

A Teams

In some (but not all) situations, tasks can be achieved more easily by **teams** with a **common purpose**, rather than by individuals. Of course, it's important to develop **team work** through **team building** so as to get the best from the team.



B Team players

Meredith Belbin¹ has identified these types of team members or **team players**:

- a the **implementer**, who converts the team's plan into something achievable
- b the **co-ordinator**, a confident member who sets objectives and defines team members' roles
- c the **shaper**, who defines issues, shapes ideas and leads the action
- d the **plant**, a creative and imaginative person who supplies original ideas and solves problems
- e the **resource investigator**, who communicates with the outside world and explores opportunities
- f the **monitor evaluator**, who sees all the possibilities, evaluates situations objectively, and sees what is realistically achievable
- g the **teamworker**, who builds the team, supports others and reduces conflict
- h the **completer**, who meets deadlines, corrects mistakes and makes sure nothing is forgotten.

C Stages of team life

The typical team goes through a series of stages:

- a **forming**: the group is anxious and feels dependent on a leader; the group tries to discover how it is going to operate and what the 'normal' ways of working will be
- b **storming**: the atmosphere may be one of conflict between members, who may resist control from any one person; there may be the feeling that the task cannot be achieved
- c **norming**: at this stage, members of the group feel closer together and the conflicts are forgotten; members of the group will start to support each other; there is increasingly the feeling that it is possible to achieve the task
- d **performing**: the group is carrying out the task for which it was formed; members feel safe enough to express differences of opinion in relation to others
- e **mourning**: the group's work is finished, and its members begin to have pleasant memories of their activities and achievements.

¹ *Management Teams: Why They Succeed or Fail* (Butterworth-Heinemann 1996)

8.1 Look at the types of team members in B opposite and say if these statements are true or false.

- 1 Implementers are not interested in final results.
- 2 Co-ordinators tend to take a leading, organizing role.
- 3 Shapers tend to follow what other people say.
- 4 Plants can be useful in providing new ideas when the team has run out of steam.
- 5 Some resource investigators might love using the Internet.
- 6 Monitor evaluators are not good at seeing all sides of a problem.
- 7 Teamworkers may help to defuse arguments between members.
- 8 Completers are bad at finishing things on time.

8.2 Members of a team brought together to work on a design project said the following things. Match them to the stages in C opposite. (There are two sentences relating to each stage.)

1 We had such a great time working together.

2 We're really making progress now and we get on so well together.

3 We're beginning to get to know each other better.

4 Who does Jane think she is, taking over and behaving as if she's in charge?

5 We need to appoint a leader.

6 We'll never finish this.

7 Do you remember that time we worked until 3 in the morning?

8 I'm new here - I don't even now what we are supposed to be doing.

9 I know we've had arguments, but can I help you with this?

10 I can see what we're supposed to be doing now.

Over to you

What teams have you worked in or are you working in? Do you recognize the types in B opposite in your team? What role do you usually play?