

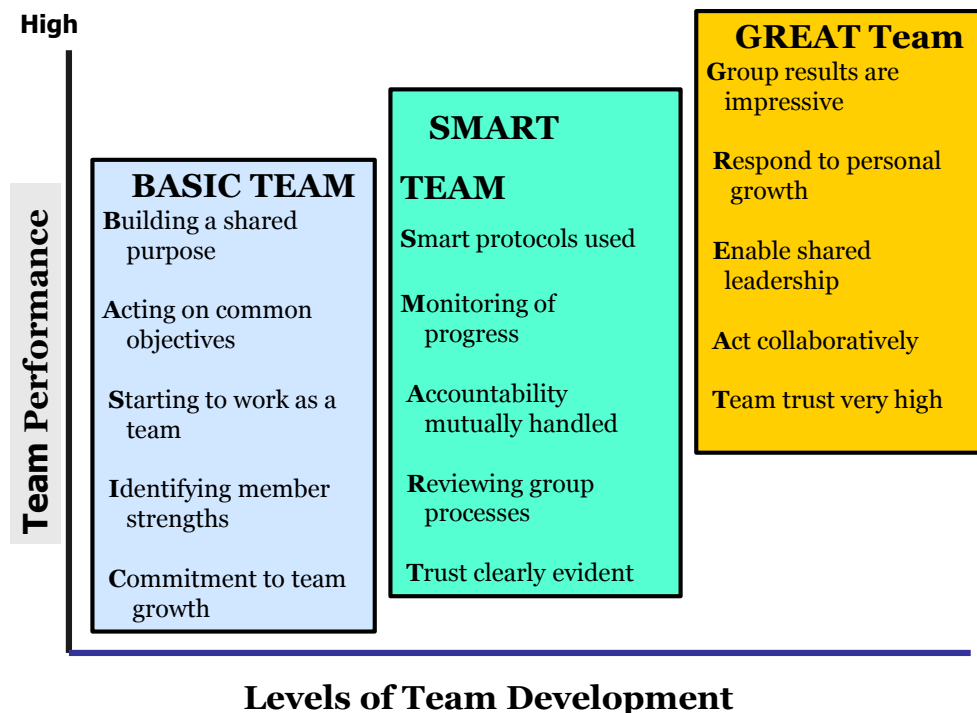
Developing and Leading BASIC, SMART and GREAT Teams

In many of the professional learning sessions that I have led, people have expressed an interest in determining how well their current team is functioning and how it might be improved. A great deal of research has been done on the development and leadership of teams. The use of teams is so widespread in educational settings that taking the time to share some of the important ideas on team building may prove to be helpful. As you may have come to expect, I will use several acronyms in this discussion.

Team Development: From Basic to Smart to Great!

A number of different approaches have been taken in discussing the development of teams. Perhaps the most famous one is the model presented Bruce Tuckman (1965) that included the following four stages: forming, storming, norming and performing. Some years later, Tuckman added the final stage- adjourning!

Based on my own experience and the opportunities that I have had to lead team building sessions, I would like to share a simplified model of team development based on three acronyms that represent increasingly more effective teams, namely, BASIC, SMART and GREAT teams! The following figure presents the three types of teams and the key characteristics that each of them exhibit.



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As the above figure shows, team performance improves with each level of team development. Most importantly, with time and a willingness to improve, a group of people can move from performing at the level of a BASIC team to performing at a SMART or GREAT team level. Over the next few weeks, resources describing the characteristics of each of these types of teams will be posted. In addition, leadership strategies that have proven to be effective at each of the three levels will be included.

Richard Hackman's 60-30-10 Rule

The initial phase of team development is perhaps the most important one. In his recent book entitled *Collaborative Intelligence: Using Teams to Solve Hard Problems*, the late Dr. Richard Hackman of Harvard University stresses that the most important aspect of team development is how the team is established. His research shows that 60 per cent of team performance will be determined by the degree to which a team has a well-defined purpose, appropriate membership and sound organizational support. The 30 per cent component will depend on how well the team begins its work together and the final ten percent depends on how well the leader leads or support the team as it is actually doing its work. It is important to keep the 60-30-10 rule in mind over the next few weeks as we consider team development and leadership strategies that can help team members learn to perform collaboratively and productively.

References

Hackman, J. Richard (2011). *Collaborative Intelligence: Using Teams to Solve Hard Problems*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

Tuckman, B. W. (1965). Developmental sequence in small groups. *Psychological Bulletin*, 63, 384-399.