

to develop initial feelings of closeness and a sense of shared expectations. This helps protect the team from disintegration while members continue their efforts to work well together.

Teams in the *performing stage of team development* are mature, organized, and well functioning. This is a stage of total integration in which team members are able to creatively deal with complex tasks and interpersonal conflicts. The team has a clear and stable structure, members are motivated by team goals, and the process scores high on the criteria of team maturity shown in **Figure 13.3**.³⁶

The *adjourning stage of team development* is the final stage for temporary committees, task forces, and project teams. Here, team members prepare to achieve closure and disband, ideally with a sense that they have accomplished important goals.

TEAM PERFORMANCE IS INFLUENCED BY NORMS.

Have you ever felt pressure from other group members when you do something wrong—come late to a meeting, fail to complete an assigned task, or act out of character? What you are experiencing is related to group **norms**, the behaviors expected of team members.³⁷ A norm is a rule or standard that guides behavior. And when a norm is violated, team members are usually pressured to conform. In the extreme, violating a norm can result in expulsion from the group or social ostracism.

Any number of norms can be operating in a group at any given time. During the forming and storming stages of development, norms often focus on expected attendance and levels of commitment. By the time the team reaches the performing stage, norms have formed around adaptability, change, and desired levels of achievement. And without a doubt, one of the most important norms for any team is the **performance norm**. It defines the level of work effort and performance that team members are expected to contribute.

It shouldn't surprise you that teams with positive performance norms, such as "Reciprocity is important—we all help one another to get things done," are more successful than those with negative ones, such as "Take care of yourself and don't expect someone to help you." But how do you build teams with the right norms? Actually, there are a number of things leaders can do.³⁸

- Act as a positive role model.
- Reinforce the desired behaviors with rewards.

A **norm** is a behavior, rule, or standard expected to be followed by team members.

The **performance norm** defines the effort and performance contributions expected of team members.

	Very poor			Very good	
1. Trust among members	1	2	3	4	5
2. Feedback mechanisms	1	2	3	4	5
3. Open communications	1	2	3	4	5
4. Approach to decisions	1	2	3	4	5
5. Leadership sharing	1	2	3	4	5
6. Acceptance of goals	1	2	3	4	5
7. Valuing diversity	1	2	3	4	5
8. Member cohesiveness	1	2	3	4	5
9. Support for each other	1	2	3	4	5
10. Performance norms	1	2	3	4	5

FIGURE 13.3 What Are the Criteria for Assessing the Process Maturity of a Team?

Teams vary greatly in the degree of maturity they achieve and demonstrate in day-to-day behavior. These criteria are helpful for assessing the development and maturity of a team as it moves through various phases—from forming to storming to norming to performing. We would expect that teams would start to show strong positives on these criteria as members gain experience with one another in the norming stage of team development. We would expect teams to have consistently strong positive scores in the performing stage.