over time, will reduce the team's overall performance.

Skill Practice

What: Case Study: The Customer Service Committee

How: Read the case study below and follow the instructions on the following page.

Linda Boudreaux is a state employee. In the past she recommended ways to increase productivity, which management implemented. As a result, management appointed Linda to a committee to recommend ways to improve customer service. Her group has six members, all from her agency, who have volunteered to serve on the committee. The committee has been meeting now for one month, in two hour biweekly meetings. The members have grown quite close over the weeks, but participation is not equal. Linda has not been very pleased with the group's performance. Only three weeks remain before a presentation is due to management and Linda is concerned. She has been thinking about some of the problems and wondering how to handle them.

At first the members were really enthusiastic but came up with wild ideas. For the past two meetings it is obvious that they have lost some of their enthusiasm and have begun to come to the meetings late. They have however, been developing better ideas on how to improve customer service. During one meeting, members suggested the need to work on tasks outside the meeting. Even though assignments were made, no group members have followed through.

Three of the members are causing problems in the group.

David is constantly putting down others' ideas, insisting that they will not work. He is very knowledgeable but refuses to listen. He always thinks his way is better and never gives an inch, even when he is wrong. There is often intense argument about whose idea is better.

Janice is very pleasant and always tries to keep the peace. She never disagrees with anyone and rarely makes suggestions. When trying to keep the peace, she usually changes the subject and gets the group off task.

Bonnie is very eager to get the group on task as she knows how important this project is to management. She is impatient with lengthy discussions and wants to see results. As a consequence, she interrupts lengthy discussions and pushes the group to make a decision.

Case Study Directions:

1. Determine which stage of team growth the team is in by analyzing team member behaviors and interpersonal relationships.
2. Recommend the behaviors that should be used to move the team toward the next stage of team growth.
3. Develop a specific plan to resolve the problems presented by David, Janice, and Bonnie.

Be prepared to share your work with the class.

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JOB AIDS

Source of Energy: Extraversion and Introversion

The Extraversion-Introversion dimension refers to how a person is energized. Another way to think about this dimension is how a person directs his/her energy.

Each person has both orientations, with one being dominant or preferred.

Extraverts

- Directed outward toward people and things
- Energized by people

Introverts

- Directed inward toward concepts and ideas
 - Energized by reflection
-

Work Environment

Tend to:

- Be relaxed and confident
- Be accessible
- Be open, active doers
- Be after thinkers
- Seek variety and action
- Prefer to have people around/group interaction
- Prefer variety and action
- Be impatient with long slow jobs
- Act quickly, without thinking
- Prefer to communicate verbally
- Prefer to learn a new task by talking it out

Tend to:

- Be reserved and questioning
 - Be subtle and impenetrable
 - Be careful, quiet, diligent
 - Be fore thinkers
 - Seek quiet for concentration
 - Prefer independent tasks and work alone contentedly
 - Dislike interruptions
 - Work on one project for a long time without interruption
 - Think before they act, sometimes without acting
 - Prefer to communicate in writing
 - Prefer to learn by reading rather than talking or experiencing
-

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Information Gathering: Sensing and Intuition

The Sensing-Intuition dimension refers to what a person pays attention to. Another way to look at this dimension is how a person prefers to gather and process information.

Sensors

- Five senses (reliance on experience and actual data)

Intuitors

- "Sixth sense" (reliance on possibilities and inspiration)
-

Work Environment

Tend to:

- Be practical
- Focus on reality and present enjoyment
- Prefer life as it is
- Prefer using learned skills
- Pay attention to details
- Focus on what works now
- Prefer an established way of doing things
- Enjoy applying what they have already learned
- Work steadily, with a realistic idea of how long it will take
- Make decisions step by step
- Be good at precise work
- Accept current reality as a given to work with

Tend to:

- Be innovative
 - Focus on expectation and future achievement
 - Prefer change, rearrange life
 - Prefer adding new skills
 - Look at "big picture"
 - Identify complex patterns
 - Focus on how things could be improved
 - Dislike doing the same thing repeatedly
 - Enjoy learning new skills
 - Work in bursts of energy with enthusiasm
 - Jump to conclusions
 - Follow their inspirations and hunches
 - Dislike taking time for precision
 - Ask why things are as they are
-

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Decision Making: Thinking and Feeling

The Thinking-Feeling dimension refers to how a person makes decisions. Both the Thinking and the Feeling approaches are rational processes.

Thinkers

- Base decisions on the logic of the situation
- Make decisions objectively, impersonally, and analytically

Feelers

- Base decisions on human values and needs
 - Weigh the importance of alternatives for self and others
-

Work Environment

Tend to:

- Value things, truth, and principles
- Solve problems
- Be brief and businesslike
- Act impersonally
- Treat others fairly
- Depend on intellectual formulas
- Be good at putting things in logical order
- Respond more to people's ideas than their feelings
- Be able to predict logical outcomes of choices
- Need to be treated fairly
- Be firm and tough-minded
- Be able to give negative feedback when necessary
- Hurt people's feelings without knowing

Tend to:

- Value people, tact, and harmony
 - Support others
 - Be naturally friendly
 - Act personally
 - Treat others uniquely
 - Value personal alternatives
 - Prefer harmony and will work to make it happen
 - Respond to people's values as much as to their ideas
 - Be good at seeing the effects of choices on people
 - Need occasional praise
 - Be sympathetic
 - Be uncomfortable giving negative feedback
 - Enjoy pleasing people
-

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Lifestyle: Judging and Perceiving

The Judging-Perceiving dimension refers to the life style a person adopts. Another way to look at this dimension is how a person prefers to organize his/her life.

Judgers

- Orderly
- Planned
- Controlled

Perceivers

- Flexible
 - Spontaneous
 - Adaptable
-

Work Environment

Tend to:

- Focus on completing tasks
- Want only the essentials needed to begin their work
- Work best when they can plan/follow the plan
- Make decisions too quickly

- Dislike to interrupt the project they are on for a more urgent one
- Prefer to get things settled and finished
- Resist making changes once a decision has been made
- Prefer the structure of schedules and deadlines

Tend to:

- Focus on starting tasks
 - Want to find out about the job - see many sides to an issue
 - Like to gather information and keep their options open
 - Have trouble making decisions, need more info.
 - Start too many projects and have difficulty in finishing them
 - Postpone unpleasant tasks

 - Prefer leaving things open for last-minute changes

 - Get a lot accomplished at the last minute under pressure of a deadline
-

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Teams Outperform Individual Efforts When

- ❑ The task is complex
- ❑ Creativity is needed
- ❑ More efficient use of resources is needed
- ❑ Fast learning is required
- ❑ High commitment is required
- ❑ Implementing the action plan requires the cooperation of others

Using the Individual Assessment in Teams

- ❑ Teams with similar types make quick decisions, but may be more likely to make mistakes.
- ❑ Teams with different types may have more conflict and work slower, but make better decisions.
- ❑ Effective teams benefit from the skills of people of all types.
- ❑ Team members should appreciate the differences among team members.

Effective Team Member Behaviors During the Four Stages of Team Growth

Forming

Team members should:

- ❑ Try to get to know one another better to build a foundation of trust.
- ❑ Determine goals, roles, procedures, ground rules, and expectations.
- ❑ Review information the team needs to get started.
- ❑ Appreciate differences in individuals

Storming

Team members should:

- ❑ Be self-directed
- ❑ Seek the leader's support to resolve issues of power and authority
- ❑ Encourage equal participation
- ❑ Seek agreement about how decisions will be made (e.g. voting)
- ❑ Be committed to the team
- ❑ Work through conflicts

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- ❑ Use appropriate humor to relieve tension
- ❑ Engage in win/win thinking
- ❑ Acknowledge others' contributions

Norming

Team members should:

- ❑ Be friendly, confide in each other, share personal problems, and discuss the team's dynamics
- ❑ Express criticism in a constructive way
- ❑ Establish and maintain team ground rules (norms)
- ❑ Utilize each others' skills, knowledge, and experience
- ❑ Demonstrate respect for one another
- ❑ Collaborate
- ❑ Accept established positive norms
- ❑ Be supportive of the team
- ❑ Obtain feedback to measure success and maintain accountability

Performing

Team members should:

- ❑ Construct adaptation to change
- ❑ Prevent or working through group problems
- ❑ Be innovative and improve continuously
- ❑ Cope with change
- ❑ Seek feedback from management
- ❑ Avoid regression to an earlier stage
- ❑ Document/acknowledge work progress and celebrate successes

The Value of Conflict

Conflict can:

- ❑ Increase creativity and diversity of viewpoints.
- ❑ Improve problem solving and decision making.
- ❑ Be a source of energy.

Individual Action Planning

What: Develop a personal action plan.

How: Develop an action plan for the team problem that you identified towards the beginning of this course.

Your problem:

Action steps needed:

Whose support will you need and how will you get it?

How will you measure your success?