



Team Managers Guide

Team Management in Action



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Team management in action

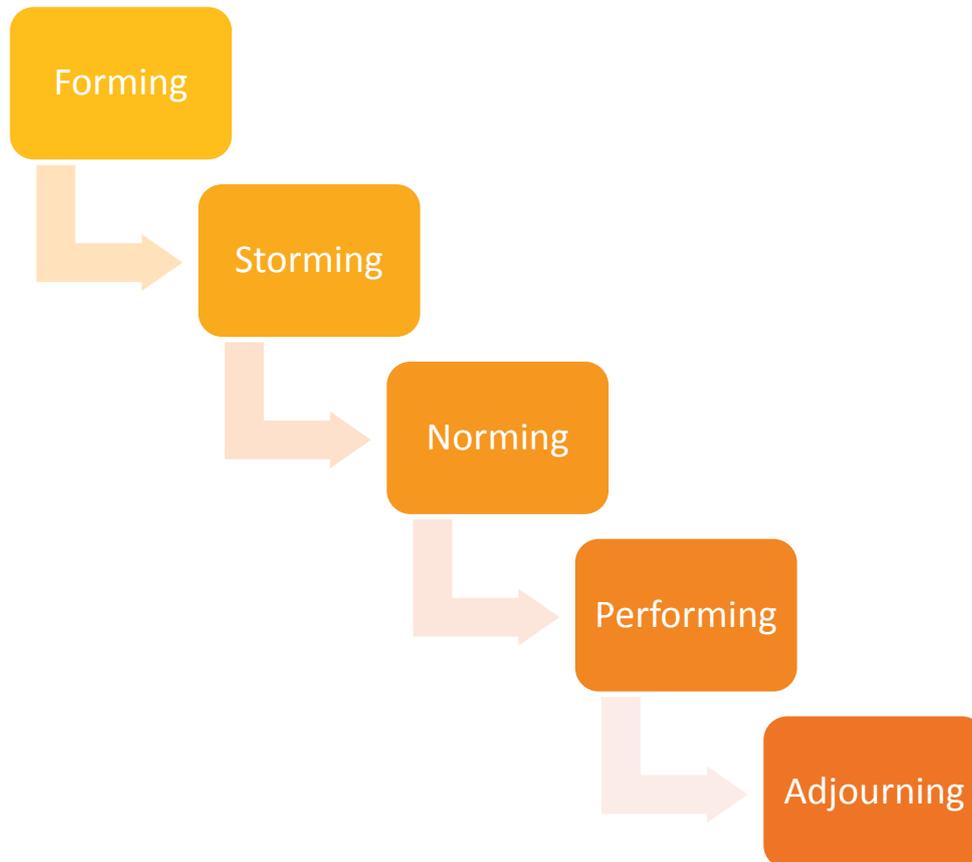
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Team Management in Action

There are different stages and issues that you as a team manager will encounter in the build up to a competition and this guide has been developed to provide you with the skills to effectively create, overcome and manage different situations.

Team Dynamics

There are different stages of group dynamics and the model below describes the stages of how a group comes together. While this model doesn't always perfectly fit a group, it can offer you guidance on how to turn a group of individuals into a team.



Stages of group dynamics

There are different types of groups that are formed when preparing to attend an event. These include:

- team management
- team management and athletes
- team management and parents/guardians
- athletes.

Each different group might utilise the information below differently but it is you as team manager who can lead people through the stages.

Forming

This is the beginning stage of working as a team. As the name suggests, this is when the team is formed. For some it is the first time working in a team or working with each other. At this stage the team is highly dependent on you as the formally appointed leader. Your behaviour and actions at this early stage will set the scene for the event or even for the entire season. Some strategies to help you in this stage include:

- an induction process for new members to the team. This could be a meeting or the development of a manual about what is coming up
- a team BBQ or social activity
- team goal-setting sessions
- developing a group charter to begin setting the culture of the group
- outlining group responsibilities
- outlining group processes.

Storming	<p>This stage is really about team members working with each other and understanding that at times people don't necessarily agree with each other! This stage can be useful not just from a team management perspective but also when dealing with athletes- especially how you manage athletes who are a part of your team who may be in conflict at times.</p> <p>To assist you in this stage here are some strategies you might want to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • outline your systems and mechanisms to deal with potential conflict. • be aware of any potential conflict situations and monitor. Review the team dynamics, particularly in these early stages • ensure there is a clear understanding of role, particularly those of group leadership.
Norming	<p>This stage a team member knows and has a better understanding of their team and their own roles within the team. The team understands what needs to be done and understands how the team will work together to achieve these goals. At this stage, the team manager might notice potential leaders emerge.</p>
Performing	<p>By now the team is a well-oiled machine. Any teething problems encountered at events early in the season have been addressed and overcome.</p> <p>The team members have automated the routines they need to perform, and move through these effortlessly: everyone understands what they need to do and they get in and do it.</p> <p>Any emerging issues have usually been anticipated and addressed.</p>
Adjourning	<p>At this stage, there is again a strong reliance on the team manager for guidance and assistance. Below are a few things that you need to consider:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • recognise team and individual efforts during the competition/season • get feedback from the team • let members know the plans for next season • plan a BBQ/social activity to celebrate the competition/season.

Team building activities

There are no limits to the types of team building activities you as a team manager can employ. When deciding upon different activities, ensure that all of the team management and athletes are included. If you are new to the team manager role it is sometimes a good idea to approach the captain of the team or senior leaders for their feedback on what previous activities have been conducted or if they have any suggestions. There are four main types of team building activities, which include:

- communication activities
- problem solving and/or decision making activities
- adaptability and/or planning activities
- trust building activities

The idea is to perform various activities that are both fun and challenging, and that also have the 'side effect' of building teamwork skills that can help improve athlete/team management performance and cohesiveness. Some examples are listed below:

- conducting a trivia night
- developing a scavenger hunt
- using a seat rotation system at tables

Conflict

It is important to remember that conflict is not always negative, and that a certain level of conflict is useful within a team. There are two kinds of conflict: substantive and emotional.

Substantive conflict: occurs in the form of disagreement over goals or strategies. Establishing a culture that is open to substantive conflict means that everyone feels comfortable having their say and that parties can 'agree to disagree'.

Emotional conflict: involves interpersonal difficulties that can arise from differing goals/values, mistrust, dislike, fear or resentment. Team members should be made aware of this kind of conflict and understand that this is not acceptable behaviour among team members.

Managing conflict

You should understand that conflict cannot always be resolved, but there are some techniques that can assist in managing conflict.

Conflict can be managed directly or indirectly. You might prefer to deal with matters using indirect strategies first, then direct. It is purely a matter of personal preference.

Conflict can be dealt with **indirectly** by:

- *appealing to common goals*: focus the attention of potentially conflicting parties on one mutually desirable conclusion
- *hierarchical referral*: referring the situation up the hierarchy for someone else to address
- *organisational design*: structuring the team so that those in conflict are separated.

Conflict can be dealt with **directly** by:

- *authority*: using the power of team manager to rule either way
- *avoidance*: directing attention away from a conflict, or ignoring it
- *accommodation*: playing down differences, highlighting similarities
- *compromise*: each party involved gives something up
- *competition*: where victory is achieved through force, superior skill or domination
- *cooperation*: direct and positive approach to conflict management that involves a recognition by all parties that something is wrong and needs attention through problem solving
- *problem solving*: gathering and evaluating information in solving problems and making decisions.

Team Protocol

Final team meeting before competition

Arrange a team meeting with everyone from the club who will be travelling to the competition (coaches, team management, athletes, supporters etc.) to cover any information about the team travel including:

- introduction of the management team and support group
- expectations of the athletes e.g., code of behaviour and self-responsibility
- discussion of any queries regarding the issue of use of drugs in sport and SLSA policy. Refer to the ASADA website so that athletes, parents and supporters can acquaint themselves with prohibited substances etc.
- issue of clothing for team and wearing arrangements
- final collection of team member agreement forms
- final collection for medical forms and any late contact changes
- final check on any food intolerances or special dietary needs of athletes that the management support team need to be aware of
- security of personal belongings at competition
- map of competition and back of beach
- discuss and advise that the team manager is the media spokesperson
- when craft and equipment is required for loading and transport
- training facilities at venue, such as pool etc.
- weather forecasts and the types of clothing/weather protection required
- the program of the competition e.g., starts times etc.
- housekeeping such as team meetings, rooming lists, travel documents, contact and phone lists, collection of any outstanding moneys and end of trip celebration
- go through all the correspondence from the competition organisers to ensure all bases are covered and understood by touring party
- team curfews must be realistic and enforced, especially for junior teams.

At the end of each day of competition

At the end of each day it is your responsibility to go through the following lists (you may have additional tasks that will need to be added to the list) and ensure that each task has been followed:

- check all gear has been returned
- Follow up treatment on any injuries
- recovery session
- clean up and pack up tent area (including cleaning up rubbish and litter)
- end of day debrief.

Team safety

Team management should also be aware of the whereabouts of team members and their personal safety while on tour. It is realised that 'mixed teams' are commonplace and that members want to celebrate after major championships. However, this should be done within the bounds of good behaviour and not at the expense of the enjoyment and respect of others.

SLSA members are encouraged to always pair up and stay with their mate when out at night, along with the following safety tips:

- stay in groups when travelling at night
- never accept lifts
- use public transport when travelling at night
- use secure train stations, taxi ranks or bus stops
- walk down well-lit streets
- plan the safest route to your destination and use it.