

BY GINNY V. LEE

It is a Saturday morning, and I am sitting with a group of 15 new and aspiring school site administrators. As part of their work toward an MS in educational leadership, this group of experienced educators is enrolled in an elective course, "Group Facilitation for School Leaders." The 12 women and three men are all experienced K-12 teachers. Collectively, they have led and served on numerous committees

and work groups at their sites and in their districts.

collaboration and cooperation; mutual respect and support; accountability to each other and to the desired outcomes; and a trusting and safe environment. They conclude that all teams are groups but not all groups are teams.

Groups, for example, may consist of people who share a role and responsibilities that provide an opportunity for the group to evolve to a team (for example, 4th-grade teachers,

and a lack of authentic tools with which to address these matters.

MODELS OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

One of the best-known theories of team development is captured in Tuckman's model of groups going through the predictable stages of "forming, storming, norming, and performing" (Tuckman, 1965). This model acknowledges the inevitable clash of assumptions, beliefs, perspectives, goals, and values that individuals bring with them to any group endeavor. The model recognizes the need for groups to engage in examining and resolving core relational and operational questions before they can be expected to work together effectively.

For a facilitator to support the

brings to the team. To share in the purpose of a team effort, each individual must believe that he or she has a meaningful role to play. Prompting members to identify what they believe are relevant knowledge, skills, and experience and then to surface the strengths and unique perspectives of each individual helps create the connection to purpose and the sense that “I belong here.”

- **Supporting individuals in imagining the power of “we,” helping members envision possibility and shared purpose.** The power of teams resides in the synergy of the collective. Thus, involving individuals at the orientation stage in tapping into their individual and collective ideas about what is possible, imagining what success would look like, and

on the part of the participants, the journey from a group to a team can be daunting. Without skillful facilitation, groups are likely to encounter personal dynamics that not only provide unanticipated challenges but may also serve as deal breakers in becoming a high-performing team. An experienced, astute facilitator who models interpersonal skills and dispositions needed for effective team work can make the difference between a group that remains a collectivity of individuals and one that forges the bonds of cohesiveness and trust that allow great things to happen.

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