

# Design Teams

ME72 Engineering Design  
Laboratory

## Why Teams?

- A team is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.
- **TEAMS OUTPERFORM INDIVIDUALS.**

# Characteristics of an Effective Team

- Team goals are as important as individual goals.
- The team understands the goals and is committed to achieving them.
- Trust replaces fear and people feel comfortable taking risks.
- Respect, collaboration, and open-mindedness are prevalent.
- Team members communicate readily; diversity of opinions is encouraged.
- Decisions are made by consensus.

## Stages of Team Development 1

- Forming
  - When the team first comes together and tries to begin working as a team
- Storming
  - When the team experiences early difficulties in the transition to teamwork and a great deal of conflict and struggle surfaces

## Stages of Team Development 2

- Norming
  - When the team begins to work out internal shared understandings (norms) of how best to work together and members begin to follow these guidelines
- Performing
  - When the team members learn how to combine their efforts effectively and begin to function as a well-coordinated team

## Communication

- 90 percent of face-to-face communication is NON-VERBAL!
- The heart of communication
  - Listening
  - Giving feedback
- Communication Skills:
  - Openness and empathy
  - Positiveness, supportiveness, and equality

## Causes of Conflict

- Scarce Resources
- Poor communication
- Ambiguities about responsibilities
- Incompatible goals
- Personality differences

## Resolving Conflict

- The best approach to resolving conflicts is through collaborative dialog
  - This approach gets conflicting team members to look at their assumptions and behaviors in light of their individual, team, and organizational goals.
  - Coming to understand the assumptions that lead to the mismatching of expectations and how these mismatches affect team performance is key to permanently resolving conflict.

# Resolving Conflict

- Be specific rather than general.
- Phrase the problem as a problem for the whole team.
- Focus on controllable things.
- Give constructive criticism.
- Remember that your purpose is to improve the team member's behavior.
- Keep feedback professional.
- Ensure understanding.

## Summary

- Teams outperform individuals.
- Teams go through forming, storming, norming, performing.
- Good communication is the key to successful teams.
- Reference
  - Manz et.al. *For Team Members Only*, New York: AMACOM, 1997.