*"Great teams do not hold back with one another. They are unafraid to air their dirty laundry. They admit their mistakes, their weaknesses, and their concerns without fear of reprisal." -*Patrick Lencioni

**Teams**

T - Together  
E - Everyone  
A - Achieves   
M - More

Simple, right? We work in teams, play on teams and root for teamsÃ¢â‚¬Â¦ok, ok! One of the five dimensions of employee empowerment is to "create team decisions". We talk the talk about teamwork, team building and team camaraderie. In science, the word synergy is the cooperative interaction among groups that creates an enhanced combined effect. The whole is stronger than its individual parts.

In 1965, Psychologist Bruce Tuckman published his Forming Storming Norming Performing model to explain team stages. He added a fifth stage, Adjourning, in the 1970s.

The progression is:

1. **Forming** - The first stage which is unclear as to goals, non-cooperative interpersonally, testing the leader, resistant and questioning everything
2. **Storming** - Clarity of purpose increases but plenty of uncertainties persist. Cliques form and there may be power struggles. Members juggle to establish their roles within the team and to make group decisions.
3. **Norming** - Agreement and consensus forms among the team, who respond well to facilitation by leader and are now working well, by and large, with their teammates.
4. **Performing** - The team now knows clearly why it is doing what it is doing. The team has a shared vision and is able to stand on its own feet with no interference or participation from the leader. They can function as a self-directed work team.

**Adjourning**, which is also referred to as "Deforming and Mourning", is more of an adjunct to the original four stage model rather than an extension to another stage. Everyone on the team can now move on to new things, feeling good about what's been achieved and their contributions. Hopefully, recognition and appreciation has been bestowed. Grief during this period is normal due to the relationships formed.

**Collaboration**

[Collaboration](http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/collaboration.html) within teams is crucial to a successful outcome. But conflict and conundrums do occur. Sometimes conflict has to be embraced to be resolved in order to gain personal commitment. Like hurdles to a runner, they have to be mitigated. Conundrums are things like diversity of the group, size of the group, skills in the group, levels of education of the group members and if the group is local or virtually connected. Many times, human resources are the people to build the bridges and tear down the walls over these challenges. Collaboration can also have an opposite meaning, as in a secret alignment with the enemy. So the word itself has a conflicting history.

Not only is collaboration needed inside the team to move the team from the initial stage to the accomplishment stage, but it is needed team to team and team to senior leadership. How the team has its leader communicate the status of the team activities upward and laterally is critical to the validation of the team's work. In life as well as work, you have to promote yourself and your accomplishments. Being a team member means the team has to promote itself and its incremental steps toward its accomplishments and ultimate goal(s).

Team Building are active exercises designed to mold individuals into a better team. For team building to be effective, leaders must first identify the issues facing the team. Then they can plan activities to address these challenges directly. These activities must be more than just fun and a break from work routine. The team must actually gain benefits from the events and activities. Keep competition out of the exercises and aim to make team building part of the daily company culture, instead of a once-a-quarter or annual event only.