



Deck Plate Leadership Series Group Development

USCG Leadership Competency: Leading Others: Team Building

Learning Outcomes:

- Describe the five states of group development
- Assess what stage the flotilla or division is at.

Time Required: 25 – 60 minutes depending on which slide option is chosen.

A group is defined as a collection of two or more interacting individuals with a stable pattern of relationships who share common goals and who perceive themselves as being a group.

Facilitator Activities: Present slides, providing amplifying information from material below. Facilitate discussion with last slide – Where are We as a Flotilla? Slides can be copied three-to-a-page with line for notes if projector is not available.

Lesson Out Brief: Knowing the stage a group is in allows the leader to adjust their leadership approach. Forming – high task direction low member support; Storming - a balance between both high task direction and high member support; Norming – low task direction high member support; and, Performing – a balance between both low task direction and low member support. This approach can also be individualized for members that are not involved in flotilla activities.

Lesson Summary:

- Forming - High dependence on Flotilla Commander for guidance and direction. Little agreement on Flotilla aims other than received from leader. Member roles and responsibilities are unclear. Leader must be prepared to answer lots of questions about the Flotilla's purpose, objectives and external relationships. **Leader directs.**
- Storming - Decisions don't come easily within Flotilla. Members vie for position as they attempt to establish themselves in relation to other members and the leader, who might receive challenges from members. There is some clarity of purpose but plenty of uncertainties persist. Cliques and factions have formed and there may be power struggles. **Leader coaches.**
- Norming - Agreement and consensus largely forms among the members, who respond well to facilitation by leader. Roles and responsibilities are clear and accepted. Big decisions are made by member agreement. Smaller decisions may be delegated to individuals or small teams within Flotilla. Commitment and unity is strong. The Flotilla may engage in fun and social activities. There is general respect for the leader and some of leadership is more shared by the members. **Leader facilitates and enables.**
- Performing - The Flotilla is more strategically aware; the members know clearly why they are doing what they are doing. The members have a shared vision and is able to stand on its own feet. There is a focus on over-achieving. Disagreements occur but now they are resolved within the Flotilla positively, and necessary changes to processes and structure are made by the members. The members are able to work towards achieving the goal, and also to attend to relationship, style and process issues along the way. Members look after each other. The Flotilla receives delegated tasks and projects from the leader. Members might ask for assistance from the leader with personal and interpersonal development. **Leader delegates and oversees.**

Subject Matter Background for the Facilitator:

In this block of membership training we will be looking at group development and the stage of development that the flotilla or division is at. The study of groups and group dynamics refers to the study of the forces within a group. If we can understand the dynamics within a group, we should be better able to predict the behaviors of the various flotilla or division members depending on the situation and the group focus.



Deck Plate Leadership Series

There are two kinds of groups: formal groups and informal groups. Formal groups are defined by the organizational structure and can be either command groups, based on the organizational chart, or task groups, formed to complete projects. The informal groups are based on relationships or alliances that are not formally structured or determined by the organization. Examples of informal groups would be interest groups, with people working together for a common purpose and friendship groups with people bonding together by sharing common needs and characteristics.

The reasons people join volunteer organizations are for:

- Security – By joining a group, individuals can reduce the insecurity of “standing alone.” People feel stronger, have fewer self-doubts, and are more resistant in threats when they are part of a group.
- Status – Inclusion in a group that is viewed as important by others provides recognition and status for its members.
- Self-esteem – Groups can fulfill social needs. People enjoy the regular interaction that comes with group membership. For many, the on-the-job interactions are their primary source of fulfilling their needs for affiliation.

The process of group development is based on five stages:

- Forming is realizing that people will be working together in a group. The issues in this stage may include members feeling varying degrees of commitment, being cautious, not initiating action, and avoiding responsibility. The level of communication is low, a few members may try to dominate the group and the purpose and goals of the team are unclear at this point.
Many flotillas will be in this state as they do their jobs (as a group) but not work with the flotilla or attend meetings. There is little to no unit cohesion or true recognition. “I do this mission.”
- Storming is the conflict that occurs in building a group. The issues arising in this stage may include individual differences, confusion arising over goals, finding a role for each member, team members wrestling with issues of communication, the team being uncertain about how to deal with issues openly, and team members reacting toward leadership with counterproductive behaviors.
As the flotilla gains in importance many may think that their programs decline in importance – not true as the individual programs are part of the overall flotilla. Make sure no personal attacks. “I do this mission and sort of belong to the flotilla.”
Norming is setting the acceptable standards of behavior. The aspects of this stage may include team members gaining in confidence, a sense of direction and momentum, and the team developing agreements on approaches, goals, and leadership roles. The team members build relationships with those inside and outside the team and members begin to relate interdependently. In this stage, members develop processes for information sharing, feedback, and equitable distribution of resources.
The members begin to realize that the flotilla is composed of many members doing a myriad of tasks – all supporting the flotilla. It should be an integrated group. “I sort of belong to the flotilla and do this mission.”
- Performing is doing the task. The features of this stage may include team members taking full responsibility for tasks and relationships. Synergy will be high and the team will achieve effective and satisfying results. As the team facilitates itself through the various stages of group development, team members work to support each other and are proactive for the benefit of the team. In this stage, they continually seek to improve tasks and build relationships.
Flotilla works together, with members feeding off each other and supplying assistance to each other. “I belong to the flotilla and do this mission.”
- Adjourning is ending the mission or event. Missions and events have a natural life cycle. When the project is over or the task has been successfully completed, the aspects of this stage are expressed sadness from members knowing the team has shared something unique.
Not for normal flotilla missions but more for special projects or special missions.

For additional preparation information of the subject go to:

<http://infed.org/mobi/bruce-w-tuckman-forming-storming-norming-and-performing-in-groups/> or http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tuckman%27s_stages_of_group_development