Step Ladder Theory of Group Development

1. **Safety**
   - Who I am
   - Do I belong here
   - What influence will I have
   - What contributions can I make
   - Will people listen to me
   - *Once I am secure about who I am, then I can move to step 2*

2. **Trust**
   - Who you are
   - How do you think
   - What are your potential contributions
   - Can I count on you
   - How do you interact with others
   - *When we know this about each other, we begin to build trust*

3. **Synergy**
   - With a sense of safety & trust as a foundation, this step is about learning how we can work together and complement one another
   - We explore what we can do as a group, what roles we may take on
   - Given the skills set of the group, how do we work together

4. **Task**
   - *Once we are secure in who we are as a group, we can deal with what we are suppose to be doing- the goal the task*
   - We often ignore what motivates people and what they need to be fully engaged in the task at hand

5. **Vision**
   - *Finally, once we know each other, our resources, our task, we can then look forward to the future of the group*
   - What is our overarching goal
   - Where can we go
   - What is our vision

“This is a simple yet powerful theory of group and team process, including sequential series of steps that can make a group more effective.”

Prepared by SHEM Coordinator (A. Andersen) from SHEM Kick-off Handout 4/22/08 (K. Burkgren) v. 6/1/2010
SHEM SC Kick-off (4/22/08) Step Ladder
- “This is a simple yet powerful theory of group and team process, including sequential series of steps that can make the group more effective.” – handout
- Trust is the most important step
- The process; does not need to be linear, is cyclical, and depends on people & events.