

# Wheelans four stages of group development essay examples

[Technology](#), [Development](#)



# **Analysis of Team Development**

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### **Introduction**

In the previous report it was mentioned that when 'ME' is changed to 'WE', a lot of great things can be achieved. Perhaps because of teamwork and collaboration, members of a team can accomplish their goals, and strive towards exceptional performance together. This report is going to analyze the experiences and performance that teams have had in the past five weeks of being in Management 4720 class. Moreover, it will also discuss how the class, my team and I have evolved towards achieving high performance using Wheelan's four stages of group development.

#### Dependency and Inclusion:

This is the first stage of Wheelan's group development. In this stage, members are assigned to their groups for the first time, which creates a sense of inclusion and dependency (Wheelan, 2013). Members in this new group create a sense of belonging and dependency. Even though there is a high ambiguity level in the group, members assign and seek to rely on one specific member 'the leader'. In this stage, members will come together and share their ideas and opinions. By the end of this stage, all members will feel at home and start feeling loyal to the group by the end of this stage" (Wheelan, 2013).

The first day of our class was filled with ambiguity. Students were not sure what was going on when they saw the desks in a circular position, rather

than all facing towards the board. Erica mentioned this in journal one, " One the first day, I was a little thrown off by moving desks, sitting in a circle and facing a group of people I wasn't familiar with. It felt a little like an AA meeting there" (Pyle, 2014). There was this sense of curiosity and eagerness pouring out of everyone's eyes. I can still remember the first day when everyone was just staring at Dr. Bright with a blank look as he spoke. After doing the team building exercise and being assigned to a group, the students in the class became more anxious; perhaps because of being teamed up with unfamiliar faces. Nevertheless, it was then when the whole class experienced the first stage of Wheelan's group development.

Being assigned to a group of people I have never known in my life made me a little uncomfortable. However, I instantly tried to make myself belong to the group by introducing myself and asking others for their names. I instigated a few conversations, and I started screening members in my mind to whom I could trust as a leader. By the second day, I had already identified Erica and Gary potential group leaders. By the second week, we had chosen Erica and Gary to lead our group, which made us more attached and loyal to the group. The uncomfortable feeling I had in the beginning was gone, and my team, including myself were communicating a lot more than what we did in the first week. In Gary's journal he mentioned " I am very content with the group with which I have been assigned. We can relate on numerous levels despite our varying backgrounds" (Korn, 2014). On the other hand, Mariah also stated in her journal that " Since we did the team building activities, today i feel more comfortable with my new team" (Garnes, 2014). This showed me that members have started to feel more comfortable and started

to build a bond towards the end of dependency and inclusion stage.

When I was reading through Wheelan's (2013) stages of group development, something very interesting occurred to me. It may be a coincidence but I felt that each week was like each of the stages in the book. We selected our goals and tasks that needed to be achieved by the end of the term and came up with a collection of contracts that included our mutual interests, and the way we can put our differences aside and work together as a team. We came up with a plan, a concept of how we were going to do things together (Pyle, 2014).

I am looking forward to continue building relationships and bonds with members of the groups I am assigned to. I understand that as a member of a high performance team, I must be task oriented to make sure group activities are taking place. I plan to take every bit of knowledge I have gained from this class and applying it to my other classes and even into the real world. The first stage is a crucial stage because this is the stage where the other people of your group get to meet you for the first time, and it is important to prove that you are a group member worth having.

### **Counter-dependency and Fight:**

This second stage of Wheelan's group development reminded me of my second week of class. In this stage, group members "face counter-dependency and conflicts among other group members" (Wheelan, 2014). There may be disagreements among the group members or with the group leader. Group members build a certain group culture where they choose to voice out their opinions and let other members know how they are feeling.

The connection to the group is stronger, as well as, the growth in the relationship among the group members.

After reading through Angela's, Erica's, Mariah's and Gary's journals, I realized that along with me, there were others who felt a little dissonance. For example, Mariah said in her second journal, " I am still a little nervous about having so much due in so little time" (Garnes, 2014), and Erica said in her journal, " I have also been feeling very overwhelmed with all of the reading assignments each night" (Pyle, 2014). The conflict was not necessarily with other members, but with oneself. Each one of us was overwhelmed with the amount of work load and upcoming exams that we were falling victims of dissonance. The anxiety within grew to the point where we would slightly take it out on other team members. I personally think that my team did not have much conflicts or disagreements; in fact, each one of us presented true leadership skills and contributed to this team equally. We enforced our group contract and communicated with each other about where we are heading. Stage two of Wheelan's group development states that when members start feeling more comfortable, the sense of counter dependency and conflicts arises. Even though member loyalty increases, conflicts among members are inevitable as time passes by. I think that sometimes conflicts may occur not because of disagreements or arguments but because of some external factors, it was possible to deal with the dissonance by pairing up team members, and work together to accomplish the tasks that needed to be completed. We gave each other feedbacks on what we think of them and where we think improvement in needed. Nevertheless, my team survived through this stage by collaborating

with each other and working as a team.

I believe that having a team contract is essential because it not only states our goals and what we are trying to accomplish but it also brings us together by putting our differences aside and building a feeling of commitment to the group. In future, when I get assigned to groups that would be the first thing I would do after I have acquainted myself to the team. Having a structure can reduce conflicts and disagreements among team members. I have read the journals, and have learned how different group members react to this stage of conflicts and dissonance differently.

### **Trust and Structure:**

In this third stage of Wheelan's (2013) group development, members become more self-starters, and have high group readiness. The level of trust, loyalty, and contribution had grown immensely. There is no leader, because everyone is familiar with what needs to be done. There is a proper structure that has come to form and everyone seems to follow it. Group members are now very comfortable with each other, and can get things done fairly quickly.

In the journals, everyone has stated how relieved they are to have completed the midterm and the report. Group members now feel very positive towards each other and feel extremely satisfied with where they are heading as a group. For example, Angela said in her journal three, " I am becoming more comfortable with the class and my group every day. My feelings of anxiety are almost completely gone. My team is collaborating even more and I feel we make good progress each week" (Betts, 2014). I

think in this stage, members will give one another feedback and help each other improve in areas where needed. I say that because, as time passed by, we were becoming more independent and self-starters. We would simply give one another a feedback of how we think the other person is doing. Our group was now able to accomplish any task with minimal guidance, because we already knew what was expected.

I think that in stage 3, a group will show symptoms of becoming a High Performance Team. In this stage, a group will form a stronger culture and work ethics. Along with being task oriented, members will also become relationship oriented, where they will respect one another and collaborate to get things done. Gary mentions in his journal “ Our group is truly building a cohesive atmosphere and everyone is beginning to chime in. As we were discussing our personal strengths and weaknesses, I began to connect and understand fellow team-members on a more personal level” (Korn, 2014).

I believe that stage 3 can be accomplished sooner if a group adapts a great learning and leadership style. In the future, I hope to lead my team into Stage 3 by illustrating great leadership skills, such as being task oriented, and gradually moving towards being relationship oriented. I will also form a contract that will clearly present what is expected. Being a member of a group means that whatever decisions are being made should benefit the whole group (Wheelan, 2013). I will continue to perform my role as a high performance team member by having a good grasp of any situations my team may have in future. I will communicate and collaborate with members to avoid or minimize conflicts and excel performance.

**Work:**

The fourth and the last stage of Wheelan's (2013) group development, states that in this stage a group will be a team of committed, loyal and effective individuals who are more goal and task oriented. After reading the journals, I noticed that everyone seemed a little overwhelmed with upcoming finals. However, they all seemed very positive and excited for the group and how everyone had evolved. For example, Erica said in her fourth journal, "Speaking of my team, we are still working very well together. Our shy members have been volunteering to speak and have been much more confident in what they had to say" (Pyle, 2014). My team has accomplished a lot in these past few weeks and it is all thanks to Dr. Bright. We now know what a high performance team should be like and how they should perform. I personally believe that stage 4 is like achieving nirvana, because here, members of a group are team members who work together and strive for the best results. I have experienced this by coming a long way from being extremely shy to someone who can now just walk around making new friends and leading a team. Stage 4 may be hard to achieve, but it is worth every bit.

I would always strive to be a great team member in the future by communicating and committing myself to my team. I would keep a great personality, such that am able to get along with everyone. This way, am able to create a great sense of understanding, where I can be empathetic towards my team members. I will lead and guide my team members to make sure everyone feels included and loyal to the team. Above all, bonding with the



team members and getting to know them on a personal basis always helps with getting tasks done.

## **Lessons Learned**

I have learned a lot about myself and about my team members from all the feedbacks, journals and self-analyzing report I feel that I have accomplished a lot in Dr. Bright's class. I plan to take all this knowledge and apply it to my other classes. I feel blessed to be part of such a great class environment. I have evolved from a closed flower bud into a person with blooming petals. I no longer feel shy or uncomfortable in a group setting but rather happy and joyful. I now feel that I can not only be a great team member, but also a great team leader. I have realized my favored learning styles and leadership styles and I plan to use it in all my future classes. While in this class, I have built a high tolerance for ambiguity and dissonance and have grown in understanding of my group readiness level. I feel very pleased with myself and it is all thanks to Dr. Bright's High Performance Class.

## **References**

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