











performance levels. For executive leaders, 35 percent say high performance is more frequent, while only 20 percent of individual contributors see the same frequency of high performance. Teams go through four predictable stages; these stages are defined by the team's current levels of productivity and morale, and each requires different behaviours from the leader to keep the team focused and moving forward. Team leaders can influence the team's productivity and morale by staying in tune with their team members and managing the situation accordingly.

## THE ROLE OF THE LEADER IN EACH STAGE OF TEAM DEVELOPMENT

### ***Stage 1 – Structuring and Orientation***

In this stage the team is just starting up. Members may or may not know each other or why they've been convened as a team. Most likely the team members will have questions about their roles and the team's purpose. In this stage, leaders should

- Set the context for the team's work
- Help team members get to know each other
- Develop a team charter to guide behaviour and performance
- Establish boundaries

### ***Stage 2 – Dissatisfaction***

In this stage team morale and performance can drop for many reasons. Perhaps the work is harder than initially imagined, or team members begin to have unresolved differences of opinion on how to proceed. In this stage, leaders should

- Address and invite discussion about conflict
- Encourage honest and curious communication
- Provide feedback on progress
- Ensure that everyone's voice is heard

### ***Stage 3 – Integration***

In this stage morale and performance begin to climb. Generally, problem solving and communication are improving along with collaboration and competence. In this stage, leaders should

- Encourage participation and inclusion
- Cultivate trust
- Recognise contributions
- Foster accountability



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Talking openly and creating an environment of safety and trust makes people comfortable about speaking out regarding improving team performance without worrying about upsetting the status quo.

Sometimes it's important for leaders to learn how to let go in order to build collaboration. That way everyone can take responsibility for creating a collaborative environment. When people are busy, it's normal to want to focus on getting individual work done but it's important to remember: If you want to go quickly, go alone. If you want to go far, go together. Knowing the characteristics and needs of a high-performing team is critical.

The results of the *Training* magazine/Blanchard survey provide a snapshot into today's teams. The survey results give Training and Development professionals a target to shoot for and recommended first steps as they look to create or enhance team training programs in their organisations. Consider how these results and findings can help begin a dialogue about team performance in your organisation.

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