## Handout: The Four Stages of Team Development

Defined by Bruce Wayne Tuckman, Ph.D. in 1965

**Forming.** Groups initially concern themselves with orientation accomplished primarily through testing. This serves to identify the boundaries of both interpersonal and task behaviors. Concurrent with testing is the establishment of dependency relationships with leaders, other group members, or pre‑existing standards. Orientation, testing and dependence constitute the group process of forming.

**Storming.** The second phase in the sequence is characterized by conflict and polarization around interpersonal issues, with emotional responses with regard to tasks. These behaviors serve as resistance to group influence and task requirements, and is terms storming.

**Norming.** Resistance is overcome in the 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. This is the stage of norming.

**Performing.** Finally, the group attains the fourth stage in which interpersonal structure becomes the tool of task activities. Roles become flexible and functional, and group energy is channeled into the task. Structural issues have been resolved, and structure can now become supportive of task performance. This stage can be labeled as performing.