Building and managing research teams

MCUAAAR SCIENTIST SEMINAR

4/18/2023
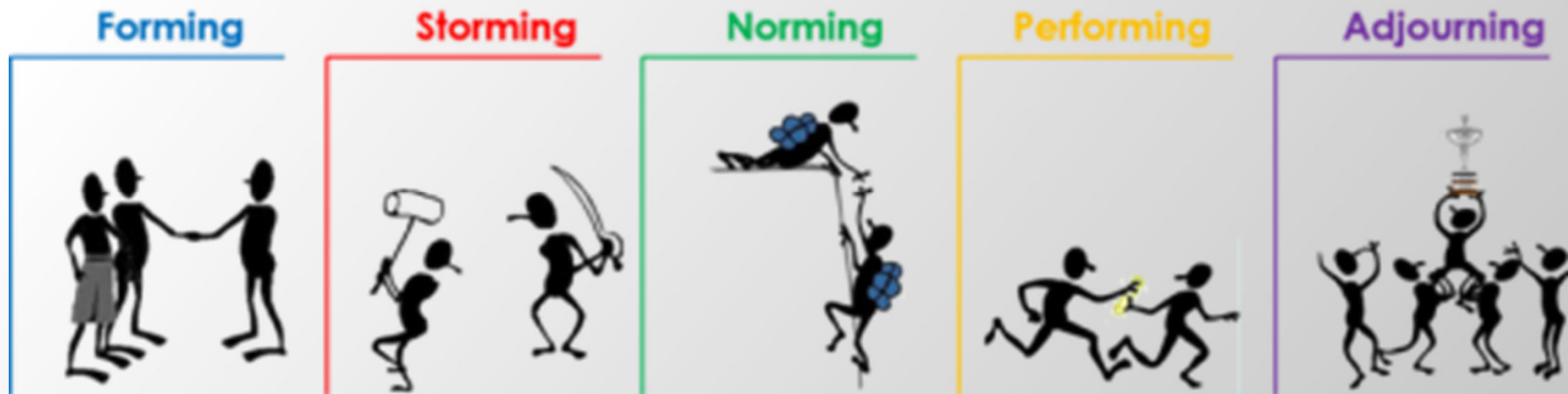
School of Social Work
MICHIGAN STATE UNIVERSITY

OUR SCIENCE **TRANSFORMS THE HUMAN EXPERIENCE**
AND INSPIRES LEADERS

Team science and the science of team science
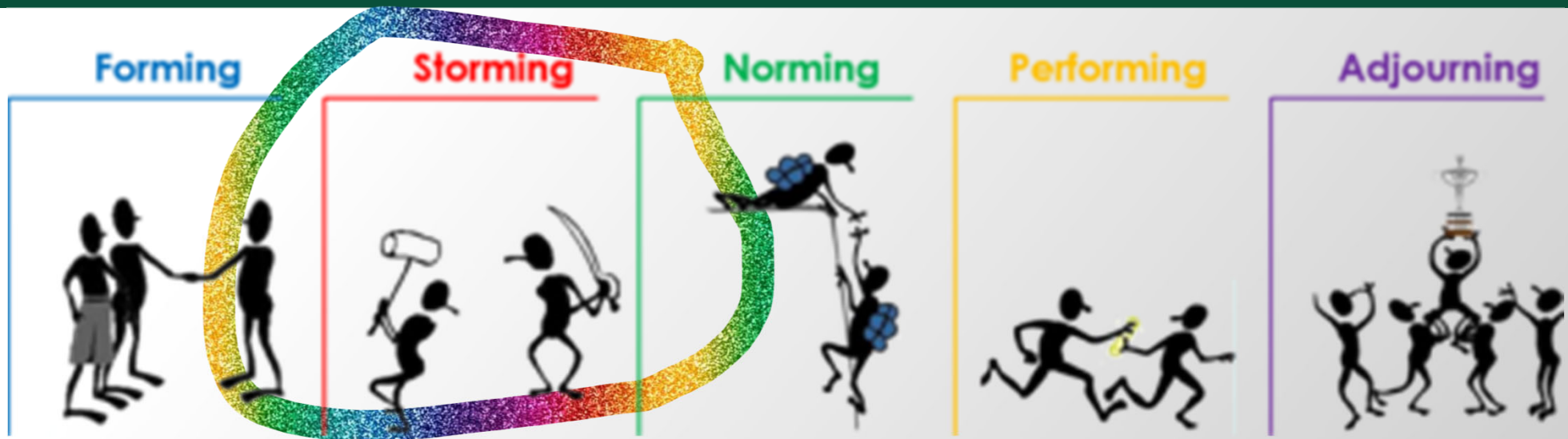

Forming   Storming   Norming   Performing   Adjourning

Forming **Storming** **Norming** **Performing** **Adjourning**

- Identify what do you need for your project to be successful

- Think about diversity across a variety of factors

- Share your goals and visions

Forming Storming Norming Performing Adjourning

- Establishing roles and responsibilities

- Define processes

Forming **Storming** **Norming** **Performing** **Adjourning**

- Revisit shared goals often

- Activities to allow team members to learn about each other

- Regular team meetings with opportunity for all to contribute

- Model/teach how to give and receive critical feedback in supportive way

- Encourage scientific debate

- Teach and train

- Process to handle disagreements

- Follow through on commitments

NORMING

When it's working?

- Trust is foundation for team success
- Platform for open communication, discussion, and disagreement
- Encourages sharing opinions, consensus when appropriate
- Willing to teach each other, support each other's work
- Confidence and commitment to group mission

When it's not working?

- Members focused on own efforts
- Can't openly discuss projects or issues
- Less included to share information, help others
- Discussions at most superficial level
- Competitors vs collaborators

Forming   **Storming**   **Norming**   **Performing**   **Adjourning**
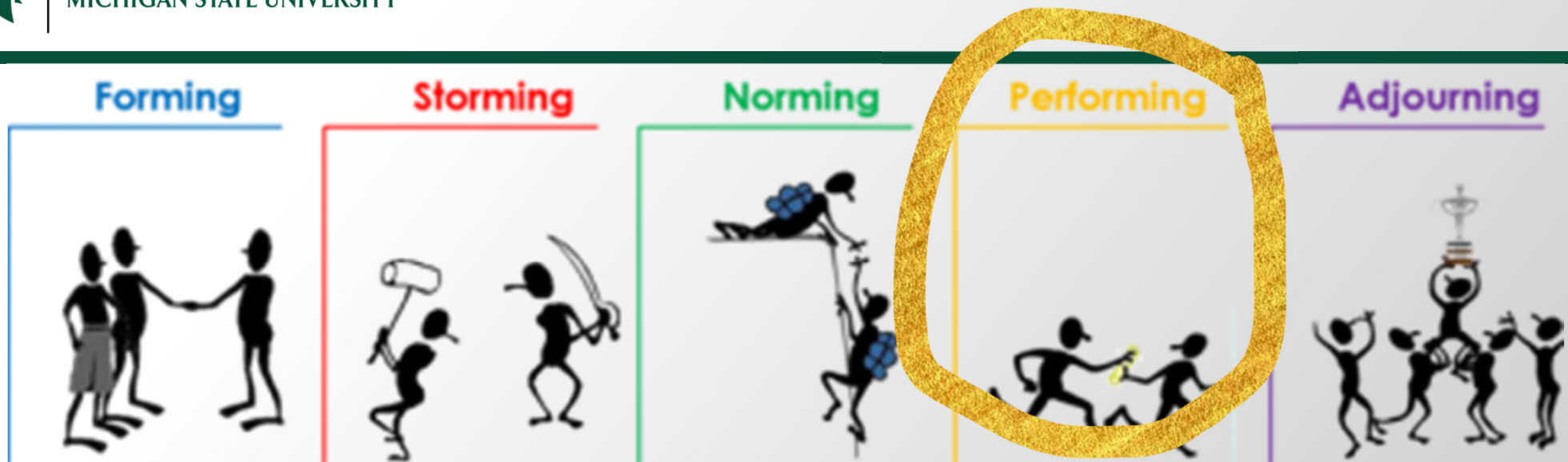
- Working together well, focused on shared goal, resolving issues
- Progressing toward goal
- Proactively preventing issues from arising

- Keep revisiting shared goals
- Continuous improvement in knowledge, skills, attitudes

PERFORMING

When it's working?

- Team members are interested in being there
- Mentoring relationship between you and your team
- Team culture and expectations are clear to interviewees/new members
- If there's a bad fit, they leave on their own or encouraged to find another project

When it's not working?

- Members prioritize their own objectives over the team goal
- Leader is not clear about roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each member
- Individuals begin working for their own gain at the expense of the team
- Working through challenges openly and honestly becomes difficult

Forming | Storming | Norming | Performing | Adjourning
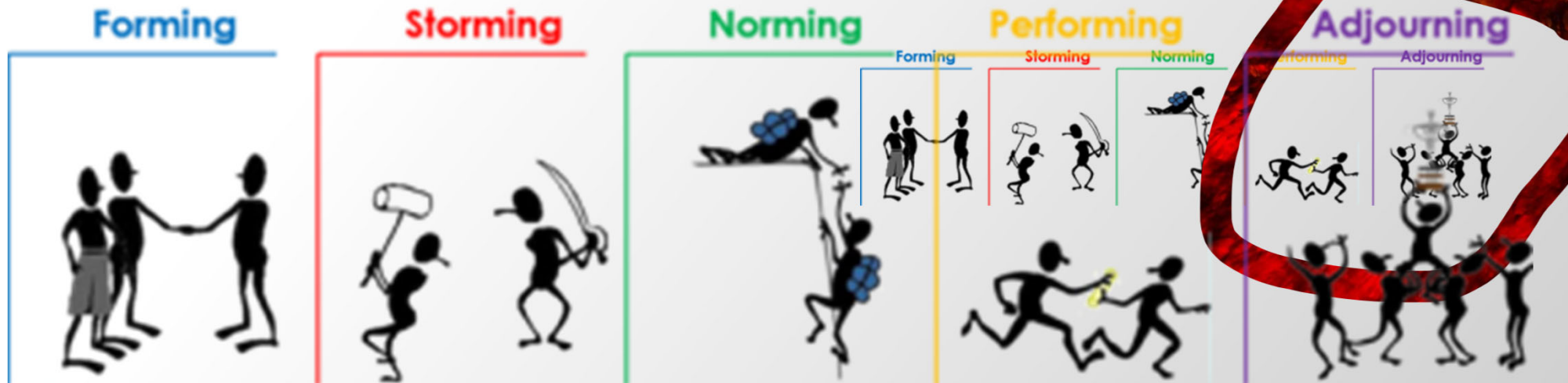
- Team comes to a natural end or takes on a new project
- Complete tasks
- Identify lessons learned

- Celebrate success
- Acknowledge contributions

Table 3:

Greatest Challenges (N = 101)

Theme	n (%)	Example
RA-specific challenges: knowledge, skills, and commitment	74 (73.2)	• "Beginning doctoral students have few skills related to academic research" • "Lack of commitment to the project or subject matter"
Logistics of managing time and tasks	68 (67.3)	• "Making sure that supervising them does not take longer than if I just did the work myself" • "Taking time from my schedule to meet with them, assign them work, and track their effort"
Professor-specific challenges: skills and expectations	24 (23.7)	• "Being responsible for someone else. I'm so used to working independently; it's hard considering another person in my approach to the work."
Administrative and structural challenges	23 (23.7)	• "Recruiting and hiring" • "Securing funding"
Mentorship	10 (9.9)	• "How to broach [that] some RAs need more professional socialization"

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Supervising student RAs

- Explain assignments clearly and precisely – written instructions are good
- Be available to answer questions and/or empower RA to make independent decisions when appropriate
- Be aware of RAs personal research interests
- Ask them to keep a timesheet
- Acknowledge good job as well as giving constructive feedback for improvement
- Better to overestimate the size of a task than underestimate it
- Make sure they get paid on time and help troubleshoot HR issues as appropriate